

Final evaluation report

External Prospective Review of the Geneva Technical Hub

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1 Abbreviations and acronyms

CHF	Swiss Franc
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DK	Denmark
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DRS	Division of Resilience and Solutions
Eawag	Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology
EHA	Engineering for Humanitarian Action
EPFL	Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne
ETHZ	Federal Institute of Technology Zurich
F2F	Face to Face
GAD	Gender, Age and Diversity
GHG	Green House Gas
GTH	Geneva Technical Hub
HQ	Head Quarter
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDA	International Development Association
IDP	Internally displaced people
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
KFPE	Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
POC	Person of Concern
RB	Regional Bureau
RQ	Research Question
RT	Review Team
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SHA	Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit
TSS	Technical Support Section
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNOSAT	United Nations Satellite Centre
USD	American Dollar
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WB	World Bank
Y1 / Y2	Year 1 / Year 2

2 Executive summary

UNHCR has developed its strategic framework set out in *Strategic Framework for Climate Change* and the *Operational Strategy for Climate Resilience and Environmental Sustainability 2022 – 2025*.

In this context of SDC's support to the Global Compact on Refugees and with the aim of also supporting UNHCR's climate action, SDC and UNHCR set up the Geneva Technical Hub (GTH) in April 2021. GTH aims to improve the life of People of Concern (POCs)¹ to UNHCR by assisting field operations to strengthen comprehensive responses and to test and roll out innovative solutions in collaboration with Swiss academia in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH), Shelter & Settlement, Energy & Environment and Protection.

Commissioned by SDC in cooperation with UNHCR, PEMconsult has carried out the external prospective review of GTH covering mid-2021 – mid-2023 which had three main objectives:

- Learn from the set up and first implementation experiences of the GTH to determine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, risks and lessons learnt of the initiative,
- Determine, in case the current experience is considered valid and promising, how it can further develop in order to become more efficient and effective, broaden/diversify the expertise mobilised, foster impactful research for development, diversify its financing base and benefit other interested Geneva based international humanitarian institutions,
- Propose an action plan and a road map for the second phase of the GTH starting in April 2024, including an outreach strategy for a renewed GTH-pledge at the second Global Refugee Forum mid December 2023. The recommendations and prospects for the future should be applicable from April 2024 to March 2027.

The review was carried out from May – September 2023. Applying the OECD DAC criteria, the review team formulated the review questions (RQ) based on the 31 questions in the ToR and added areas of enquiry. (See Annex 6). The review team (RT) has carried out extensive document review (See Annex 3) and carried out 52 interviews mostly online with a wide range of stakeholders of which 38 were men and 14 women. Initially findings, conclusions and recommendations were discussed and validated at a workshop in Bern on 30 August with participation of stakeholders who had been involved in implementing GTH (See Annex 5). In this report, the RT presents 11 conclusions and eight recommendations. A workshop was also held on 1 September at UNHCR HQ in Geneva where possible future partners and donors were invited and discussed the options for expanding the GTH into a GTH 2.0. There was interest in going along such path especially from organisations like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). The roadmap and outreach strategy in Annexes 1 and 2 are based on the recommendations and indicate the path to expanding to GTH 2.0.

The RT has concluded that:

¹ For UNHCR, the terms affected people and affected populations, common in inter-agency settings, generally refer to persons of concern to UNHCR, in line with the Organization's mandate for refugees, asylum-seekers, refugee returnees, stateless people, and the internally displaced.

1. The vision of GTH is relevant and important for UNHCR and possible future partners which need technical assistance to meet the challenges of climate change and environmental degradation while adequately provide protection to a high number of refugees.
2. A Theory of Change (ToC) was not developed in the design stage which could have clarified the vital linkage between the inputs, outputs and outcomes and the achievement of the overall objective. In absence of the ToC, it appeared realistic and adequate for GTH to revise the log frame, but this led to a substantial weakness in the implementation strategy as the focus changed from application of technical solutions to dissemination and visibility.
3. There were different expectations to GTH and UNHCR, SDC, GTH experts and research institutions have different ways of working. The different institutional cultures and expectations have to some extent delayed the implementation of activities and the utilisation of the strengths of different skill sets. Over the first two years expectations and ways of working have been clarified and harmonized which contributes to laying the foundation for a better use of the strengths of GTH.
4. Supply of technical solutions has been a strong driving force in in the design of GTH. Practice has confirmed that there is a demand in UNHCR for context specific technical services in the focus areas which are aligned with the Global Compact on Refugees.
5. GTH has not been designed based on consultations with people of concern. In the implementation people of concern in refugee camps have been involved to a limited extent and on a case-by-case basis and satisfaction has not been monitored.
6. GTH has been contributing to solving technical problems in a case-by-case manner which potentially can lead to good results in an environmentally sustainable and climate resilient manner in the refugee camps but does not take a strategic view providing integrated and comprehensive responses to systemic problems of bringing shelter, water, sanitation, and energy to a high number of refugees.
7. Despite thorough knowledge among experts and researchers and comprehensive guidance, age, gender and diversity (GAD) is not fully and systematically integrated into the work of GTH. That is, there is not a systematic considered if and when GAD is relevant and what could be done.
8. The two first years have been concentrated on setting up GTH and delivering on the different outcomes. GTH has not entered into dialogue with like-minded partners on strategic issues regarding the application of the humanitarian – development nexus or to similar projects and initiatives to explore synergies.
9. The main results of the first phase of GTH will be a series of knowledge products on technical solutions and approaches on WASH, shelter & settlement and energy & environment. GTH has yet to develop a knowledge management strategy.
10. High quality and often low-cost technical solutions have been developed and delivered. There are no procedures either in GTH or UNHCR for following up or seeking financing. This limits the likelihood of uptake of the recommendations in the refugee camps. This impacts negatively on the efficiency of SDCs support as it reduces the likelihood of impact and thereby, sustainability.
11. Based on the clear demand, the existence of the strategic framework on environmental sustainability and climate resilience, the technical expertise globally and regionally and the presence of like-minded institutions working in the humanitarian area, there is scope for looking into developing an expanded GTH with a wider mandate and more partners

3 Introduction

The United Nations developed the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) in 2018.² It aims at *operationalizing the principle of burden- and responsibility-sharing, to mobilize the international community as a whole, and to galvanize action for an improved response to refugee situations*.³ The compact unfolds the humanitarian – development nexus, the alignment with the Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development and the imperative of addressing both humanitarian needs and development in areas where communities are hosting refugees. It states that host countries may seek international support to address challenges with accommodation and environmental impacts of a large number of refugees.⁴

It states that, the international support should *contribute resources and expertise to strengthen infrastructure, facilitating access to appropriate accommodation for refugees and host communities and to promote integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems in both urban and rural areas*.⁵ The capacity building support in the areas accommodation, water, sanitation and hygiene, infrastructure and environment and energy should close the technology gap and scale-up the application of smart, affordable and appropriate technologies.⁶ A recent study on 20 refugee camps in Africa found that 17 were highly exposed to climate change and extreme weather conditions especially high temperatures and drought and the *camps are often located at the margins both politically and geographically, on low-value land unsuitable for large-scale self-reliance activities, isolated from urban areas and the locus of a country's economy*.⁷

It's in the context of the GCR, that UNHCR has elaborated its *Strategic Framework for Climate Change* and the *Operational Strategy for Climate Resilience and Environmental Sustainability 2022 – 2025*.

SDC's support to the Global Compact on Refugees and with the aim of also supporting UNHCR's climate action, SDC and UNHCR set up the Geneva Technical Hub (GTH) in April 2021. GTH aims to improve the life of People of Concern (POCs)⁸ by assisting UNHCR field operations to strengthen comprehensive responses and to test and roll out innovative solutions in collaboration with Swiss academia in the areas of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH), Shelter & Settlement, Energy & Environment and Protection.⁹

Two years into implementation SDC has, in coordination with UNHCR, commissioned a prospective review covering mid-2021 – mid-2023 which has three main objectives:

- Learn from the set up and first implementation experiences of the GTH to determine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, risks and lessons learnt of the initiative,
 - Determine, in case the current experience is considered valid and promising, how it can further develop in order to become more efficient and effective, broaden/diversify the expertise mobilised, foster impactful research for development, diversify its financing base and benefit other interested Geneva based international humanitarian institutions,
- Propose an action plan and a road map for the second phase of the GTH starting in April 2024, including an outreach strategy for a renewed GTH-pledge at the second Global Refugee Forum mid December 2023. The recommendations and prospects for the future should be applicable from April 2024 to March 2027.

² Based on the Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2018 on the Office of the UNHCR

³ Global Compact on Refugees, United Nations, New York, 2018

⁴ Ibid, paragraph 78

⁵ Ibid, paragraph 78

⁶ Ibid, paragraph 79

⁷ Refugee settlements are highly exposed to extreme weather conditions, PNAS 6 June 2023

⁸ For UNHCR, the terms affected people and affected populations, common in inter-agency settings, generally refer to persons of concern to UNHCR, in line with the Organization's mandate for refugees, asylum-seekers, refugee returnees, stateless people, and the internally displaced.

⁹ Agreement FDFA – UNHCR Geneva Technical Hub (GTH) 2021-2022, 7F-10684.01, 81069705

4 Review methodology

The **inception report** was approved by SDC on 19 June after having gone through consultation with both UNHCR and SDC. The review team (RT) had designed a methodology which focused on utility, participation and transparency considering age, gender and diversity as well as the humanitarian principles and the localization agenda.

The inception report includes the theory of change reconstructed by the RT based on the GTH revised log frame (See Annex 7). Applying the OECD DAC criteria, The RT also revised the review questions (RQ) based on the 31 questions in the ToR and added areas of enquiry. These RQs are formulated with the view to analyzing the functioning, results, and signs of impact of GTH and with a strong focus on learning, lessons and recommendations. RQ1 Strategy corresponds to the DAC criteria Relevance and Coherence. RQ2 Institutional set up and partners corresponds to Effectiveness (Approach), RQ3 Cooperation and added value to Efficiency and RQ4 Results corresponds to Effectiveness (Implementation and scale) and impact while RQ5 Transfer of knowledge and learning and RQ6 Recommendations corresponds to Sustainability in a forward-looking sense.

During the data collection phase from the end of June to mid-September, the RT carried out semi-structured interviews online with 50 key informants and 2 interviews F2F in total 52. Of these 38 were men and 14 women¹⁰.

The interviews were complemented by thorough document review, a focus group discussion with the experts, UNHCR staff and researcher working in the energy & environment area of which three were women and six men. The RT also participated in the Technical Group meeting on 6 June 2023. One limitation which was difficult to overcome was the lack of access to the end beneficiaries, namely the people of concern which have been indirectly involved in GTH.

Based on the data analysis, the RT formulated preliminary findings, lessons, conclusions and recommendations which were presented to SDC and UNHCR for commenting. Two **presentations with the preliminary findings, lessons¹¹, conclusions and recommendations** were prepared. The validation of these took place at **capitalization workshops** at SDC HQ in Bern on 30 August with 25 participants which had all been involved in the implementation of GTH. At the workshop on 1 September at UNHCR HQ in Geneva 14 people representing like-minded organisations, donors, SDC and UNHCR participated in the discussion of the prospects of expanding the GTH with more donors and partners in the second phase from 2024 – 2027. Feedback from the participants has been used to refine the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

The workshop in Geneva was the first step in the process of expanding GTH. The RT has carried out an **action plan and roadmap** for the second phase and an **outreach strategy** for the period from October to the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) from 13 - 15 December which describes the milestones to reach a pledge for the GRF and to whom to reach out to get the right partners on board for GTH 2.0.

The RT has filled in the obligatory **OECD assessment grid** (See Annex 8). It should be noted that this grid should normally be used for evaluations and that since this is a review, there has been limited focus on impact and not on sustainability. The **draft report** was submitted on 20 September for review by SDC and UNHCR and the **final report** on 30 September after integrating comments from SDC and UNHCR.

¹⁰ The RT has little influence on the gender balance since the interviewees represented the people with most knowledge and involvement in GTH.

¹¹ The area of inquiry on supporting and hindering factors for management and results which can be found in the inception report have been incorporated into the lessons. Area of enquiry no 4.4 *functioning* has been integrated into RQ2 on institutional set up and partners.

5 Findings

5.1 RQ1 Strategy

RQ 1: Strategy - To what extent is the technical approach of GTH contributing to the Objectives of the Global Compact for Refugees and UNHCR's strategic framework on climate resilience and environmental sustainability?	1.1 Strategy - To what extent does GTH contribute to the Global Compact on Refugees in addressing the accommodation and environmental impacts of a large number of refugees?
	1.2 Coherence - Is GTH aligned with the key strategic framework of Switzerland and UNHCR? (<i>Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy 2021-2024, with the SHA operational concept 2030, with the Swiss Research Concept for the Policy Sector on Development and Cooperation 2021-2024 and with respect to the KFPE North-South research principles, UNHCR Operational Strategy for climate resilience and environmental sustainability 2022 - 2025</i>)?
	1.3 Vision - To what extent does GTH support meet expectations of UNHCR staff requesting support?

5.1.1 GTH is in line with the vision of the Global Compact on Refugees and the UNHCR operational strategy on climate resilience and environmental sustainability 2021 – 2025

GTH is highly aligned with and relevant for the Global Compact on Refugees and the UNHCR operational strategy on climate resilience and environmental sustainability 2021 – 2025. GTH is identifying and developing technical solutions for improving basic services on WASH, energy & environment and shelter & settlement at the operational level in refugee camps. The areas of technical support are in line with the priority areas in the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR) and UNHCR's operational strategy on climate resilience and environmental sustainability. During the first two years GTH has been established. Establishing structures and procedures and identifying needs and solutions partly explains that GTH's contribution to the GCR has been limited. Contributing factors are also that a case-by-case approach has been applied so far and focus has been on dissemination of knowledge rather than uptake of technical solutions and recommendations. The concrete contribution to the Global Compact on Refugee has been a set of proposals for technical solutions and capacity building. GTH has a clear intention of applying a value chain logic from conception to implementation of technical solutions¹² and this approach is being increasingly pursued. It is too early to quantify the number of beneficiaries among refugees in the camps. GTH has also not yet begun to monitor the level of satisfaction among POC.

