

# Global Platform for Action on Sustainable Energy in Displacement Settings

## Terms of Reference

### What is the GPA?

The **Global Platform for Action on Sustainable Energy in Displacement Settings (GPA)** is the global initiative to promote actions that enable access to sustainable, affordable, modern and reliable energy in displacement settings, as laid out in the Global Plan of Action [Framework Document](#). The GPA is sustained by a support structure consisting of a Steering Group, a Coordination Unit, five thematic working areas and ad hoc Task Forces, to deliver its goals.

The content work of the GPA is guided by the **Global Plan of Action [Framework Document](#)** that was launched in July 2018<sup>1</sup> at the High-Level Political Forum, a non-binding framework that provides a collaborative agenda for energy, development and humanitarian partners to deliver concrete action toward achieving SDG7 for displacement contexts.<sup>2</sup>

### What is the vision and mission of the GPA?

**Vision:** Displaced persons, host communities, and associated humanitarian response mechanisms have access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy services by 2030.

**Mission** of the GPA<sup>3</sup>: Delivering collective change on energy in displacement settings by providing supporting services to mainstream sustainable, affordable, and reliable energy access for crisis-affected communities and those that serve them.

### What are the objectives of the GPA?

Members of the GPA work together to deliver the goals and recommendations of the GPA Framework Document by:

1. **Improving coordination** of energy in displacement settings through streamlined and strengthened coordination processes at the country and global levels;
2. **Providing policy and advocacy support** at the local, national and international levels to ensure humanitarian response meets the energy needs of both displaced and host communities, and national energy and development planning processes are inclusive of the energy needs in displacement settings;
3. Exploring avenues to **increase and diversify funding and improve existing financing mechanisms** for energy programming in humanitarian responses by developing innovative financing mechanisms and approaches to funding sustainable energy access programming and energy infrastructure, in partnership with funders and lenders;

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.humanitarianenergy.org/what-is-the-gpa](http://www.humanitarianenergy.org/what-is-the-gpa)

<sup>2</sup> In order to communicate progress on the collective humanitarian sectors transition to sustainable energy access and use, ongoing activities and outputs of work facilitated under the GPA, a progress measurement framework is intended to be created with key sector partners as a part of the GPA.

<sup>3</sup> **Due to need for simplicity and clarity around the support structure as a collective framework**, the mission, as noted in the GPA Framework Document, has been changed from: The mission of the GPA is to equip stakeholders with the capacity to mainstream sustainable energy solutions into programming and operations, with the goal of delivering improved protection, dignity and energy-related social, environmental and economic benefits in situations of displacement. It advances this mission by providing a strategic, multi-sector framework for addressing current challenges and barriers to achieving sustainable energy access in situations of displacement.

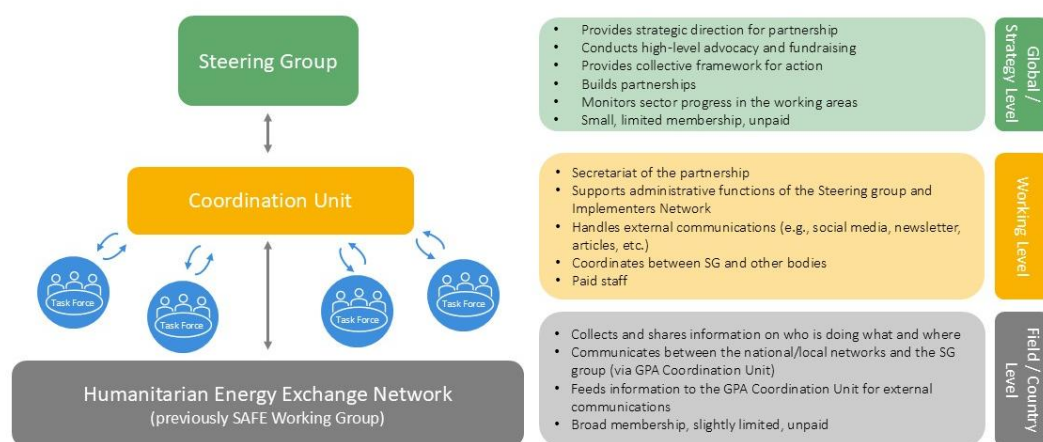
4. Enabling sustainable delivery of energy in displacement settings by **strengthening the humanitarian sectors expertise, capacity, and knowledge** on sustainable energy, and partnering, where practical to do so, with experienced development and private sector actors; and
5. **Supporting harmonisation of humanitarian-energy data** collection, analysis, reporting and MEL processes, and building the collective evidence base of best practices and learning from previous projects to support collective sector learning.

