

LCG SUBGROUP GUIDELINES

1. It is up to each subgroup to decide its **purpose and the main focus of its work**. These should normally respect in broad terms current guidance from the LCG on the overall purpose of aid coordination.
2. Subgroups should attempt to **include as many donors as possible** who are interested in a sector/thematic area, and should not serve as coordinating groups for the planning and implementation of multi-donor projects in which other (potential) members are not involved.
3. The formation, abolition, merging and clustering of subgroups should be an **unregulated demand-driven process** dependent on the interests of particular donors at a given time. However liaison with other subgroups will help optimal decisions to be made. Subgroup chairs and the LCG should review the overall situation once a year.
4. Every subgroup should have brief written **terms of reference**, covering the purpose of the subgroup, and its basic ways of working (covering most of the issues below). These should be agreed by the subgroup and reviewed at least every two years. The chair should ensure each new member has received a copy. ToRs should be shared with other subgroup chairs, relevant GoB and other non-donor contacts as requested.
5. It is best practice to produce a flexible/rolling **workplan** which sets out particular issues within the scope of the ToRs which the subgroup plans to work on over the coming months/year.
6. **A list of members** including email addresses should be kept updated and made available to all members on request (or ideally through attachment to minutes). When a member leaves their job they should inform the chair of the name of their replacement. Passive membership of subgroups (whereby a member reads the minutes but rarely attends) should not be discouraged, as for donors with an interest in many subgroups but staffing constraints it is better than nothing.
7. The average **frequency of meetings** should be agreed and periodically reviewed. It is best practice to set a provisional date for the next meeting at the end of each meeting, although ad hoc and emergency meetings may also sometimes be necessary.
8. In any case, except where there is exceptional urgency, **notification of meetings** giving some idea of the agenda should be sent at least ten days in advance (this is essential for overloaded donors to decide whether or not to attend). If several (three or more) members want a meeting the chair should call one whether or not they think it is needed.
9. Every subgroup should agree how it will **make decisions** - what constitutes a quorum for making decisions, when consensus is needed, when voting (simple majority or larger) is appropriate, and what the subgroup can do without the consensus of all members.
10. **Minutes** of subgroup meetings should be circulated to all members of the subgroup whether they attend or not. They should usually be brief and focused on decisions and actions. It is not necessary to circulate minutes to all LCG members (heads of mission/agency) - where a member's head of mission/agency or other colleagues wants to see minutes they can be circulated within an agency, and where a donor cannot attend meetings but has an interest in a subgroup the head of mission/agency should nominate themselves as a (passive) member. Minutes should be circulated to the chair of any other subgroup who requests them.

11. Every subgroup should have a **chair**. The subgroup's terms of reference should cover what arrangements apply when the chair is not present (co-chair, deputy/alternate chair), how long the chair's period of office is, and how a new chair will be chosen. Any changes in the chair should be sent to the World Bank (Syed Nizamuddin - snizamuddin@worldbank.org), which maintains a list of all subgroup chairs.
12. Chairs should make a **clear distinction between their roles** as representatives of their own donor agency and their role as chair of a subgroup of several donors. This applies both in chairing the subgroup (where the chair should not push the agenda of their own agency without the agreement of other members), and in speaking to other stakeholders on behalf of the subgroup, which should be done with caution where the chair does not have a clear mandate.
13. It is best practice for subgroups to maintain **liaison with other subgroups** with similar interests to ensure there is no duplication of work or important areas where coordination is needed but not happening, and that subgroups can look for synergies with related work being done by others. Mechanisms for doing this include cross-representation at subgroup meetings, sharing of minutes, and meetings of subgroup chairs (which will be called by the chair of the LCG at least annually, usually 3 months before the BDF).
14. **Information sharing** by email rather than through meetings is usually more effective and best practice, and does not necessarily have to come via the chair.
15. Subgroups should periodically review which **non-LCG representatives** they invite to their meetings or have contacts with. Gradual movement towards **greater GoB involvement** (and in some cases eventually ownership) is likely to be a goal for most subgroups. Other stakeholders to consider include private sector representatives, Bangladeshi NGOs, international NGOs (who sometimes are quasi-donors), Bangladeshi academics/sector experts, and other civil society representatives.
16. Subgroups should clearly establish what **level of confidentiality** different aspects of their discussions operate under. Where discussions are particularly sensitive, taking minutes may not be appropriate. Unless explicitly agreed otherwise, members should not discuss subgroup proceedings or share minutes with the media or people who may pass confidential information to the media.
17. Subgroups should consider **asking the LCG to help** with difficult problems they cannot solve themselves, which might include blockages with GoB, or in extreme cases disputes within the subgroup. They should also recommend particularly important issues of wider interest arising from their work for consideration for the main LCG agenda. Such requests can be addressed to the LCG chair/executive committee, although not all may be taken up for discussion at the LCG, depending on other LCG agenda priorities.
18. The chair does not have to do all the **administration of the subgroup** alone - sharing of work with other members is an effective way of making chairing subgroups seem like a less burdensome task. But the chair should ensure that all the basic administrative tasks are being done.