5.1.2 GTH's concept is well aligned with Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy 2021-2024 and the recently revised Swiss Humanitarian Aid (SHA) operational concept but not fully with Swiss research principles. (1.2)

The GTH's concept is well in line with Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy 2021-2024, and the recently revised SHA operational concept. The GTH is conceived to contribute to the Swiss strategy's objective "saving lives, ensuring quality basic services and reducing the causes of forced displacement and irregular migration" especially in relation to providing quality basic services. GTH aligns well with priority area 2) Ensuring access to water, sanitation and hygiene and 4) Disaster risk reduction (DRR) and sustainable reconstruction, including measures to reduce the environmental footprint of humanitarian aid of the SHA operational concept 2030. Energy is not particularly mentioned in this concept but falls under the environment area as use of energy has a high environmental impact in the areas surrounding refugee camps because of the use of biomass as cooking fuel.

¹² Steering Group decision

In relation to research alignment could be better with the Swiss Research Concept for the Policy Sector on Development and Cooperation 2021-2024 and the KFPE North-South research principles. The KFPE principles should promote *Transboundary and intercultural research in partnership is a continuous process of sound knowledge generation, building mutual trust, mutual learning and shared ownership*. GTH has defined the area and scope of the research based on requests from UNHCR field staff. This has limited the research institutions in following the 11 principles such as setting the agenda together, interact with stakeholders and account to beneficiaries.¹³

5.1.3 The vision of GTH has broad support and GTH technical solutions to a wide extent meet expectation of UNHCR operational staff (1.3)

There is very broad support among the stakeholders to the overall vision of the GTH to assist UNHCR in the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees especially with technical support.

Several interviewees find though that the vision could be clearer defined in relation to the operationalization of the humanitarian – development nexus. It could also be clearer if GTH should address technical problems in specific refugee camps or the wider issue of the environmental footprint of refugee settlements. UNHCR staff at operational level expressed their interest in innovative solutions addressing challenges on climate change, environmental sustainability and cost efficiency.

The agreement between SDC and UNHCR on GTH refers to the aim of GTH as “*In collaboration with academia, offering a technical hub to test and roll out innovative solutions for complex and emerging problems in the countries of UNHCR operations.*”¹⁴ The reference to *complex technical problems* has been widely questioned because it is difficult to define and create confusion about the kind of problems to be addressed. Often the technical problems presented have been relatively simple while the complexity lies in the social, cultural, and political context both at UNHCR level and at the level of the country.

5.2 RQ 2: Institutional set up and partners

RQ 2: Set up and management - To what extent does the institutional set-up, partners and modalities support the objectives of GTH?	2.1 Management - To what extent has the management of GTH and collaboration with experts and academia worked well?
	2.2 Modalities - To what extent are the support modalities and tools of GTH suitable and complementary to deliver the expected / suitable solutions?
	2.3 Monitoring - Has monitoring of progress including the level of satisfaction been carried out and reported regularly?
	2.4 Gender, age and diversity - In what way has GAD been mainstreamed into the support of GTH?

5.2.1 Considerable progress has been made in two years in analyzing the technical problems, delivering solutions at the refugee camp level and give guidance and capacity building to UNHCR staff and local partners. The institutional set up with human resource restraints in UNHCR and widely different institutional cultures of the partners have made in challenging to reach the objectives of GTH (2.1)

Since its launch in June 2021, GTH has made considerable progress in analyzing the technical problems and delivering solutions at the refugee camp level and give guidance and capacity building to UNHCR staff and local partners. Good intentions and support to the vision of GTH from all partners (UNHCR

¹³ A Guide for Transboundary Research Partnerships 11 Principles, Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships With Developing Countries (KFPE), 2018

¹⁴ Agreement FDFA – UNHCR Geneva Technical Hub (GTH) 2021-2022, 7F-10684.01, 81069705

TSS, GTH expert, academic institutions) have been strong driving forces in establishing and operationalizing GTH.

GTH is established in the Technical Support Section (TSS) in 2020 under UNHCR's Division for resilience and solutions (DRS). DRS was established in 2018 in the framework of UNHCR's effort to contribute to the 2030 Agenda and development-humanitarian nexus. UNHCR has about 22000 employees of which 90% are placed in UNHCR's 7 regional bureaux (RB) and 86 country offices (CO) covering 130 countries worldwide.

The TSS is responsible for the day-to-day management centered around reception, analysis, and follow-up of requests from UNHCR's RBs and COs. UNHCR staff in TSS allocated to the management of GTH include a head of unit and three project managers for energy & environment, WASH and shelter & settlement respectively. They are all part-time dedicated to GTH as they have other tasks in UNHCR besides GTH. A Swiss Junior Professional Officer is working in the energy & environment team and has also taken care of coordination and secretarial tasks of GTH.

A Steering Group (SG) with representation from UNHCR and SDC has been set up with responsibility for providing strategic leadership and governance oversight. The research institutions are not represented in the SG. During the first two years, four SG meetings have been held which is in accordance with what was planned.

A Technical Group (TG) was also set up to ensure quality insurance and guide the decisions of the SG from a technical perspective. The members in this group are SDC, UNHCR, GTH experts and research institutions. As planned, the TG has had six meetings¹⁵.

The GTH expertise input to respond to the technical requests from the field are:

- Five man-years divided on nine experts from the SHA roster¹⁶. The input is pre-defined through fixed percentages per expert. The distribution and changes from Y1 to Y2 can be seen in table 1 which shows that inputs from the energy & environment and from the shelter & settlement were reduced from Y1 to Y2, although shelter & settlement is still highest.
- Research for innovative solutions from the Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL), Federal Institute of Technology Zürich (ETH Zürich) and Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology (Eawag). These three academic institutions have been pre-selected by SDC among Swiss federal research institutions.

Through this input GTH delivered **field support, operational guidance** and **capacity building** to UNHCR staff and partners.

Based on the interviews with UNHCR HQ staff, GTH experts and researchers, it is the impression of the RT that the day-to-day management has been challenging but is improving. In the view of the RT team the challenges are partly rooted in the different institutional cultures, practices and expectations of the involved parties. While UNHCR is a huge international organization whose mandate on refugee protection requires it to act fast and within short notice, the research institutions are by nature institutions which need longer time for analysis and reflection. The GTH experts are expected to be able to work independently in refugee camps but at the same time they are integrated into UNHCR which is a complex organization with a mandate that is highly politically sensitive. Experience has shown that researchers and experts with extensive previous experience in the humanitarian area and specifically with UNHCR have been most at ease and capable of interacting and creating results without friction.

¹⁵ 01 Nov-2021, 17 Jan-2022, 08 Nov-22, 02 Feb-2023, 24 May 2023, 06 Jun-2023

¹⁶ The SHA is made up of some 550 specialists who, in addition to their own professional activities, are on standby for deployment in a wide range of humanitarian fields of action. SHA missions can be short, medium or long-term assignments. As its operational arm, the SHA is integrated into the SDC, also to contribute to the implementation of SDC programmes, particularly in fragile contexts. Source: *Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit operational concept 2030 Humanitarian Aid September 2022*

Another factor has been the availability of UNHCR staff in GTH. A high number of interviewees observe that the GTH management is overloaded and sometimes difficult to get hold of.

The RT finds that the time set aside for meeting at an overall level is adequate but based on inputs from interviewees there is a need for balancing the meetings in favor of discussing technical issues and exchange experience rather than meetings on accountability. The more technically oriented meetings should include integrated meetings where there is participation from all technical areas a) shelter / settlement, b) WASH and waste management and c) energy and environment. This would also be more in line with the idea of GTH being a hub.

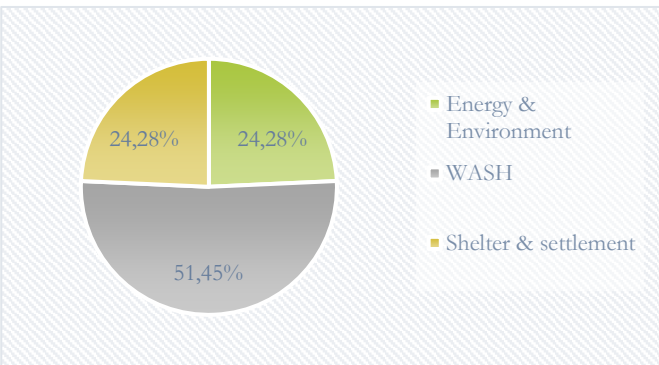
GTH experts but also researchers have at time felt that they were micromanaged and not giving sufficient space and confidence to carry out their tasks. For the researcher at EPFL this is manifested by very short, six-month contracts which do not in their experience give sufficient time to develop innovative solutions. GTH experts have experienced close oversight in e.g., preparation of joint meetings, which has been interpreted as lack of trust. GTH management views these approaches as necessary for accountability and minimizing the risk of not delivering the expected outputs.

By and large the management has been improving over time although the allocation of human resources to GTH management remains a challenge.

SG meetings seem to have worked well and have been used for discussion and decision-making on issues such as the application of the integrated value chain logic and on visibility of GTH. There have been many changes in the representation of SDC which to some extent has affected the engagement. The Technical Group has served a good purpose on sharing information about progress and the status of different initiatives, but much time has been dedicated to presentation of field missions at the expense of discussions about how to work in a more integrated way and apply the value chain logic to a greater extent. The SG and the TG have not been used as fora for discussion with representatives from like-minded organizations and initiatives i.e., Tech4Dev, Engineering for Humanitarian Action (EHA) etc. or other strategic partners. As mentioned below, this is linked to the focus on setting up GTH rather than reaching out to like-minded partners.

5.2.2 The requests from the UNHCR field offices have been increasing over the two years in all the technical focus areas. Supply of expertise has not always matched with the area where technical support has been requested (2.1)

Figure 1: Distribution of the 173 requests received during Y1 and Y2 (June 2021 – June 2023)



The work of GTH is demand-driven based on requests for assistance coming from UNHCR staff at the RBs and COs to solve technical complex problems at the operational level in the refugee camps. Considering the high number of offices and staff, the demand could potentially be very high. In the beginning knowledge about GTH had to be disseminated to spur the demand. Over the two years GTH has received 173 requests. Of these requests 89 were in the WASH area and the energy & environment and

shelter & settlement area received 42 requests each¹⁷. See figure 1 with the percentage distribution. 29 requests are still to be attended. 20 were assessed to need a mission to the field i.e., about 10%.

The requests are very diverse ranging from questions that can be replied almost immediately over technical problems in a refugee camp which can be solved through field missions to more overall challenges which require research on innovative and possibly scalable solutions. The volume of the demand must therefore be assessed both on the basis of the number of requests and their nature.

Table 1: SHA expert input to GTH

Area	Y1	Y2
Energy & environment	1,5	1,25
WASH	1,6	1,6
Shelter & settlement	2,4	2,15
TOTAL	5,5 years	5 years

As can be seen from table 1 there are significantly more resources allocated to shelter & settlement than to the two other areas. Each of the nine experts have been allocated a fixed percentage of their time to GTH work and they are remunerated based on this percentage. The review team has not found any justification or criteria for the percentage distribution. Based on the demand there has not been a workload in the shelter &

settlement area which has required 2,4 work years of input. After considerable internal discussion in GTH, the input was reduced to 2,15 years in Y2 which is still higher than for the other areas. This mismatch has been an ongoing topic of discussion during the lifetime of GTH to the point where it is mentioned as one of only two topics under the *Challenges and lessons learnt* in UNHCR annual reports¹⁸. The RT team has not been able to get an explanation of why the demand in the area of shelter & settlement is perceived to be too low or why the demand is perceived to be too low. This topic has been allowed to consume a lot of time and energy. The RT finds that it indicates low adaptive management capacity of GTH, both in SDC and in UNHCR.

In the areas of energy & environment and WASH there has been a good match between demand and supply.

5.2.3 A case-by-case and sector approach to providing technical proposals has been prevalent while GTH is intentionally but slowly moving the direction of a more integrated value chain logic approach which have had promising results. (2.1)

The GTH sector managers analyze the requests received on a case-by-case basis deciding if the requests are relevant and how and by whom they should be responded. The responses can be in the form of missions but also comments, drawings and recommendations to documents, longer online support, rapid assessments, training and production of guidelines or new tools. 15 requests have been responded to with the involvement of academic institutions. To a large extent it makes good sense to respond to the requests case-by-case because they are quite varied, and the responses need to be fitted to the specific situation. Moreover, while GTH has been under establishment, it has been a learning process to know the nature and quantity of requests to set up a system for their responses and identify systemic problems. This, however, has so far mostly led to responses which can only be applied in one specific situation and not in a wider context. In a few cases, requests have led to multi-sector field missions which have been able to look at the problems in a more integrated manner from different perspectives. A joint mission was undertaken by two WASH experts in Bangladesh which led to integrated solutions. Mauritania requested support for both environment and settlement planning topics, and also trainings have been

¹⁷ GTH reporting tool_final_2022 v3 January 2023

¹⁸ UNHCR Progress Report for the SDC on its financial contribution to the Geneva Technical Hub (1 June 2021 - 31 May 2022) and UNHCR Progress Report for the SDC on its financial contribution to the Geneva Technical Hub (1 June 2022 - 31 May 2023)

done in a more integrated way e.g., a cross-sectorial training on climate-related risk analysis was held in Geneva in February 2023 and was facilitated by several GTH experts, along with TSS staff, academia partners and the United Nations Satellite Centre. These have been more in line with the value chain logic and show that GTH is progressing in that direction.

5.2.4 After two years solutions from the cooperation with the research partners are emerging but the potential of having academic partners has not been explored fully. (2.1)

Technical solutions from academic research takes longer time to be developed. In a universe of 15 requests from the field which have led to academic research, there are also several products which have been developed. Some of them have been developed quite recently so the RT have had limited possibility to assess their dissemination and use. EPFL has developed an App on shelter and sustainability which already has been used to create 50 shelter designs. EPFL is also finalizing an App on calculating GHG emissions and a study on e-waste, while ETHZ is finalizing applied research analysis on flood risk. Eawag is finalizing a biogas feasibility assessment tool on which GTH is piggy backing. EPFL has also produced 4-page guideline on *Appropriate common open spaces* which has an introductory character and the longer and much more detailed guideline on *Efficient Circulation Networks* which facilitates communication and social interaction through its built environment and natural surroundings to be safe and inclusive and offer equal opportunities for all. These knowledge products can potentially be very useful in a variety of contexts.