Activities towards the delivery of these objectives are anticipated to work closely with impacted populations and related in-country stakeholders to ensure clear knowledge and understanding of local conditions in displacement settings and demonstrate the implementation of appropriate energy access measures.

All actions are intended to meet the targets within [SDG7](#) in displacement contexts, notably ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services (SDG 7.1), increasing substantially the share of renewable energy use (SDG 7.2), and improving energy efficiency in energy systems (SDG 7.3).

## How is the GPA Supported?

The GPA is facilitated by a support structure to deliver its goals, consisting of a Steering Group, a Coordination Unit, five thematic working areas and ad hoc Task Forces, and the [Humanitarian Energy Exchange Network](#) (previously the SAFE Humanitarian Working Group), as outlined in the diagram and section below. The GPA is guided by annual [work plan](#) that partners deliver against individually and collectively, which is reviewed and adapted annually.



## How to become a Contributing Partner to the GPA?

There are multiple avenues to become a **Contributing Partner to the GPA**. When committing to becoming a partner of the GPA, there is an implicit understanding that the individual and/or the organisation aims to act toward the goals and principles of the GPA (see Annex), and in doing so becomes a GPA Contributing Partner (which would allow organisations to be linked in a Partnership Page on the GPA Website, where stakeholders can outline their work on humanitarian energy).

Individuals and organisations are invited to become a GPA member by contributing to ongoing processes facilitated under the GPA. The terms of reference outlining how to get involved in different GPA activities is listed in the annex. By becoming a member, partners can contribute to one or more of the following working levels:

- **For Global Support and Setting the Collective Agenda, Apply for the GPA Steering Group:**  
The GPA Steering Group (SG) consists of UN Agencies, INGOs and other development partners

with humanitarian-energy expertise and ambition to shape the global agenda. The role of the SG is to support, direct and stimulate systemic change on how energy is delivered in the humanitarian response. The main activities of the SG are to align sector-wide strategy, track progress, identify gaps and opportunities for collective action, and support the management of the stakeholder network. The Steering Group membership is reviewed yearly, and key partners committed to the global action agenda are invited to be a member on a needs basis. The SG convenes once a month and members are expected to contribute to the meetings and develop the sector further. *Identified in the Support Structure diagram as the Global Level.*

- **For Working/Thematic Support, Join a GPA Task Force:** This includes humanitarian or development partners, member states, companies and researchers working collectively on topic-specific and output focused activities (such as setting minimum energy standards, running global advocacy campaigns like the Clean Energy Challenge, or coordinating sector-wide e-waste efforts) and to develop joint projects and partnerships that contribute to the GPA Outcome Areas. The frequency of the meetings will be established by the Task Force lead. *Identified in Support Structure diagram in blue.*
- **For Coordination and Knowledge Exchange, Join the Humanitarian Energy Exchange Network (previously know as the SAFE Humanitarian Working Group):** This includes individuals working in field/country operations on energy-related programming who provide local leadership, implement projects and humanitarian programmes, share knowledge and lessons learned. The Humanitarian Energy Exchange Network co-chairs will organise regular exchanges for field staff and provide support to the network via standard tools, best practices and advocacy support. *Identified in the Support Structure diagram as the Country/Field Level.*

Further details on how to join different supporting sections of the GPA can be found in the Annex.

## Contact

For further inquiry regarding the GPA and how to get involved, please feel free to contact the Coordination Unit at [energy@unitar.org](mailto:energy@unitar.org).

*The GPA is steered and supported by the following organisations.*

The GPA is steered by



The GPA Coordination Unit is supported by



## ANNEX

### Annex 1: GPA Coordination Unit

The Coordination Unit executes the day-to-day coordination of activities between and among the Steering Group and thematic working areas – coordination, policy, innovative finance, technical assistance, and data – as outlined in the [GPA Framework Document](#), ensuring progress towards goals and streamlining efforts of key stakeholders and the implementation of the GPA activities.