The assessment of the collaboration with the research institution, however, is rather mixed because it has been a challenge to find common ground between the longer-term, academic vision of the researcher and the short-term focus of UNHCR to find solutions to technical problems. In some cases, shorter contracts were applied than the ones academia usually works with, interviewees have questioned the utility of such contracts in producing new and innovative technical responses to the requests. There have also been discussions on the approach to researching solutions e.g., in settlement where researcher have argued for a more overall analysis of settlement as living spaces in the light of the longevity of refugee camps while UNHCR has requested solutions to more immediate and practical issues. It has also been a discussion point whether researchers should participate in field missions. This is not envisaged in the GTH budget. The RT finds if such possibility should exist, it should first of all be based on the integrated value chain approach i.e., longer term projects which are systemic problem in a wider context where the possibility of working with South researchers have been assessed. Factors which have contributed positively to collaboration with research institutions are knowledge and understanding on the part of researcher of the humanitarian area and UNHCR, previous working relationships between GTH experts and researchers.

5.2.5 The reporting structure of GTH limits the possibility for an overall and strategic analysis of the progress and challenges of GTH (2.1)

The reports being produced by GTH are 1) mission report elaborated by GTH experts based on their visits to refugee camps, 2) yearly narrative reports to SDC from UNHCR that accounts for the financial contribution received and 3) yearly reports to SDC from the academic institutions on the financial contribution received. Overall status was also regularly provided in the form of powerpoint presentations shared with both TG and SG during regular meetings and captured in minutes. The academic institutions should also have produced six-months reports, but they have not been produced¹⁹. GTH does not produce annual reports covering the overall status and progress of GTH. The GTH narrative reporting only includes activities carried out by GTH with the funds UNHCR receives from SDC and the report is focused on the requests which led to field missions and not on analysis of progress in relation to the log frame.

¹⁹ The review team has only received the annual report from EPFL and not from ETH and Eawag.

This reporting structure is therefore fragmented, and it means that there is no one involved with GTH who gets the full picture of achievements and challenges. The basis for a more strategic analysis which could lead to integrated approaches which could overcome the challenges and move towards greater impact is limited.

5.2.6 The modalities of field support, operational guidance and capacity building are very suitable and appreciated and have in general been complimentary to UNHCR capacity. (2.2)

Over the two years, GTH has provided field support to refugee camps through 20 different missions of which a couple included more than one expert. African countries and Bangladesh have received support through field missions. Even if there were more missions in the first year, the travelling was hampered by COVID-19 restrictions. This modality has been very much appreciated by both RBs and COs and GTH experts. It has been the main modality to provide technical support to solve problems in the refugee camps. In many cases, GTH experts have followed up with operational guidance through online communication. There are examples of GTH missions which contribute directly to improvement of basic services, mainly in WASH sector. For instance, the sanitation mission to Nigeria, in September 2022 carried out by the GTH Sanitation Expert, addressed quality sanitation services and included outputs on faecal sludge management, sanitation infrastructure, feedback on existing solutions under a cost effective, sustainable and cheap solutions approach.

Table 2 Number and distribution of field mission 2021 - 2023²⁰

	Energy & Environment	WASH	Shelter & Settlement
No of field missions	5	11	4

Operational guidance has both been given through online support and guidance documents. Online guidance to the Bangladesh CO on HomerPro²¹ application was particularly appreciated. A few tools that provide more overall guidance on different topics have been published while most are being elaborated, reflecting that best practices and innovations have been identified and developed. Examples are the GTH case studies on *Operationalising the master plan approach in settlement planning*, *Improving the sustainability of shelters*, *Nigeria – Durable Housing Solution for IDPs* and *Identifying groundwater potential mapping, Uganda*. The last one is an example of how a methodology developed in a specific setting in Uganda can develop into a tool which is applicable in a wider context in Sub-Saharan African where geological settings are like Uganda. It should be noted that this is the culmination of several years of research on this context and topic²². The Apps developed by EPFL are other examples of operational guidance products.

5.2.7 Monitoring of progress in achieving the outputs and outcomes was carried out and analyzed by the Steering Group and Technical Group. More strategic monitoring and analysis was limited by the nature of the log frame and the GTH reporting structure. (2.3)

Monitoring is carried out according to the indicators, outputs, and outcomes in the log frame. Discussion of progress of GTH based on the monitoring is a fixed item on the agenda of the SG. The log frame has been revised and amended several times during implementation. A major revision at the end of 2021 resulted in reformulation of Outcome 2 and 4. In table 3 the formulation in the SDC credit proposal and in the present GTH log frame are compared. As can be seen the revision reduced the level of

²⁰ Based on the UNHCR narrative reports to SDC

²¹ Hybrid Optimization of Multiple Energy Resources software for cost effective and reliable hybrid microgrid and grid-connected systems that combine traditionally generated and renewable power, storage, and load management.

²² The methodology is available for replication by any hydrogeologist and is described in detail in Scherrer et al. (2021) in the Hydrogeology Journal (vol. 29, 2033-2051).

ambition as Outcome 2 became focused on identifying needs instead of developing tools and guidance which should be followed by UNHCR field operations. In Outcome 4 the focus changed to dissemination instead of application of technical solutions. The changes were made to get a log frame which was more realistic within the set time frame of three years. It is also a recognition that GTH was designed without an institutional mechanism in UNHCR to promote uptake of the recommendations and without tools and actions for mobilizing financing.

Table 3: Comparison of Outcomes 2 and 4

The GTH credit proposal	The present GTH log frame
<u>Outcome 2:</u> Technical tools and guidance are developed by the GTH and followed by relevant UNHCR's field operations.	<u>Outcome 2:</u> UNHCR operational needs for GTH's support are identified .
<u>Outcome 4:</u> Innovative and optimized context specific technical solutions to complex challenges are proposed by the GTH to and applied by UNHCR's field operations in the technical areas.	<u>Outcome 4:</u> GTH optimized technical solutions, also innovative when necessary and applicable (i.e. tool/guidance), are disseminated to UNHCR field operations and partners in the technical areas.

The recognition of the weakness in monitoring progress on uptake led to adding the 2.1.1b indicators % *of recommendations implemented* in January 2023. This indicator strengthens the focus on implementation and is in the view of the RT a step in the right direction of showing impact despite not having many cases presently.

The credit proposal²³ has a risk matrix but it has not been carried over to the agreement between UNHCR and SDC²⁴ and monitoring on the risks and mitigation measures listed in the credit proposal are not carried out.

The planned client satisfaction survey which should have been carried out 18 months after kicking off i.e., by the end of 2022 was not carried out. However, an indicator on satisfaction with capacity building was inserted in the log frame and participants in training event have begun to fill in this survey from 2023. Results from three events indicate a high level of satisfaction (90%).

5.2.8 Gender, age and diversity (GAD) have not been addressed in a systematic way in the work of GTH although comprehensive strategies and guidelines on GAD exist in both UNHCR and SDC. Only in a few cases is it clear that GAD have influenced the technical solutions proposed. (2.4)

SDC's toolkit on *Gender in practice – A toolkit for SDC and its partners* is from 2003. Ten years on SDC considers the progress made and why there is still such a long way ahead despite the clear evidence of the advantage of equality. “*There is still room for improvement, and the remaining challenges – also those of a structural nature – must be met by women and men together*”.²⁵ UNHCR has extensive updated guidance on age, gender and diversity on its website²⁶ backed by handbooks and guidelines which give detailed information and assistance on how to do. As such, the strategic and policy framework is fully in place.

UNHCR staff and GTH experts are fully aware of the need to address gender, age and diversity issues and find that these issues are clearly integrated in their work. There is a good gender balance among GTH experts with four women and five men. Interviewees from the research institutions find that the issue has not been brought up in relation to research requests. The RT has only found limited evidence of

²³ Credit Proposal Geneva Technical Hub (2021-2024). 7F- 10684.01

²⁴ Agreement FDFA – UNHCR Geneva Technical Hub (GTH) 2021-2022, 7F-10684.01, 81069705

²⁵ 10 years SDC Gender Policy, SDC 2013

²⁶ <https://www.unhcr.org/publications/unhcr-age-gender-and-diversity-policy>

such integration and how it has influenced the technical guidance and recommendations given by GTH experts.

Activities or considerations on GAD are not reported in the two narrative reports from UNHCR to SDC. The few reports received from the research institutions do also not include GAD. In the mission reports, GAD is not generally mainstreamed, meaning that it is not mentioned whether GAD was considered or not. GTH management has informed that an assessment was made which concluded that GAD is not relevant for hydrogeological assessments or solarization of facilities. The mission reports on these topics do not refer to this assessment.

However, gender is mentioned in several reports i.e., on environment and settlement. The mentioning is rather cursory without addressing how gender considerations have impacted on the proposed solution.²⁷ For examples in the analysis of different energy sources for cooking and different types of stoves, it is not considered whether these would be the preferred options for women.

One report on sanitation options in Nigeria considers the suitability for people with disabilities of different latrine types²⁸ while another also on sanitation options notes that open spaces constitute a risk for gender-based violence. It is specifically noted that people with disabilities should be included in follow up activities.²⁹

Implications of the solutions proposed for young people, for example in relation to job opportunities, are not addressed. The RT team has not found evidence that cultural, ethnic and gender diversity have been considered in the solutions proposed or that these issues are not relevant for the solutions proposed.

5.3 RQ3 Cooperation and added value

RQ3: Cooperation and added value - To what extent does GTH add value in the context of development of innovative solutions and exploring synergies with relevant partners and initiatives?	3.1 Added value - To what extent has GTH added value in itself and compared with other similar initiatives?
	3.2 Application of resources – To what extent have financial and human resources been applied efficiently?
	3.3 Cooperation - To what extent is GTH succeeding in creating synergies in its collaboration with other like-minded initiatives and with country/ local systems as well as SDC, UNHCR and other partners?

5.3.1 The GTH is adding value through the knowledge transfer and technical solutions from the GTH experts to UNHCR staff at operational level. Other initiatives are more strategic and potentially transformational (3.1.)

GTH constitutes a highly specialised multi-sectoral support team that enhances UNHCRs capacity. The technical support given on mission and online as well as the proposals for technical solutions are highly localised and mostly solutions which consider keeping costs low and adapt to local conditions e.g., the solution on selling LPG in portions in the Mbera refugee camp in Mauretania, making use of manure from an existing pig farm in Zimbabwe and applying interlocking bricks in Nigeria. In Mauretania the

²⁷Mission de support pour settlement planning, Tchad, Nadia Carlevaro & Emilie Schmid, 2022, Mission Report Environmental Field Support Luwani Refugee Settlement, Malawi, 2022, Manuel Krähenbühl, Mission Report Environmental Field Support, Mebeha Refugee Settlement, Zambia, 2022, Manuel Krähenbühl, Mission Report Environmental Field Support Tongogara Refugee Camp, Zimbabwe 2022 Manuel Krähenbühl

²⁸ Executive Summary – Sanitation Mission in Sudan (Khartoum, Kassala, Gedaref & White Nile) 2023 Philippe Reymond – Sanitation Expert Geneva Technical Hub – Division of Resilience and Solutions

²⁹ Draft Report – Sanitation Mission in Nigeria, (Ogoja and Ikyogen regions) Philippe Reymond – Sanitation Expert Geneva Technical Hub – Division of Resilience and Solutions

GTH expert was appreciated for adding value on knowledge transfer and exchange bringing in different views and knowledge on how things are done in other refugee camps.

In Bangladesh, the GTH expert gave online support to use of the Homer Pro software which gave the solutions for revising the budget allocation for a solar panel project. This permitted to carry out the procurement for a solar panel system within the budget to be installed on Bhasan Char Island Refugee camp. In the present set up, GTH is most valuable when applying an integrated multi sector approach to find cost efficient localized solutions.

As the technical support is highly connected to requests from the UNHCR RB and CO concerning problems are the operational level in refugee camps, the solutions proposed are very localised and in most cases the opportunity for upscaling is limited. There is one example of integration of GTH recommendations in Sudan's WASH strategy 2023 – 2025 which potentially could be transformational at the country level. The GTH has added value on knowledge transfer at the local and increasingly at the global level.

Integrated approach applied through joint mission to Bangladesh

The GTH hydrogeology expert and the GTH water systems expert conducted a joint mission to Bangladesh to evaluate the water systems serving 759,000 people in Ukhiya. The sustainability of the groundwater extraction and the performance of the solar pumping systems were assessed. A strategy based on a continuous cycle of improvement called "*Rapid diagnosis, deep dives, quick wins, repeat*" was proposed for the coming years. Low-cost solutions were identified to improve the service level, climate resilience using water and solar resources. (GTH Narrative Report Year 2.)

The **Engineering for Humanitarian Action (EHA)** initiative was launched in 2020 by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), ETH Zürich and EPFL to support humanitarian action. The EHA initiative aims to bridge the gap between emerging technologies and the pressing needs of vulnerable populations affected by conflicts. The EHA initiative develops, tests and scales innovations that help address the most pressing humanitarian challenges and creates educational programs for humanitarian workers. The initiative is steered by a Steering Committee (2 people from ICRC, from EPFL and from ETH) meeting twice a year. The topics are not defined by the steering committee but rather by exchanges between the ICRC and researchers. EHA organizes yearly calls (called HAC, Humanitarian Action Challenges) where researchers can propose research projects up to 2 years and CHF 300.000. They need to have a support letter from the ICRC specific to the project explaining why it is important for the ICRC.

GTH seems to have similar challenges as TECH4DEV³⁰ and ETH4D³¹ which are also supported by SDC which have been evaluated recently. Like GTH there are promising technical solutions and innovations but "There lacks a coherent sequence of funding, assistance, and networking to promising science-based innovations"³² Contrary to GTH which is well embedded in the social context of refugee camps, these two initiatives are somewhat lacking the social dimension even though there is strong involvement from Global South researchers. It is found that TECH4 DEV and ETH4D are "*singularly focused on the research and pay too little attention to the development challenges inherent in bringing*

innovation to society and implementing them at scale."³³ It should be noted that these initiatives have been two years underway like GTH and therefore might not have achieved maturity.

By contrary, EPFL researchers have in interviews highlighted the advantages of Engineering for Humanitarian Action partnership with ICRC because the researchers are included in deciding which topics should be researched, they are part of decision-making bodies which annually analyze and decide on the focus area. Strategic and more global challenges are addressed, and ICRC is perceived to be open to being challenged on conventional approaches and practices. Researchers are given more time to research, and they can go on field visits. The RT has not assessed to what extent this partnership brings

³⁰ EPFL Tech4Dev aims to implement innovative technological solutions that can scale and reach a growing number of beneficiaries in the global South. <https://www.epfl.ch/innovation/domains/tech4dev/>

³¹ ETH4D links researchers from engineering, the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities with civil society, NGOs, governments and industry to develop and scale innovations for the global population. <https://eth4d.ethz.ch/>

³² Evaluation Report for the External Evaluation of the Tech4Dev and ETH4D, Volume 1: Main Report Draft version, 7 July 2023, JaLogisch Consulting

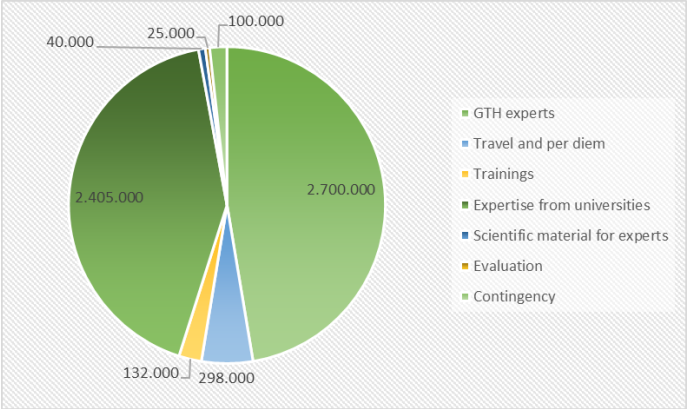
³³ Ibid p.38

added value in relation to its objectives, but it has a structure which is seen as advantageous for researchers.

5.3.2 The lack of mechanisms in GTH to promote and mobilize funding for uptake of recommendations constitutes a high risk of GTH being inefficient. (3.2)

SDCs financial support to GTH is CHF 5,7 million over three years from 2021 – 2024. As can be seen in the figure below this amount is budgeted almost entirely to technical assistance in relation to the modalities of field support, operational guidance, and capacity building i.e., CHF 5,4 million including travel & per diem. As such the support from SDC is for developing technical solutions and building technical capacity in UNHCR. The implementation of the technical solutions is envisaged to come from other sources.

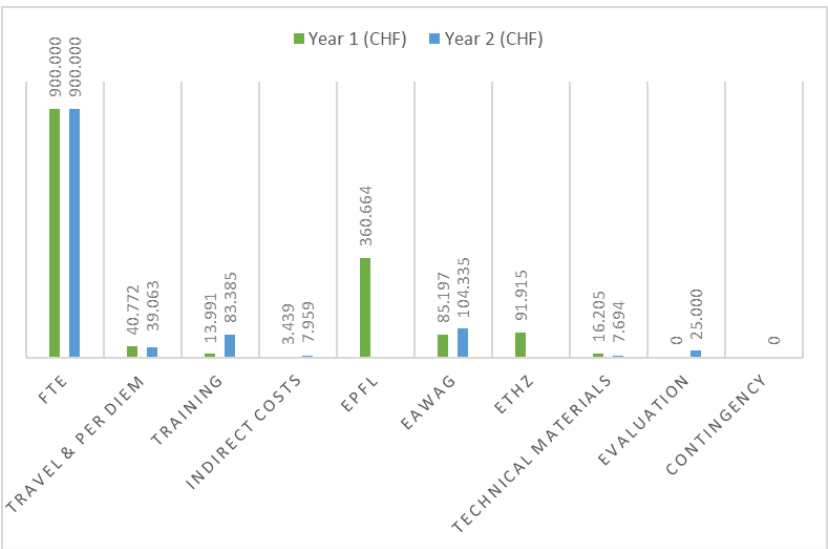
Figure 2 Planned distribution of the CHF 5.700.000 for GTH over three years



The total expenditure for Y1 1 June 2021 – 31 May 2022 was CHF 1.512.183. Apart from the technical assistance technical equipment such as the two solar meters for the camp in Kanye were purchase. The planned expenditure was CHF 1.9 million, so the expenditure rate was 80%. The expenditure is expected to be at similar level in Y2 but the financial reports from EPFL and ETHZ are not available yet.

As mentioned under RQ2 the cost for the GTH expert is fixed through establishment of percentage and the costs for the research institutes are set in the contracts. Therefore, little deviation from the budget is expected. The only budget lines which is not applied as expected are *travelling & per diem* and *trainings* where only about 50% of the allocated budget has been spent. This was due to various factors including assessment by UNHCR about which requests required travelling, not using GTH experts as gap fillers, preparation of training materials and logistic challenges i.e., related to COVID-19 in Y1. At times, country operations declined the support from GTH since they would not have the needed resources to implement the recommendations.

Figure 3 Expenditure in year 1 and year 2



between GTH expert input is too rigid to match the demand-driven requests which means that the cost of some expert is very high compared to their input.

The following factors lead to less efficient application of budget and human resources:

- The preselection by SDC of the research partners and GTH experts among the SHA experts limits the choice of expertise that can be offered. Expertise available locally is not explored.
- The fixed percentage distribution

- The high allocation of resources to shelter & settlement has sometimes given incentives to carry out activities which would otherwise not have been prioritised.

However, most importantly the SDC's financial investment has a high risk to be limited to increased capacity of a couple of hundred of UNHCRs 22000 employees who deal with technical issues and a set of innovative technical solutions which will most likely not be implemented since UNHCR as the leading agency has not put in place mechanisms to follow up on application of the technical solutions in the refugee camps including mobilisation of funding. While the achievements of GTH so far are positive and going in the right direction, they are still far from the vision.

5.3.3 Within the first two years of its establishment, GTH has to a limited extent reached out to like-minded organizations to coordinate and explore synergies (3.3)

GTH has to a large extent been focused internally on putting the hub on track and making it function well. Although GTH has reached out to a couple of organization e.g., ICRC and UNICEF and the Cluster on human settlement, it has not reached the level of creating synergies.

GTH experts have interacted with UNHCR partners such as Save the Children, Hope Sudan and Welthungerhilfe, consulted people of concern and coordinated with relevant host country institutions at different levels. Little to no cooperation has been sought with other like-minded research initiatives. The RT has not found evidence that GTH's interaction with these actors have led to longer term cooperation or to creation of synergies.

5.4 RQ4 Results

RQ 4 Results - To what extent did GTH support lead to intended or unintended, positive or negative results?	4.1 Outputs and outcomes - Have the stipulated outputs and outcomes been achieved in a timely manner?
	4.2 Uptake - To what extent have the recommendations been implemented and scaled up?
	4.3 Empowerment - To what extent does the GTH empower local/regional partners to play an increasingly prominent role in developing and applying innovative solutions?

5.4.1 The revision of the log frame from focusing on application of solutions to focusing on dissemination made it realistic within the timeframe and resources available but less focused on tangible results on the ground. (4.1)

As described and analysed above the log frame was revised at the end of 2021. The output targets for achieving Outcomes 2 and 3 were met and exceeded during Y1 and Y2 as can be seen in the table below. The output targets for Outcome 2 were related to identification of needs. It was measured through the identification of major needs, uptake of recommendations, participation of research institutions and field missions. The RT finds that the relationship between what the indicators, the outcomes 2 - 4 and the overall objective of improving the lives of people of concern could be clearer and the RT notes that the linkages are not discussed or analysed in the GTH reporting.

Under outcome 3 GTH trained 111 RB and CO staff compared to 15 planned. 12 and 11 technical guidelines or other tools per year were part of the resources used by CO staff as compared to five planned per year. In Y2 the elaboration of material training courses was a bit behind with only three compared to five planned.³⁴

RB and CO interviewees are unanimous in appreciating the capacity building through F2F and online course, knowledge shared during field missions and online support and guidance.

An assessment of strengthened capacities is not possible to measure due to lack of data since as mentioned the satisfaction survey with UNHCR field offices and partners, including local partners, foreseen to be carried out after 18 months was not conducted.³⁵

Table 5: Degree of achievement of Outcomes 2 - 4

Logframe

Outcome 2: UNHCR operational needs for GTH's support are identified	144%
Outcome 3: The technical capacity of UNHCR staff in the field is improved through technical assistance from the GTH	182%
Outcome 4: GTH optimized technical solutions, also innovative when necessary and applicable (i.e. tool/guidance), are disseminated to UNHCR field operations and partners in the areas of preparedness and DRR, Shelter, Settlement, WASH, Energy while mainstreaming environmental and protection considerations	53%



GTH optimized technical solutions are disseminated to UNHCR field operations and partners mainly through the field missions, the virtual and F2F trainings. Many tools and guidelines are still under development and will be disseminated at a later stage. Dissemination of knowledge products reached 53% as compared to planned (Outcome 4). In the revision of this outcome, the output indicators for this outcome became somewhat similar to the those of Outcome 3, focusing on disseminating and sharing.

5.4.2 The achievement of output targets set in the log frame provides limited insight into the results, GTH has achieved. GTH has yet to analyse its achievement in relation to the overall contribution to the Global Compact on Refugees and its strategic framework on climate resilience and environmental sustainability (4.1)

A theory of change was not developed for GTH at the design stage which could have clarified the overall objectives of GTH and the change process through outputs and outcomes which would have contributed to the overall objective.

The impact of the change of the outcomes is not reflected in the narrative reports from UNHCR to SDC, neither is it analysed to what extent the achievement of output target has been adequate and sufficient to reach the outcome state and to what extent the overall objective has been achieved.

The descriptive nature of the GTH reporting and the output-oriented indicators which do not include indicators on e.g. i) cost-efficiency in innovative solutions ii) comprehensiveness in the recommended and provided solutions iii) multi-sectoral approach with a strong focus on technical needs at RB and CO level and iv) the value chain logic in terms of intervention from the design to implementation stages in the technical support, limits the insight into the overall progress and results of GTH.

5.4.3 A total of 19 recommendations were made for technical solutions to UNHCR regional bureaus and country offices but conditions including financing for implementation are only in place in a few cases. (4.2)

As mentioned under monitoring above an indicator to follow up the uptake of GTH proposals on technical solutions was introduced in January 2023. The monitoring has so far led for identification of

³⁴ GTH Technical Group Meeting June 6th, 2023 PP Presentation

³⁵ Agreement FDFA – UNHCR Geneva Technical Hub (GTH) 2021-2022, 7F-10684.01, 81069705

one case which is about integration in the “Sudan WASH strategy 2023-2025” of recommendations on establishment of faecal sludge management services.

The uptake of recommendations is largely beyond the control of GTH since it is up to the UNHCR RBs and COs and/or external partners to decide on their implementation. Furthermore, implementation of recommendations depends on many aspects as: i) willingness to implement; ii) available human and financial resources; iii) time frame to procure needed material; iv) evolving local conditions. As already mentioned, UNHCR has not established specific mechanisms to promote uptake of GTH recommendations.

An example of the challenges for uptake of recommendations is the installation of the first-ever use of smart energy meters by UNHCR to measure the energy consumption in communal facilities in Kakuma refugee camp and Kalobeyi settlement in Kenya. The responsible for the solarization of the camp and settlement was very engaged but was transferred to another location shortly after the installation and thereafter there was no follow up. Furthermore, it appears from interviews that the measuring (data collection) can be done in a more analogue and less costly way.

Although it is mentioned in the narrative report when it is assessed that an activity contributes to the Global Compact on Refugees or the strategic framework on climate resilience and environmental sustainability, it is not evidenced or discussed how this contribution is happening.

Through a couple of examples of the work varied out by GTH, Table 4 below illustrates the variety of topics addressed by GTH and the technical solutions proposed of which some are partially implemented through increased capacity, a few are awaiting decision on funding while implementation of most of them depends on funding possibility and concrete follow up by the RBs and COs³⁶

Table 4

Request area	Example of GTH technical solution or response
Energy & environment	
Review on affordable and sustainable solutions for cooking in Mbera refugee camp in Mauretania	In arid and semi-arid areas biomass is a limited resource. Solutions for more efficient use of firewood or alternatives to firewood are therefore requested. Various environmental activities were ongoing but only at pilot scale level. LPG was already available in the camp, but use was limited due to high costs of buying a full gas cylinder. The GTH proposed solution was sale of smaller LPG portions through use of LPG handpumps which partially refills the gas cylinder. This solution is affordable and can contribute to both environmental sustainability and climate change. Even though LPG comes from fossil fuels the use is assessed to have less impact in the specific context compared to the impact of deforestation. GTH has assisted preparing a proposal for funding which is awaiting decision on approval.
WASH	
Hydrogeological mission to Layoune camp in Tindouf in Algeria	The sanding up of wells had then been identified as a main operational challenge leading to water extraction below required levels and contributing to increased operational costs. GTH expert use boreholes cameras and identified the specific causes for the boreholes high sand content. Capacity building was also integrated as a main objective for the mission. The expert trained the UNHCR local partner on conducting a full borehole diagnostic and on monitoring processes to ensure the procedure can be further replicated in the other refugee camps in the area. The expert also gave recommendations for short- and long-term remedial measures as a prerequisite for sustainable water supply in the Layoune camp. The mission was followed up by online communication. This work gave continuation of work started pre-GTH where one of the GTH expert carried out a general hydrogeological mission in 2018.
Goz Beida and Djabal refugee camps, Chad	The existing pumping mains in Goz Beida and Djabal camp are extremely undersized, resulting in energy consumption being seven times higher than would otherwise be required and an estimated USD 92,000 per year in unnecessary expenditure. The system will still be very wasteful despite being solarized. This document is a decision tool. The GTH expert with

³⁶ It should be noted that assisting on procuring financing is not part of the GTH experts ToRs.