#### Membership and Governance

The Coordination Unit is the functioning body with the mandate to support the GPA. This includes full time staff members to operationally maintain the GPA and ensure its efficacy toward the objectives and guiding principles.

#### Functionality

The Coordination Unit reports to the Steering Group and provides organisational and administrative support. It provides its members with technical assistance, process management, monitoring and evaluation, gap assessments, and the recommendations on measures and tools to fill these gaps.

#### Roles & Responsibilities

1. Operationalization, support and monitoring of GPA recommendations:
  - a. Translate the recommendations of the GPA into a first draft Work Plan with defined activities, approved by the SG. The Work Plan is then consulted upon and delivered through the thematic working areas and task forces, supported by the Coordination Unit and Steering Group.
  - b. Support the activities of the Work Plan where appropriate and monitor their implementation, in line with inter-agency humanitarian coordination mechanisms.
  - c. Support mainstreaming the results of the working areas, ensuring coherency across thematic working areas and task forces.
  - d. Review and adjust work plan, if necessary and if new gaps are identified.
2. Fundraising for the GPA specific activities, and support on financing to sector partners:
  - a. Identify new ways of financing or capacity support, coordinated with the Work Plan.
  - b. Coordinate voluntary contributions and benefits.
  - c. Support joint fundraising from several partners, communicating relevant funding opportunities to the Steering Group and thematic working areas.
3. General administration and maintenance of the Steering Group and its membership, in coordination with UNHCR and IOM. This includes (but is not limited to):
  - a. Host regular Steering Group meetings, including agenda development and meeting minutes.
  - b. Monitor member participation. Process applications for new membership.
  - c. Issue content for social media and strategic communication pieces such as editorials, blogs, and press releases.
  - d. Share information (regular online meetings and one in-person annual meetings) on the implementation of activities.
  - e. Prepare SG members for the dissemination of the results of the Work Plan.
4. Awareness raising and advocacy on the energy transition in displacement settings:
  - a. Participate in conferences and other meetings in energy, displacement and related topics when strategically identified with a deliverable.
  - b. Issue regular newsletters to the GPA mailing list, and issue content for social media and strategic communication pieces such as editorials, blogs, and press releases.
  - c. Identify and engage relevant partners.
  - d. Ensure communication of GPA activities with relevant cluster mechanisms.

## Annex 2: Global Strategy Level: GPA Steering Group

### **Background**

The **GPA Steering Group (SG)** is a group of leading UN, INGO and other development partners with humanitarian-energy expertise working collectively to mainstream sustainable energy in displacement situations in policy and practice, to realise the vision of the [GPA Framework Document](#).

The Steering Group (SG) is the primary body responsible for the overall direction, development and implementation of the GPA at the global level. It plays a critical role in advocating for the objectives of the GPA to key stakeholders and is responsible for reviewing and endorsing the global GPA strategy and work plan, leading or participating in GPA Task Forces, providing support to global policy and advocacy efforts, playing an active coordination and expert content role through leading on collective activities, and supporting the Coordination Unit in monitoring and oversight of collective progress facilitated through the GPA.

### **Membership**

The GPA Steering Group is comprised of the main UN and INGO agencies working on SDG7 in displacement settings globally. Additional organisations may apply for membership in the Steering Group, with a maximum of 20 organizations. Applications for membership are received and handled by the GPA Coordination Unit. New members must meet all eligibility criteria below, and be approved by a majority vote of the Steering Group. Each organisation may only cast one vote, even if it is represented by more than one individual, and membership is reviewed annually. Eligibility criteria for the GPA Steering Group is as follows:

- International organization - operating in several countries.
- Providing relevant human resources to support activities of the GPA, and appointment of a replacement if transitioning out of role.
- Operational mandate or proven track record for contribution to the development, implementation and monitoring the Work Plan.
- Actively learns and shares relevant information on sustainable energy in displacement settings.
- Present the GPA and relevant results within the organization, as well as in other fora.
- Support fundraising for sustainable energy for displacement, and approval or engagement from senior management.
- Impartial and neutral to type of energy (no pushing of agendas for a certain solution).
- Commitment to sustainable energy delivery models.
- Commitment to the guiding principles of the Global Plan of Action.