	<p>UNHCR experts analyzed the different options economically to determine investment costs, reductions in operation and maintenance, and break-even periods for different intervention options. Some of the options require as little as two or three years to break even and recover investments costs below USD 100,000, save USD 300.000 in operational costs over 10 years.³⁷ The mission took place in 2022. GTH reporting does not mention how follow-up has been on the specific recommendations.</p>
Solar pumping and water scheme design training, Abéche, Chad	<p>The mission above was combined with a one-week training in May 2022. 16 participants joined the event including 5 UNHCR staff, 1 UNICEF staff, 2 representatives from the Ministry of Water and Ministry of Energy, 5 staff from local NGOs and 3 from international NGOs. The training was a combination of presentations and practical fieldwork. It covered all steps in a solar water scheme design, from well-inspection to water quality analysis, to pumping tests used to dimension the water scheme, which was then practically set up under field conditions. The training facilitated transfer of required skills to the technical staff on the optimal implementation of sustainable solar water schemes.</p>
Mission of sanitation to 15 settlements in Khartoum, Kassala, Gedaref & White Nile regions in Sudan	<p>The objective was to provide technical support and identify sustainable solutions for latrine design and fecal sludge management in the specific context characterized by poor soil stability and flood risk. As four regions with different characteristics were covered, different recommendations were given for each region. Follow-up actions were also indicated. The recommendations covered; cost-benefit analysis for fecal sludge management services, finalize the design and procedures for implementation and operation of a fecal sludge treatment plant, include Eawag in the design of upgrading two existing landfills and preventing mud pools around tap stands by channeling the lost water towards productive use e.g., watering or irrigation. The expert also assessed capacity building needs for WASH partners and UNHCR staff. The mission took place in February 2023. Follow up on these specific recommendations have not been mentioned in GTH reporting.</p>
Shelter & settlement	
Labondo settlement in Nigeria	<p>UNHCR has set the goal of building permanent housing for the millions of internally displaced people in northeastern Nigeria who have been living in emergency shelters for years. The search for a suitable plot of land for the new settlement of durable buildings was carried out in several regions. The UNHCR found a suitable site. The settlement consists of 225 double housing units and will provide space for 450 families. Both the layout of the settlement and the houses themselves exhibit high qualities and testify to careful planning. The houses are constructed with Interlocking Stabilized Soil Blocks (ISSB) which is an environmentally friendly and sustainable construction technique. It uses materials that can be found in the surrounding area, it requires only a little cement, and the bricks are not burned, but only cured. It is an example of a mission where GTH sought new solutions which can be replicated and scaled up in other settlements³⁸.</p>
Webinar on site selection	<p>It was organized by the GTH experts on 17 May 2022. 52 participants from 24 operations participated in the webinar that focused on settlement-related issues such as environmental and human risks, land usage and property, public services, and livelihood. As part of the webinar, a survey related to settlement characteristics and site selection process was conducted. Recordings from the webinar are available for further dissemination.</p>

5.4.4 Local partners working for UNHCR have been involved in the work during field missions. The capacity building of the local partners to develop and apply innovative technical solutions have not yet been the focus of GTH (4.3)

GTH has no information on the number of local partners that took part in the GTH events but there is evidence from interviews that local partners have not been invited to capacity building events. While the empowerment of local and regional partners through capacity building and cooperation has so far not been the focus of GTH, it is expected to be more in focus during year 3. GTH experts do involve UNHCR local partners in their missions. An example of how an external partner has been included in

³⁷ Based on high-level summary from GTH mission report.

³⁸ Based on GTH mission report

the GTH recommendations, is the sanitation mission to Nigeria, in September 2022 and implemented by the GTH Sanitation Expert. In the summary of recommendations and follow up, the expert included Save the Children as key stakeholder to implement the recommendations with UNHCR. The interviewed local partners highly appreciated the knowledge sharing during the field missions. As shown in Table 4, GTH did carry out some training events in relation to missions where local partners participated.

5.4.5 GTH did not contribute to any unintended or negative results.

The RT has not identified any unintended or negative results which can be attributed to the activities of GTH.

5.5 RQ5 Transfer of knowledge and learning

RQ 5: Transfer of knowledge and learning - To what extent has the GTH interventions contributed to learning and suitable long-term solutions?	5.1 Transfer of knowledge - To what extent has there been an effective transfer of applied knowledge between the current Swiss experts and academic partners and the UNHCR and its beneficiaries to create capacity and empowerment?
	5.2 Research application and learning - Are external partners building on the GTH achievements for further research and development?
	5.3 Sustainability - To what extent are innovative and adapted solutions by the GTH environmentally sustainable, technologically and financially viable and integrated in the respective local systems?

5.5.1 The transfer of knowledge has been done through on-the-job training during missions, online and F2F training and testing of different tools. (5.1)

GTH transferred knowledge to UNHCR regional and country level staff as well as head quarter level designing, developing, organizing, and facilitating training tools, materials, and capacity building initiatives and events. GTH provided new tools and guidance documents from experts and academia in the scope of 18 responses to major needs that are now part of the UNHCR technical resources utilized by its staff. These responses complement and expand the operational strategy within UNHCR operations.

Improving technical programs against climate-related risks training

- Opportunity to exchange between Geneva, Europe based and field experts, and discuss challenges faced by technical staff.
- Opportunity to immerse in a more collaborative approach between settlement planners and WASH officers.
- Training in using UNOSAT datasets and other similar outputs to develop a comprehensive analysis.
- Hands-on experience with various tools (software, plug-ins, methodologies) to produce hazard maps.
- Introduction to a variety of mitigation measures and scenarios to be used specific for the operational contexts.

Transfer of knowledge happens at the RBs that serve as meeting points for UNHCR staff from different levels, UNHCR partners as well as GTH experts. RBs develop as the key actors to foster this interaction because of their geographical and technical areas coverage, especially in the scope of the UNHCR decentralisation process. Interviewees mentioned that added value is strongest when field missions, trainings and research are linked to each other under a multisectoral approach to provide comprehensive solutions. Specially in recurring areas of work or upcoming areas of interest as environment or climate change adaptation solutions. The visits to the field were seen as a good tool for transfer of knowledge but it was also pointed out that transfer of knowledge successfully happened via online communication. Transfer of knowledge could be enhanced through closer collaboration between researchers and GTH experts and UNHCR technical staff at different levels.

UNHCR has created a page on its website where information and news about GTH is shared.³⁹ The site is a good start for developing a knowledge sharing platform with a community of practice facility. There are some also good examples on how GTH has provided an innovative capacity building and knowledge sharing space to UNHCR country and regional operations. One of them was the training *Improving technical programs against climate-related risks* in February 2023 in Geneva which had 19 participants from 12 UNHCR operations with WASH, settlement planning, and shelter background (see box). This was the first in-person, cross-sectorial training on Climate-Related Risk Analysis facilitated by a multisectoral GTH team using a cross-sectoral and holistic methodology. Another example which has been highly appreciated is the online training on the HomerPro in June 2022.

5.5.2 External partners have so far limited knowledge about the achievements of GTH and there is no evidence that GTH achievements lead to further research. However, GTH's visibility is increasing. (5.2)

There is no evidence so far, that GTH achievements led to further research or that external partners are building on the GTH achievements. Documents were uploaded on UNHCR's intranet page dedicated to the GTH and accessible by all UNHCR staff. As of June 2023, the external GTH webpages had gathered over 1000 views. Through a monthly newsletter and community of practice meetings GTH shares updates with over 200 UNHCR staff mostly with a technical profile at country, regional and global level. Furthermore, as GTH got more known it was mentioned in several publications.⁴⁰

In addition, the GTH was given visibility at several global events, such as at the World Water Week 2022 that took place in Stockholm during 23 August – 1 September 2022, the Emergency Environmental Health Forum that took place in Budapest on 10-11 May 2023 and the Global WASH Cluster Technical Event in Geneva in April 2023.

5.5.3 The technical solutions recommended by GTH are so far only to a very limited extent integrated into local planning and budgeting systems. Only a few technical solutions are financially viable within the framework of the UNHCR camp budgets and there is no mechanism for financing uptake of GTH technical solutions and recommendations. (5.3)

Interviews confirm, that UNHCR RBs and COs are very interested in environmentally sustainable, climate change adapted and innovative solutions with a low budget. GTH experts added value by improving funding proposals in Chad and South African and by assisting COs in preparing proposals for the UNHCR Climate Action Innovation fund. This included the CO in Zimbabwe in 2022 which got funding for a biogas project and the CO in Mauritania in 2023 which is awaiting decision on funding for an LPG project. Several interviewees mentioned that the timing of recommendations is quite important for fundraising. If the recommendations are timed with the UNHCR end-of-year planning and budgeting, it is more likely that they can be included. The integration of technical recommendations into local planning and budgeting systems are areas which GTH has only explored to a very limited extent.

³⁹ <https://www.unhcr.org/what-we-do/build-better-futures/environment-disasters-and-climate-change/geneva-technical-hub>

⁴⁰ The 2022 Annual Report on Sustainable Energy, the 2022 Annual report Water, sanitation, hygiene, the UNHCR Global report 2022 and the Swiss International cooperation – Annual report 2022.

6 Lessons learnt

The following lessons learned could be extracted during the review process. These lessons focus on the themes added value, approach, knowledge sharing and innovation.

ADDED VALUE: “GTH adds value to UNHCR operations: technical support and applicable technical solutions focusing on low costs.

Considerations emerging from the review process

- There is a local demand for cost efficient technical solutions at regional and country level and requests have increased with wider knowledge about the existence of GTH.
- SDC funding allows for identification of solutions to the technical issues raised by RBs and COs
- GTH experts bring in knowledge, ensure higher standards and share experience from other areas.

“Having outsiders opinions are valuable. When you are working all the time in the project you need an external view.”

APPROACH: “Multisectoral and integrated approaches linking more sectors allow better outputs”

Considerations emerging from the review process

- It takes time to harmonize expectations and different ways of working.
- The sectoral and case-by-case approach may limit the identification of overall and more strategic responses.
- Integrated approaches linking several sectors i.e., WASH and shelters allow better outputs.
- Joint field missions and online training work well because they induce cross-sector thinking out of the box.
- Field missions are motivating and allow for detailed understanding of the request and the local conditions.

“Cross cultural training. Multisectoral training to many institutions: this would be useful in emergency and humanitarian.”
“To analyse better the impact of cyclones and to be better prepared to a climatic situation, a multisector analysis is necessary including wash, electricity, shelter, environment.”

KNOWLEDGE SHARING: “Knowledge management requires a long-term and multi-actor strategy based on networking and a sharing concept”

Considerations emerging from the review process

- GTH concept is about reaching out to like-minded partners, establishing knowledge sharing platform, creating visibility and applying the value chain logic.
- Applicable research has been based on good knowledge of humanitarian assistance.
- It takes time for such different partners as UNHCR, SDC / SHA experts and academic institutions to understand each other and speak a common ‘language’.
- Pressure for results in the short term limits the possibility of finding durable and innovative solutions as it requires time to research, test and upscale.

“Knowledge transfer is working in both directions because solutions need to be adapted and tailored to the specific contexts. Local people can travel to regional bureaux and GTH experts also, regional bureaux may be the meeting point.”

INNOVATION: “Innovation through GTH recommendations is feasible when funding and intra & inter institutional coordination mechanisms are put in place”

Considerations emerging from the review process

- Financing of the recommended solutions was not part of the GTH design.
- Lack of a funding and institutional mechanisms for implementing recommendations have limited uptake.

“Building resilient shelter that can resist floods, strong winds imply working with UN-Habitat and national authorities to look more broadly (urban displacement vs displacement in camps). UN Habitat produced a report on refugees settling in urban areas. Camps do not offer opportunities for jobs, health, schools... and people need all that.”

7 Conclusions

12. The vision of GTH is relevant and important for UNHCR and possible future partners which need technical assistance to meet the challenges of climate change and environmental degradation while adequately provide protection to a high number of refugees.
13. A Theory of Change (ToC) was not developed in the design stage which could have clarified the vital linkage between the inputs, outputs and outcomes and the achievement of the overall objective. In absence of the ToC, it appeared realistic and adequate for GTH to revise the log frame, but this led to a substantial weakness in the implementation strategy as the focus changed from application of technical solutions to dissemination and visibility.
14. There were different expectations to GTH and UNHCR, SDC, GTH experts and research institutions have different ways of working. The different institutional cultures and expectations have to some extent delayed the implementation of activities and the utilisation of the strengths of different skill sets. Over the first two years expectations and ways of working have been clarified and harmonized which contributes to laying the foundation for a better use of the strengths of GTH.
15. Supply of technical solutions has been a strong driving force in in the design of GTH. Practice has confirmed that there is a demand in UNHCR for context specific technical services in the focus areas which are aligned with the Global Compact on Refugees.
16. GTH has not been designed based on consultations with people of concern. In the implementation people of concern in refugee camps have been involved to a limited extent and on a case-by-case basis and satisfaction has not been monitored.
17. GTH has been contributing to solving technical problems in a case-by-case manner which potentially can lead to good results in an environmentally sustainable and climate resilient manner in the refugee camps but does not take a strategic view providing integrated and comprehensive responses to systemic problems of bringing shelter, water, sanitation, and energy to a high number of refugees.
18. Despite thorough knowledge among experts and researchers and comprehensive guidance, age, gender and diversity (GAD) is not fully and systematically integrated into the work of GTH. That is, there is not a systematic considered if and when GAD is relevant and what could be done.
19. The two first years have been concentrated on setting up GTH and delivering on the different outcomes. GTH has not entered into dialogue with like-minded partners on strategic issues regarding the application of the humanitarian – development nexus or to similar projects and initiatives to explore synergies.
20. The main results of the first phase of GTH will be a series of knowledge products on technical solutions and approaches on WASH, shelter & settlement and energy & environment. GTH has yet to develop a knowledge management strategy.
21. High quality and often low-cost technical solutions have been developed and delivered. There are no procedures either in GTH or UNHCR for following up or seeking financing. This limits the likelihood of uptake of the recommendations in the refugee camps. This impacts negatively on the efficiency of SDCs support as it reduces the likelihood of impact and thereby, sustainability.
22. Based on the clear demand, the existence of the strategic framework on environmental sustainability and climate resilience, the technical expertise globally and regionally and the presence of like-minded institutions working in the humanitarian area, there is scope for looking into developing an expanded GTH with a wider mandate and more partners.

8 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions the RT proposes a basic scenario where SDC and UNHCR take a series of steps to improve the functioning of GTH under the current institutional set up. This is called the basic scenario. While doing this, they also continue the process of developing GTH into a technical hub with more donors and partners in line with the discussions which were initiated at the workshop on 1. September at UNHCR HQ in Geneva. This process is named the extended scenario and will imply a profound change of GTH. There are four recommendations for the basic scenario and four recommendations for the extended scenario.

No	Recommendation	Explanation
Retrofitted GTH 1.0 (Oct 23 – End of 2024)		
1	GTH should revise the log-frame to ensure focus on impact and sustainability avoiding the term ‘complex’ as it is difficult to define and creates confusion about the focus of GTH	The log frame should be revised to establish clear linkages between outputs, outcomes, and the overall objective. Primarily, this relates to revising Outcomes 2 and 4, mostly reverting to their original formulation focusing on application of the technical solutions. This can be accompanied by a Theory of change which will assist clarifying if outputs and outcomes are sufficient and adequate for contributing to the overall objective. In this, the indicators should also be somewhat revised based on GAD guidelines and the risk matrix from the SDC credit proposal. The concept of complex technical problems has not been helpful in identifying the technical problems which need GTH support. This is because in many cases the complexity lies in the geographic, social, and cultural issues and not necessarily in the technical aspects. It is recommended to find another formulation.
2	GTH should revise the set-up and procedures so that the follow up on requests identify systemic problems and value chain logic responses, the reporting is focused on learning and that missions are integrated and cross-sectoral	The SG should decide on a procedure to analyse the requests which would further identification of systemic problems. This could include analysing the requests at TG meetings where the expertise of researchers and GTH experts would be activated to contribute to identifying systemic problems which GTH can address in a wider context. The TG would then be focused on technical analysis and discussion rather than presentation of mission reports. GTH should also develop a reporting format for the annual report which focuses on learning and integrates the log frame monitoring, the risk matrix, and the narrative expenditure reporting. The report should include the whole GTH. The mission reporting format should include a table with clear presentation of the recommendations and how UNHCR management at the different levels will follow up. It should also be included how GAD has or has not been considered and included. It could be considered to use SDC credit proposals, especially the checklists as an inspiration. Based on the above, UNHCR only approves missions which are integrated with GTH experts from different sectors who apply the value chain logic and where the RB and CO agree and take active part in implementing relevant solutions. The input from GTH experts should be flexible and match the demand. This would entail revising the percentage distribution.
3	UNHCR should put in place internal procedures which promote the uptake of	RBs and COs have expressed wide satisfaction with the work of GTH. However, some RBs and COs have also been reluctant to receive support and capacity building in areas where there is no funding

	recommendations at the operational level in refugee camps. This should be accompanied by procedures for mobilising funding.	for solving the problems. UNHCR should establish a mechanism whereby RBs and COs with support from HQ take responsibility for implementing the technical solutions which are found suitable. Experience has shown that there are internal funds which are ready to provide funding for the implementation of GTH technical solutions. Such funding opportunities should be explored systematically. Furthermore, there are other funding opportunities e.g., the GEF small grants, which UNHCR's local partners could apply for using the humanitarian – development nexus and the climate adaptation and environment considerations as leverage.
4	SDC should decide to extent GTH 1.0 with one year	It will take a while, probably six months to one year to develop the programme document for GTH 2.0, get the relevant partners on board, approve the programme document and setting up the structures. Therefore, there is a need for extending the present GTH 1.0 with some revisions as described above. At the same time, this year will give the opportunity to increase the uptake of the technical solutions which have already been developed and thereby secure lasting impact of GTH 1.0.
Expansion to GTH 2.0 (Jan 25 – Dec 29)		
5	Based on a decision in the SG on embarking on development of GTH 2.0, GTH should elaborate a theory of change for this new programme which is based on needs and expectations of actors and stakeholders.	Based on an approach on identifying needs and expectations from a bottom-up perspective including all relevant actors as described in Annex 1 and 2, SDC, UNHCR and ICRC should elaborate a ToC for GTH 2.0 which can guide the development process.
6	Under the leadership of UNHCR, the organisations which have expressed interest in an expanded GTH i.e., UNHCR, ICRC and UNITAR should continue the dialogue with like-minded organizations and donor agencies to discuss how GTH can become fully operational as a technical hub.	<p>The workshop on 1 September 2023 in UNHCR in Geneva was a first step in this dialogue where ICRC expressed interest in participating in establishing GTH as a Centre of Expertise which will serve as a collaborative platform, facilitating strategic and technical expertise sharing, joint planning, and decision-making to address the root causes of crises, promoting resilience, and bridging the gap between traditionally separate domains for a more sustainable humanitarian response. (See action plan in Annex 1). In the continued dialogue there is a need for leadership. The RT recommends that UNHCR take on this role based on being one of the biggest organisations in the humanitarian area and its experience with GTH. Initially the three organisations (UNHCR, ICRC and UNITAR) will drive the process as other organisations might join later. In the process these organisations should specify what their financial and in-kind contributions would look like and how their headquarter-based GTH-secretariat counterparts interacts with its organization internal stakeholders. That is how will the staff allocated by these organisations interact with the technical staff in HQ and at local level, operational staff in regional and country offices as well as local and regional implementing partners.</p> <p>The first milestone in the process will be preparing the pledge could be about the joint effort of the signing pledgers to establish a new GTH 2.0. here is a need to be flexible to revise GTH's orientation and strategy to be in line with key partners' mandate and strategies to the extent that such partners find GTH an interesting initiative and are open to discuss further the possibilities for</p>

		<p>closer cooperation. GTH should explore the potential for closer cooperation with the Human Settlement Group of friends which is co-led by UNHCR. An initial meeting took place on 12 September which demonstrated GTH needs to have better communication materials which bridges to the needs and wills of potential donor agencies and partners. After this meeting UNITAR expressed interest. SDC is recommended to support this process with consultant resources at least until the GRF in order to facilitate the announcement of a related pledge a longer commitment is recommended to contribute to a smooth process building in GTH 1.0.</p>
7	<p>The committed organisations (UNHCR, ICRC and UNITAR should explore different set up and different cost structures</p>	<p>There are different options for the institutional set up of GTH 2.0 which should be carefully studied and based on the experience of GTH 1.0 and on other similar projects such as EHA, TECH4DECV and ETH4D. It is important the management of GTH 2.0 is adequately resourced and independent. In order to be independent one possibility, it for GTH to be placed outside UN organizations. The RT suggests that such secretariat could be staffed with a full-time programme manager / secretariat leader and a part time programme assistant. Depending on funds available technical staff could be supplied in kind by the participating organisations. It should also be considered what is the technically best, transparent and most cost efficient set up in relation to technical expertise. This could entail tendering for technical expertise and research input.</p>
8	<p>The committed organisations should decide on and elaborate a programme document for GTH 2.0</p>	<p>The committed organisations should elaborate a proposal on the objectives GTH 2.0 should pursue, how it should be structured and governed, how it should function and how the support it will provide is embedded in a results-oriented approach i.e., applying the value-chain logic. This proposal for programme document should be based on an elaborate consultation identifying needs and expectations of relevant actors and stakeholders at local, regional and global levels.</p> <p>The programme document should address that the embedding of the technical support locally, with the local beneficiaries, implementation partners and host communities and institutions. It should address how the implementation of the expert recommendations is financed and how knowledge management and communities of practice should be set up including the sharing of studies etc.</p> <p>from various sources regarding the global policy discussion on relevant topics. The GTH secretariat should mainly vet the proposal against related criteria and ensure related “procurement” according to the resources it receives from these institutions and the donors. Having demands presented jointly by humanitarian institutions, including through an interdisciplinary approach, should be part of such criteria.</p> <p>The RT recommends that such a proposal is based on a long-term vision which could be for 12 years divided in phases of four years. It would allow for testing, implementing and upscaling new and innovative solutions, based on input from technical experts, researchers and local actors e.g., POCs. SDC for example usually applying this timeline in its support for projects and programmes and experience shows that to consolidate results especially when it requires changing mindsets and include some construction and procurement it is best to have a long timeline. Researchers would then have sufficient time to find new solutions.</p>

Annex 1: Action Plan and Road Map for the development of GTH 2.0

8.1 Introduction

The capitalization and prospective workshop on 1 September at UNHCR headquarters had as its aim to gauge the interest among like-minded partners and donors to take part in developing the Geneva Technical Hub. It was confirmed that there is an interest in GTH beyond UNHCR and SDC. ICRC showed immediate interest in working with SDC and UNHCR and has contributed with the following to contextualize and explore what a future GTH would be about. The RT finds that it is an excellent contribution and starting point for the process of developing GTH.

8.2 Considerations on the future Geneva Technical Hub

The expanded GTH is developed in the context of supporting the objective in the Global Compact on Refugees to *contribute resources and expertise to strengthen infrastructure so as to facilitate access to appropriate accommodation for refugees and host communities and to promote integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems in both urban and rural areas.*⁴¹

In response to the evolving humanitarian landscape, it is crucial to reevaluate the operational strategies of humanitarian organizations. Enhanced collaboration and knowledge sharing are essential, given the multifaceted challenges, including climate change impacts, access constraints in conflict zones, protracted crises affecting essential services, and the ongoing threat of global health emergencies. Fostering partnerships and facilitating expertise exchange enables the sector to navigate these complexities more efficiently while upholding humanitarian principles.

The imperative to reevaluate strategies underscores the strong case for establishing a dedicated *Center of Expertise* in this dynamic sector. This initiative represents a significant addition, connecting various stakeholders with a common goal of influencing decisions within the humanitarian field. Drawing inspiration from existing initiatives, this integrated approach, could bring together humanitarian organizations and clusters, development and corporate agencies, academia, private sector, international development organizations, and other partners. It will serve as a **collaborative platform**, facilitating **strategic** and **technical expertise** sharing, joint **planning**, and decision-making to address the root causes of crises, **promote resilience**, and bridge the gap between traditionally separate domains for a more sustainable humanitarian response.

Its primary focus will revolve around developing, testing, and scaling interdisciplinary innovative solutions, thereby strengthening the humanitarian system. Such a center would play a pivotal role in forging strategic partnerships facilitating the mobilization of resources to address humanitarian challenges, exploring financial sustainable models, enhancing the sector's capabilities, and achieving sustainable development goals. Additionally, it will facilitate the integration of a strategic resilience approach across various facets of humanitarian work, advancing transformative development, climate adaptation, human rights advocacy, and protection policy. By leveraging collective expertise and resources, it will effectively support on the enhancement of multifaceted challenges, providing innovative but pragmatic solutions and guiding the sector toward increased resilience and adaptability.

The hub's mandate will also encompass **knowledge dissemination**, **capacity building**, and **policy advocacy** at both the global and national levels, exerting influence on decision-makers in crucial areas such as environmental sustainability, climate resilience, and humanitarian practices. Thus, the Center of Expertise will become a pivotal catalyst for progress, enabling humanitarian organizations not only to

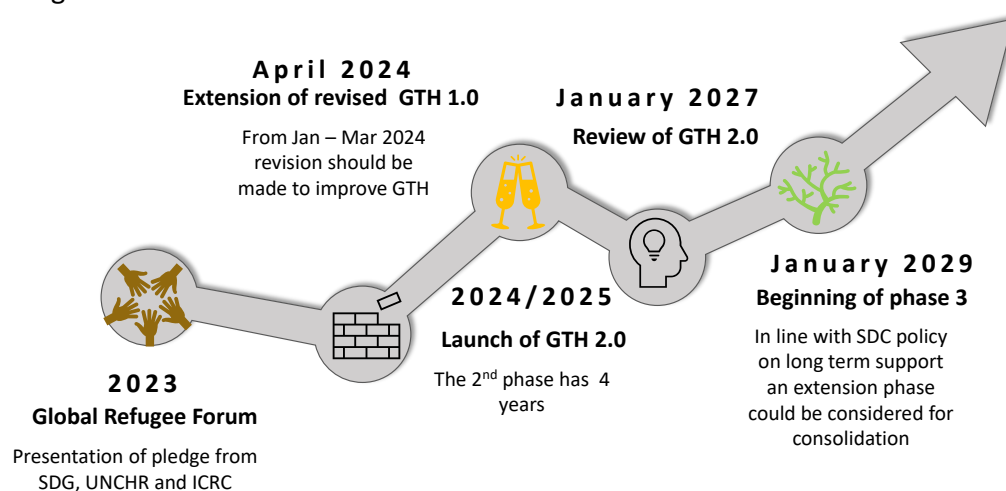
⁴¹ Global Compact on Refugees, paragraph 78.

accomplish their mission but also to amplify their impact in alleviating human suffering and advancing on global sustainable development.⁴²

The above outlines the vision and scope for what GTH could develop into in terms of Centre of Expertise. In practice there will be several phases in such a process where SDC and UNHCR will steer the process in cooperation with the aim of transforming the present GTH, building the new GTH based on the lessons and experience from the last two years.

ROADMAP to the Geneva Technical Hub 2.0

Milestones in the process to create more partnerships with donors and like-minded partners to turn GTH into a dynamic and strategic hub on the humanitarian nexus



8.3 Phase 1: October – December 2023

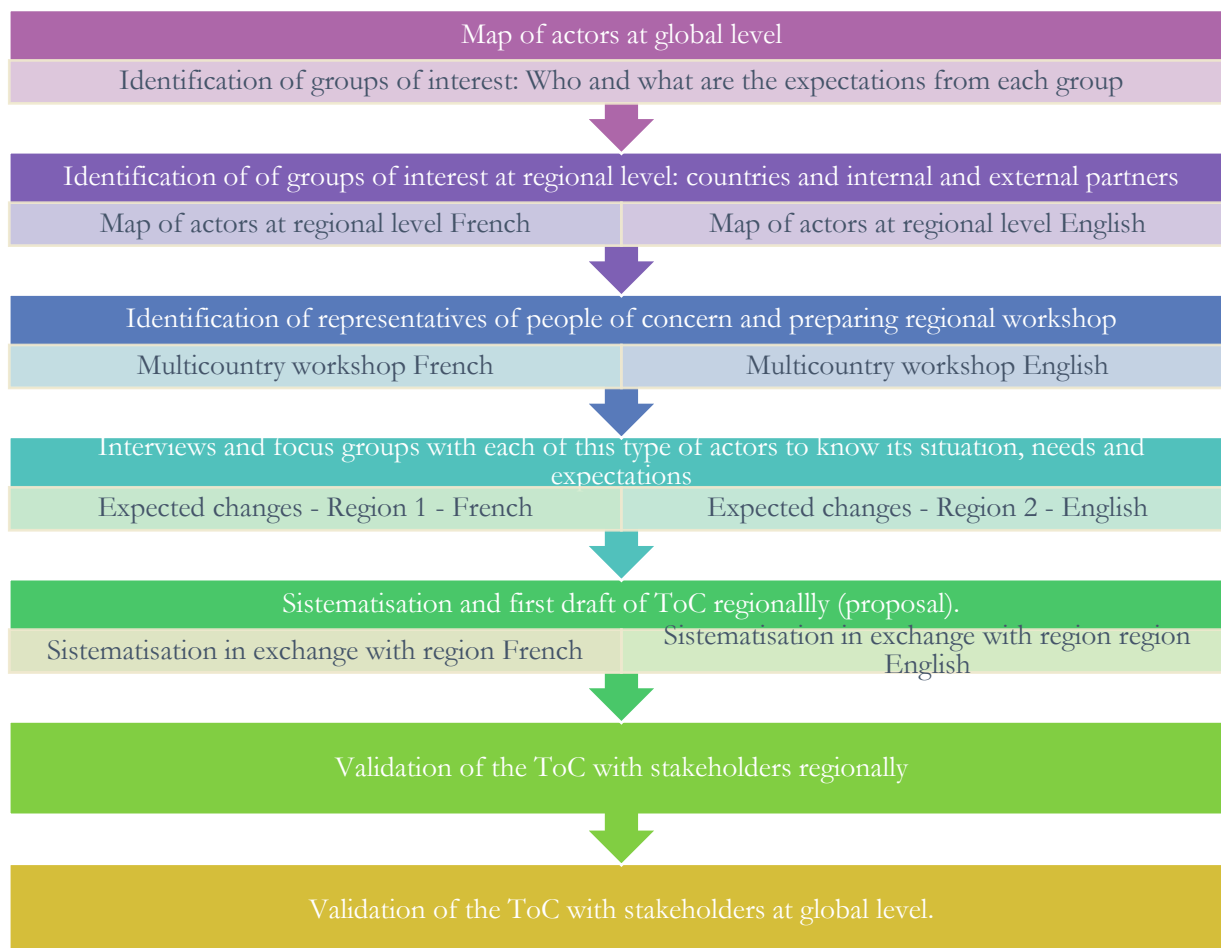
The outputs of this phase are a stakeholder **validated theory of change** and a **pledge for technical support in the humanitarian area** to achieve the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees and the Agenda 2030.