A statement of ambitions for involvement, potential ways to implement the GPA activities in current work and practical ways of contribution to the Steering Committee is requested from all members of the Steering Group. The desired output from this requirement is to record members commitment to taking action and streamlining the GPA into their work for efficient and purposeful collaboration.

### **Operations**

The SG meets online each month to collaborate and coordinate action on priorities, and an in-person meeting per year to conduct an in-depth review of the GPA Activities. The existing GPA Steering Group consists of UNHCR, WFP, FAO, IOM, UNDP, UNITAR, GIZ, Mercy Corps, SEforALL, Practical Action, Clean Cooking Alliance, UNEP, NORCAP, the MECS programme and SNV.

### **Objectives and Key Activities**

#### **1. Conduct advocacy**

- a. Increase the organisational, political, and financial prioritisation of energy in displacement settings through targeted advocacy messaging and education.
- b. Support the field working groups in conducting advocacy at the local level, such as through community mobilization, supporting behaviour change, and developing communication materials.

- c. Develop and leverage strategic partnerships with trusted advocacy organisations and journalists.
- d. Implement the HEEN advocacy strategy.

## **2. Mobilize resources**

- a. Explore sources of funding and build contacts with relevant donors as a network.
- b. Collaborate on joint proposals for humanitarian energy coordination, research, and implementation.
- c. Provide information to HEEN partners about funding opportunities, requirements, and processes.
- d. Educate donors on needs, gaps, and opportunities regarding energy access in displacement settings.
- e. Provide relevant information and recommendations to the donor community on how and where donor funds for energy activities can be most effective.

## **3. Build human resource capacity of partners and key stakeholders**

- a. Conduct trainings and hold workshops on energy in displacement settings for relevant stakeholders including field staff (e.g., program officers), donors, partners, and government officials.
- b. In collaboration with experts, support the capacity building of relevant stakeholders and suppliers.

## **Leadership and Contact**

Updated information on the GPA Steering Group can be found online here: <https://www.humanitarianenergy.org/who-is-involved>.

The GPA Steering Group is supported and facilitated by the GPA Coordination Unit, a full time, staffed team hosted at [UNITAR](#), which executes the day-to-day coordination of activities between and among the Steering Group, Task Forces and activities within the GPA Work Plan, ensuring progress towards goals and streamlining efforts of key stakeholders and the implementation of the GPA activities. The Coordination Unit reports to the Steering Group and provides organisational and administrative support to facilitate the GPA. Each GPA Coordination Unit member delivers on activities outlined in the GPA Work Plan in the 5 thematic working areas (Coordination, Policy, Finance, Technical Expertise, and Data), as well as supports administering Task Forces with partners by convening stakeholders, setting collective objectives and outputs, and delivering on those outputs.

Organisations and partners curious to learn more about the GPA Steering Group and Coordination Unit are invited to contact [energy@unitar.org](mailto:energy@unitar.org).



## Annex 3: Humanitarian Energy Exchange Network (HEEN) Terms of Reference (TOR)

*Formerly SAFE Humanitarian Working Group*

### **Background**

Access to clean, sustainable, reliable, and affordable energy is an important enabler for sustainable development for all. However, the majority of displacement-affected communities (i.e., refugees, internally displaced people, returnees, stateless people and asylum-seekers) have limited access to energy for household, productive and community uses. Achieving large-scale and sustainable impact requires coordinated action from stakeholders at all levels.

The Humanitarian Energy Exchange Network (HEEN) serves as the central platform for coordination and collaboration between humanitarian and development agencies working to improve sustainable energy access for displacement-affected communities at country and regional levels. The HEEN facilitates inter-agency collaboration in areas such as joint assessments, evaluations, knowledge sharing, programme design, and project implementation.

The HEEN builds on the work of the Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE) Working Group, with a focus on practical, operational-level energy programming in displacement contexts where no formal coordination mechanism exists. In 2020, the Global Platform for Action on Sustainable Energy in Displacement Settings (GPA) and SAFE Working Group agreed to join forces to strengthen the link between global and field-level efforts and improving knowledge and expertise sharing among practitioners.

The HEEN was formally launched on 28 April 2021 during the [GPA briefing session on humanitarian energy at Humanitarian Networks and Partnership Weeks](#). The HEEN meets monthly, enabling practitioners to exchange knowledge, share lessons learned, identify support needs, and explore opportunities for collaboration to develop sustainable energy programmes in displacement settings.

### **Membership**

Membership in the HEEN is open to all relevant stakeholders contributing to energy access for displacement-affected communities. Representatives are typically from the headquarters of their respective organisations, though this is not a requirement. Organisations interested in joining can apply via the [online form](#), which is reviewed by the current HEEN chairs. New members are admitted following a simple majority approval vote by existing members.

### **Operations**

The HEEN holds an online meeting for all members every month. Depending on network priorities and the availability of speakers, these meetings are held as either:

- Coordination sessions focused on updates, planning and joint activities.
- Learning sessions featuring presentations, case studies, and technical discussions.

### **Objectives and Key Activities**

#### **1. Improve coordination and share knowledge**

- Exchange information during monthly calls and where possible, through an annual in-person strategic planning meeting.
- Maintain and update a 4Ws mapping (Who is doing What, Where, When) for energy initiatives in displacement settings.
- Keep the HEEN webpage up to date.

- Identify and document achievements, best practices, lessons learned, and effective mechanisms to address energy needs and challenges, and use this knowledge to inform planning and programming.
- Facilitate connections with private sector actors to strengthen public-private partnerships and enhance energy programming.

## **2. Build evidence through consistent monitoring, evaluation and learning**

- Document and share lessons learned from ongoing and past energy projects and programmes in displacement contexts.
- Support partners by providing common energy and humanitarian indicators for integration into programmes.

## **3. Provide technical support, tools, and guidance**

- Act as a technical resource for members on existing tools and knowledge
- Offer technical advice to field-level working groups and implementing organisations (e.g. standard TOR templates, partnership facilitation, and good practice approaches).
- Coordinate with the NORCAP Experts to strengthen programme delivery.
- Disseminate relevant guidance and tools to members and other practitioners.
- 

### ***Leadership and Contact***

The HEEN is chaired GPA Coordination Unit, which manages and coordinates all network activities. The HEEN chair is responsible for:

- Leading discussions, organising meetings, and preparing group documents (e.g., TORs, agendas, and meeting minutes).
- Manage roles, responsibilities, and deadlines for joint deliverables
- Facilitating information sharing among members.

For additional information regarding the HEEN, please contact Elif Gül Demir ([elif.demir@unitar.org](mailto:elif.demir@unitar.org)).

*Note: The HEEN TOR is a living document and may be updated to meet the current needs of all members, subject to agreement by the network. Unless members request specific amendments, the TOR will be reviewed annually.*



## Annex 4: Advisory and Technical Support Level: Join a GPA Task Force

A **GPA Task force** is a task-oriented, output focused and time-bound structure contributing to the objectives of the GPA and recommendations in the [GPA Framework document](#). A Task Force can be initiated by the GPA Coordination Unit (CU) with support from the Steering Group members and Partners to address emerging needs in the sector. A task force is only created in the presence of clear demand from relevant partners, availability of dedicated capacity and resources. The GPA CU is responsible for leading the task force and development of the TOR, outlining the following components:

- Activity Title
- Proposing/Lead agency(ies)
- Summary (*rationale for activity, issue or gap the project aims to address, objectives, and which thematic area of the GPA the working group contributes to*)
- Proposed participants (*types of stakeholders desired and stakeholders who have already agreed to participate should the proposal be approved*)
- Duration and Key Milestones (*deliverables and timeline*)
- Resource requirements (*short overview of activity budget in financial, human resource, or in-kind service contributions, and how the resources will be met*)
- Process (*section detailing the main project deliverables and process for delivery, including when input from the GPA leadership or partners are requested, as well as any previous consultation with other agencies, related institutions or sector initiatives*)
- Outputs (*list of deliverables and indication of GPA logo use*)

Throughout the operational lifetime of the Task Force, a leading focal point reports on updates to the GPA Steering Group and Coordination Unit on a needs-basis via the monthly GPA Steering Group meetings, and relevant outreach material through GPA communications channels.