1. SDC and UNHCR should prepare **communication material** which can be used for meeting with donors and like-minded partners which show the advantages for having a Center of Expertise and the vision of such center in relation to the Global Compact on Refugees and the humanitarian area. This communication material should be elaborated with the support of communication experts.
2. The communication material should also be the basis for **meetings with potential donors** including in the private sector such as foundations. PEM presented the findings and recommendations at the Group of Friends meeting on 12 September and a few organisations expressed interest and will contact SDC or PEM with any questions/clarifications.
3. SDC and UNHCR should have regular meetings e.g., monthly **with ICRC** to substantiate the thoughts shared above.
4. As a first step to transform GTH, it is necessary to **clarify the expectations and needs** of actors and stakeholders such as Group of Friends donors and e.g., Unicef, IFCR, MSF, Terre des

⁴² Contribution from ICRC, Pavlos Tamvakis

Hommes, Medair, IFRC, UN-Habitat, local partners (Save the Children, Caritas etc.), UNHCR RB and CO staff, Relevant UNHCR HQ staff and not the least people of concern. SDC and UNHCR should **carry out mapping of actors and initiatives**. (See outreach strategy in Annex 2)

5. The second step in clarifying expectations and needs are to elaborate a theory of change based (See outreach strategy in Annex 2) on the mapping and an actor-based methodology:



6. As shown in the figure above the elaboration of the theory of change will **include interviews with stakeholders** at the regional level. Here suggested to be divided in a region with French speaking countries (Sahel, West Africa) and aa region with English speaking countries (Asia, Africa). This process will clarify WHAT GTH 2.0 should focus on.
7. **Elaboration of ToC** based on the consultation. This step and the following are based on the outreach strategy in Annex 2.
8. **Validation** of the ToC with stakeholders at the **regional** level in second half of November
9. **Validation** of the ToC with stakeholders at the **global** level in second half of November.
10. The ToC will contribute to clarifying the vision of GTH in the future. It is therefore meant to feed into the final pledge for the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) from 13 – 15 December. There is a window between end of November and the GRF to agree on a pledge. As a minimum this pledge should be agreed between SDC, ICRC and UNHCR. It would be an advantage to have at least one other donor on board. The representation of Norway has so far shown most interest in GTH.

8.4 Phase 2: January – April 2024

GTH 2.0 will not be ready for launching in April 2024 where GTH 1.0 should normally end. Therefore, there is a need to continue GTH 1.0 but in an improved version based on the findings and recommendations of the prospective review. This phase is about making the necessary revisions in the set-up of GTH 1.0 to function until the GTH 2.0 is fully developed and ready to be launched. The main outputs of phase 2 are a revised **log frame of GTH 1.0** which focuses on application of the technical solutions. The easiest way to do this is to use the original log frame. Another output should be **revised procedures for analysing the requests** from the field which should further the identification of systemic problems which GTH can address in a wider context. There will also be **several changes in procedures** at different levels. Phase 2 depends on decisions by the GTH SG and discussion at a GTH TG meeting regarding the recommendations of this prospective review.

In parallel with the retrofitting of GTH 1.0, SDC and UNHCR with ICRC continue the process of developing GTH 2.0.

Retrofitting GTH 1.0

1. The basis of increasing application internal institutional mechanisms and systematic mobilisation of funding. For this
 - a. UNHCR should provide such institutional procedures,
 - b. SDC should consider making it part of the GTH experts' ToR to assist in mobilising funding following the best practices from the fundraising to the biogas plant in Zimbabwe.
2. The SG decides on a log frame which is focused on application.
3. The SG decides on a procedure to analyse the request which further identification of systemic problems.
4. The SG decides on a reporting format for the annual report which integrates the log frame monitoring, the risk matrix, and the narrative expenditure reporting. The report should include the whole GTH.
5. The SG decides on mission reporting format which includes a table with clear presentation of the recommendations and how UNHCR management at the different levels will follow up. It should also be included how GAD has or has not been considered and included.
6. Based on the above UNHCR only approves missions which are integrated with GTH experts from different sectors who apply the value chain logic and where the RB and CO agree and take active part in implementing relevant solutions.

Developing GTH 2.0

7. Analysing different options for setting up an independent GTH with a management secretariat in Geneva manned with 1 manager which would be contracted and technical staff on full and / or part time basis which will be in kind contribution from the participating organisations.
8. Explore options for applying elements from the EHA which works well. It could even be considered to merge GTH and EHA since these initiatives align well with establishing a dedicated *Center of Expertise*.
9. Design of GTH 2.0. SDC to elaborate credit proposal based on the joint programme document which should have a lifetime of four years instead of three as this gives time for development, testing and application. The joint programme should include an exit strategy which also considers the possibility of subsequent phases.
10. SDC to decide on their modality of participation (SHA experts) in relation to how the input can better match the demand.

11. The Steering Committee in the GTH 2.0 should have a strategic scope and include researchers and representatives from regional/ local level. It should also be considered to consult regularly with like-minded initiatives and strategic thinkers in the field of the humanitarian – development nexus.

8.5 Phase 3: April 2024 – End of 2024 / Beginning of 2025

Phase 3 is about continuing GTH 1.0 with the revised set up while setting up GTH 2.0. It is difficult to estimate how long time it would take to get the GTH 2.0 ready to launch. The partners could aim for a launch of GTH 2.0 at the end of 2024. The outputs and outcomes will be **approved by joint programme document for GTH 2.0** and **agreements with the staffing and technical input** as also described in recommendations 6 – 8 above.

1. Continuing reaching out to like-minded donors and organisation to the point where there is sufficient commitment to launch a GTH 2.0 as a four-year programme with an independent secretariat,
2. Development of the full actor's based Theory of Change
3. Approval of the GTH 2.0 programme document in the respective organisations,
4. Contracting of full-time programme manager who should lead the secretariat and part time administrative assistant,
5. Agreements between the organisations involved on contribution of technical staff and all procedures.
6. Secretariat in place and functional.

8.6 Phase 4: April 2025 – April 2029

As mentioned above the **GTH 2.0 is launched** as a 4-year programme to allow for identification, testing, implementing and scaling up the technical solutions.

1. Implementation of GTH 2.0 securing coordination with host institutions and communities and people of concern and host communities in design and implementation.
2. Establish knowledge management platform,
3. Exchange with like-minded organizations,
4. Participation in relevant events for sharing of best practices,
5. Review of GTH 2.0 in April 2027.
6. Decision on subsequent phases.

Annex 2: Outreach strategy

GTH presentation: GTH concept and examples with results from the field and GTH added values

This outreach strategy covers the period up to the Global Refugee Forum and focuses on mapping stakeholders and identifying expectations and needs for a future GTH 2.0. It includes **parameters from the actors' and outcomes' based theory of change** in order to ensure contents under the same approach. The idea is to **prepare actors' oriented material including GTH added values** for the working spaces (workshops, focus groups and interviews). In this way a clear, aligned message about the GTH concept will be presented at the beginning of the spaces. This strategy will be **complemented with the inputs and voices** from the actors at the different stages.

Following this process, the **strategy will first be consolidated at the global level** (steering and other strategic partners, columns C & D in the table 1 below). With **regional and country level working groups, insights from the operational partners and final beneficiaries** of the GTH services will be included (columns A & B – table 1 below).

Mapping of needs and potential contributions to achieve an expected leverage effect

Both above mentioned steps will secure a **strategic and participatory exchange** between key stakeholders previously identified. The methodology will be implemented asking the actors for their needs and expected outcomes and results at each stage.

The strategy will make sure to **include the previously identified stakeholders** at each level. This will allow to provide an expanded version of the ToC for the future GTH2.0. But also, to take up the **recommendations from the interviewed actors** during the review concerning the collaborative and bottom-up approach. A close coordination with the Group of friends, ICRC, the UNHCR HQ, RB and CO will be key to ensure this part of the job.

GTH Outcomes' and actors' based management, monitoring and dissemination

The expected outcomes' and changes to be identified at all stages (columns A, B, C & D – table 1 below) will allow to provide the basis for a more results' oriented management, monitoring and dissemination by GTH in the future.

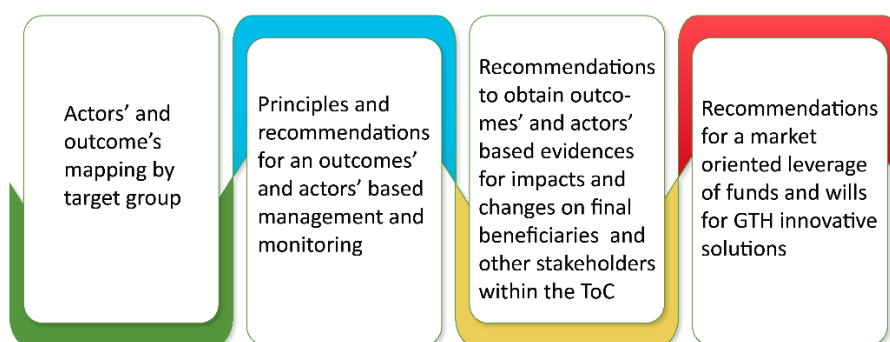


Figure 1: Outreach strategy contribution to results

This strategy contributes further to improve GTH visibility and communication. The strategy is based on a methodology that will allow to disseminate at the field and at the global level concrete stories, results and outcomes under an actors' based approach. To enhance this, GTH requires support in the areas of communication, and knowledge management to complement this ad hoc strategy exploring the potential of online platforms, social media. During the working spaces further GTH target audience may be identified, to best steer the GTH communication and dissemination strategy. All that contributes to a beneficiaries and donors oriented GTH action. This approach can be considered as a first attempt to:

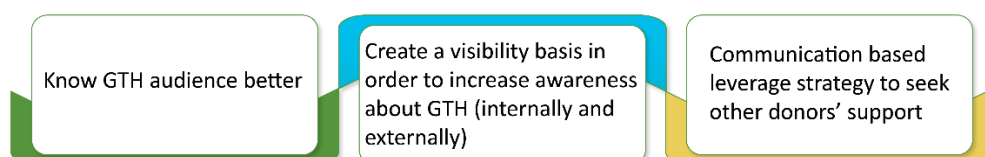





Figure 2: Expected outcomes

In the table below we present the structure of the above-described outreach strategy. The GTH added values were extracted from the review's interviews:

		Final beneficiaries (A)	Direct area of influence Operational partners (B)	Indirect area of influence Strategic partners (C)	Steering committee (D)
Crosscutting GTH added values	Targets	Evidences for impacts and changes on final beneficiaries	Needs' assessment Leverage effect (funds & will)	Needs' assessment Leverage effect (funds & will)	Outcomes' and actors' based management, monitoring and dissemination
GTH added values Sustainability Innovative solutions North- South, public-private collaboration and strategic exchange Leveraging funds and wills		Collaboration between GTH experts, academia and regional and country offices	Support durability. <i>Environmental sustainable solutions are the added value. Bureaus are needing that kind of proposals to present to donors.</i> Collaboration between North South academia: <i>exposure to the field.</i>	Resources need to be increased to ensure GTH added value and sustainability. <i>Treasury funds modality necessary to ensure long term financing.</i> Added value is the expertise <i>GTH contribute to concept notes for more funds under innovative approaches including new needs.</i> Other partners should fund also	Added value is to provide inputs, opinions, quality assurance and to foster these new solutions when they are according to the needs. Having outsiders' opinions is valuable. Working in the project requires an external view.

	Final beneficiaries (A)	Direct area of influence Operational partners (B)	Indirect area of influence Strategic partners (C)	Steering committee (D)
			<p>environment, climate change, energy, etc.</p> <p>Private partners for instance</p> <p>Private donors identified at regional level could be potential ones...</p> <p>Linked to a product?? SDC can screen the donor and establish parameters.</p>	
<p>Bottom up holistic approach</p> <p>Global vs specific responses</p> <p>Aligned and applied humanitarian research</p>	<p>Bottom approach for solutions and cost benefit analysis to prove the financial sustainability.</p> <p>Innovations occur on the field.</p> <p>Field oriented solutions: specific solutions are necessary there is not a global answer for everything.</p>	<p>A new approach for research institution creating a network with universities and other institutions.</p> <p>Aligned and applied research provides an added value through guidelines, trainings, platforms specific for the humanitarian sector by humanitarian sector's scientists.</p> <p>GTH is accessing to a wide expertise network. It is important to mix research and practice.</p> <p>Intensify testing on the field when they are developing.</p>	<p>Research institutions provide higher added value and effectiveness when working closely with more agencies at academic level in technology adaptation.</p>	<p>Differentiate between global response and specific response.</p> <p>Focus on one and not try to analyse the big picture.</p> <p>Link all modalities and sectors to create a holistic approach.</p>
<p>Accountability</p> <p>Outcome's orientation</p> <p>Knowledge sharing</p>	<p>The real results are to be found on the field.</p>			<p>Impact is important to get feedback. Follow up to the solutions is necessary afterwards.</p>

	Final beneficiaries (A)	Direct area of influence Operational partners (B)	Indirect area of influence Strategic partners (C)	Steering committee (D)
Upscaling				Accountability and transparency on results and impact. Added value would be to access an intersectoral knowledge sharing platform.
Approach	GTH presentation: GTH original concept and examples with results on the field + GTH added values			
	Mapping of needs Mapping of potential contributions			
Who	People of concern Regional staff Country staff	UNHCR External local partners Other potential local partners (incl. academia at regional level (South))	Unicef IFCR ICRC UNITAR UN-Habitat BMZ / GIZ Last Mile Climate Asian Development Bank Norwegian Refugee Council Globesight Cities Alliance WHO Privat partners linked to a product? Academia (North)	SDC UNHCR HQ GTH Academia
Contact Channel	UNHCR HQ + CO + RB	UNHCR regional bureaus and country offices	Liaison with Group of Friends (Charles Campbell / Manuel Krähenbühl / donors)	
Outreach strategy contribution to results	Actors' and outcome's mapping by target group			
	Principles and recommendations for an outcomes' and actors' based management and monitoring			
	Recommendations to obtain outcomes' and actors' based evidences for impacts and changes on final beneficiaries and other stakeholders within the ToC.			


	Final beneficiaries (A)	Direct area of influence Operational partners (B)	Indirect area of influence Strategic partners (C)	Steering committee (D)
	Recommendations for pledge and for leverage of funds and wills for GTH innovative solutions.			

Table 1: GTH Outreach strategy

Annex 3: Documents consulted

1. Background and strategic documents

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- UNHCR (n/a): Shelter and Sustainability - A technical and environmental comparative overview of common shelter typologies found in settlements across UNHCR operations. United Nations.
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- Agreement FDFA- UNHCR GTH (GTH) 2021-2022 -Addendum (2022-2024): “Addendum No 1 to the Agreement between the Swiss Confederation, represented by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, acting through the Swiss Humanitarian Aid SDC/HA and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) concerning the Support to Establish the GTH at UNHCR”. (07/2022).
- Agreement FDFA- UNHCR GTH (GTH) 2021-2022 -Addendum (2022-2024): “Addendum No 2 to the Agreement between the Swiss Confederation, represented by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, acting through the Swiss Humanitarian Aid SDC/HA and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) concerning the Support to Establish the GTH at UNHCR”. (07/2022).
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- EPFL (Essential Tech Centre) (2022): GTH – EPFL collaboration. Operational report Phase 1 (10.2021-07.2022).

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- ETH, GTH, UNHCR, SDC (n/a). Phase 2 Proposal. Timeframe: December 2022 – May 2024.
- FDFA, SDC Humanitarian Aid & SHA (2021, 19. November): Mandate (*Unspecified*).
- FDFA, SDC Humanitarian Aid & SHA (2022, 08. Juni): Mandate. Eawag Consultancy for the GTH.
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- GTH (n/a): Geneva Technical Hub [PowerPoint slides]. GTH.
- GTH (n/a): GTH support provided by Country [PowerPoint slides]. GTH.
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3. Steering Group and Technical Group

- Francesca Coloni (2022): “Steering Group Meeting (3)” [Minutes of the Meeting]. 2022, November 24. GTH.
- GTH (2021): “GTH – Technical Group Meeting (1)”. [Minutes of the Meeting]. 2021, November 01. GTH. Bern, Switzerland.
- GTH (2021): GTH Steering Group – 8.10.2021. 2021, October 08. GTH.
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- GTH (2021, November 01): Technical Group Meeting (1) [PowerPoint slides]. GTH.
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- GTH (2022, 17. January): Ellen Milnes, hydrogeologist GTH [PowerPoint slides]. GTH.
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- GTH (2022, 17. January): Settlement Planning GTH Technical Group Meeting [PowerPoint slides]. GTH.
- GTH (2022, 17. January): Shelter Support GTH Technical Group Meeting [PowerPoint slides]. GTH.
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- GTH (2022, 24. November): *Steering Group Meeting* [PowerPoint Slides]. GTH.
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- GTH (2023, June 06): GTH - Technical Group Meeting (6) [Agenda]. SDC Headquarters and online. GTH.
- GTH (2023, June 13): Steering Group Meeting [PowerPoint slides]. GTH.
- GTH Reporting Tool 02. Januar 2022 – 29. June 2023. [Excel Sheet].
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- Philippe Long (2022): “Steering Group” [Minutes of the Meeting]. 2022, May 22. UNHCR HQ (Geneva). GTH.
- Philippe Reymond (2022, 17. January): Progress & Plans [PowerPoint slides]. GTH.
- SDC (2022): Training SHA 2022 [PowerPoint slides]. GTH.
- SDC (2023, 02. March): SDC 2030 – fit for purpose [PowerPoint slides]. DEZA.
- ToRs Steering Group Geneva Technical Hub. (n/a).
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4. Financial management

- Budget GTH detailed per year.
- GTH Budget and Expenditure.
- UNHCR (2023): Draft Financial Information – Year 2. Financial Annex for the Government of Switzerland. United Nations.
- GTH (2023): UNHCR Progress Report for the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) on its financial contribution to the GTH (1 June 2022 - 31 May 2023). GTH.
- Financial report. SDC contribution for UNHCR GTH (2021, June – 2022, May). Final Report.
- SDC (2023, 30. January): Expense Account for Mandate Type B.
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- Benninger, U. (2023, 10. July): Re: [External] Expenditure [E-Mail].
- SDC (2022, 15. September): Expense Account for Mandate Type B. EBI, Eawag, GTH Abrechnung Phase 1 (01.06.2021 – 03.07.2022)
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5. Mission reports

- GTH, UNHCR & SDC (2022): Draft Report – Sanitation Mission in Nigeria (Ogoja and Ikyogen regions).
- GTH, UNHCR & SDC (2023): Executive Summary – Sanitation Mission in Sudan (Khartoum, Kassala, Gedaref & White Nile).
- Mission de support pour settlement planning, Tchad (n/a).
- Mission de support pour settlement planning, Tchad (n/a). Annexes.
- Mission Report Environmental Field Support Luwani Refugee Settlement, Malawi (2022): Manuel Krähenbühl
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- Philippe Reymond (2022, 17. January): Sanitation Mission: Zimbabwe – Malawi – Zambia [PowerPoint slides]. GTH.
- GTH, UNHCR & SDC (2023, 01. May): Mission Report. Review of Ukhiya Water Supply Systems.

6. GTH output documents (tools and guidelines)

- EPFL (n/a): GTH Phase 2 – Monitoring. [Excel Sheet].
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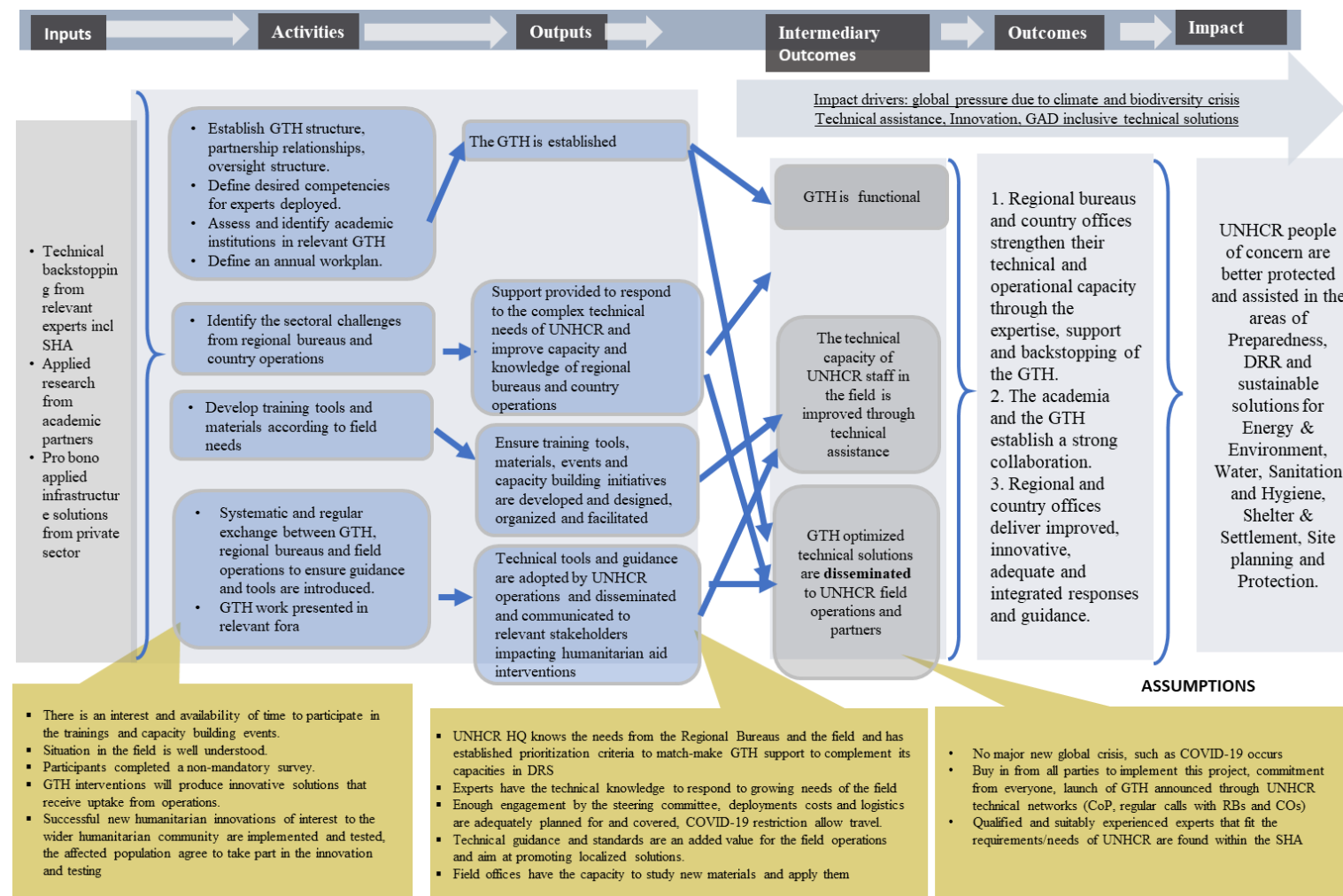
Annex 6: Review framework

Questions	Areas of Enquiry
RQ1 - To what extent is the technical approach of GTH contributing to the Objectives of the Global Compact for Refugees and UNHCR's strategic framework on climate resilience and environmental sustainability?	Strategy - To what extent does GTH contribute to the Global Compact on Refugees on addressing the accommodation and environmental impacts of a large number of refugees?
	Coherence - Is GTH aligned with the key strategic framework of Switzerland and UNHCR ⁴³ ?
	Vision - To what extent does GTH support meet expectations of UNHCR staff requesting support?
RQ2 - Institutional set up and partners - To what extent does the institutional set-up, partners and modalities support the objectives of GTH?	Modalities - To what extent are the support modalities of GTH suitable and complementary to deliver the expected / suitable solutions?
	Management - To what extent has the management of GTH and collaboration with experts and academia worked well?
	Monitoring - Has monitoring on progress including the level of satisfaction been carried out and reported regularly?
	Gender, age and diversity - In what way has GAD been mainstreamed into the support of GTH?
	Why and why not? Which factors have supported or hindered the well-functioning of the institutional set up and cooperation with partners?
RQ3 - Cooperation and added value - To what extent does GTH add value in the context of development of innovative solutions and exploring synergies with relevant partners and initiatives?	Application of resources - How has GTH's resources been applied?
	Added value - To what extent has GTH added value in itself and compared with other similar initiatives?
	Cooperation - To what extent is GTH succeeding in creating synergies in its collaboration with other like-minded initiatives and with country/ local systems as well as SDC, UNHCR and other partners ?
RQ4 - To what extent did GTH support lead to the intended results?	Outputs and outcomes - Have the stipulated outputs and outcomes been achieved in a timely manner?
	Uptake - To what extent are the initiatives strategic, taking up and on track to achieve the expected impact at scale?
	Empowerment - To what extent does the GTH empower local/regional partners to play an increasingly prominent role in developing and applying innovative solutions?

⁴³ Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy 2021-2024, with the SHA operational concept 2030, with the Swiss Research Concept for the Policy Sector on Development and Cooperation 2021-2024 and with respect to the KFPE North-South research principles, UNHCR Operational Strategy for climate resilience and environmental sustainability 2022 - 2025)

	Why and why not? Which factors have supported or hindered the achievement of the stipulated output, outcomes and results?
EQ 5: Transfer of knowledge and learning - To what extent have the GTH interventions led to learning and suitable long-term solutions?	Functioning - What has been working well for GTH in terms of reaching expected results, partnerships, management structure, institutional set up and modalities?
	Transfer of knowledge - To what extent has there been an effective transfer of applied knowledge between the current Swiss experts and academic partners and the UNHCR and its beneficiaries to create capacity and empowerment?
	Sustainability - To what extent are innovative and adapted solutions by the GTH program environmentally sustainable and integrated in the respective local systems, technologically and financially viable?
	Research application and learning - Are external partners building on the GTH achievements for further research and development?
EQ6: Recommendations - Based on the lessons from 2 years of implementation, which changes should be made in the GTH to make it better in responding to UNHCR's and other Geneva based international humanitarian organizations' need for capacity in finding and applying sustainable solutions within their mandate?	Approach to localized solution? - Does its focus on solving complex technical issues make sense? Or should it rather solve problems in an innovative way, finding appropriate localized solutions?
	Strengthening GAD - How could the approach implementation of GAD in practice be improved?
	Change in management: structure - How could the management structure be more effective?
	Change in modalities - Any alternative approaches that should be considered?
	Change in institutional set up - Which advantages could there be in changing the institutional set up, how would that effect costs and how could additional costs be covered?
	Change in pool of experts - Shall experts from other countries/entities be mobilized for GTH?
	Change in research approach - Which elements of the academic institutions' support should be changed to strengthened to be more effective?
	Future partners - To what extent is GTHs orientation relevant and in line with the strategies of present and potential new partners?

Annex 7: Reconstructed theory of change based on revised log frame



Annex 8: SDC OECD Assessment Grid

Annex 2: Assessment grid (version July 2021)

Note: this assessment grid is used for evaluations and internal assessments of SDC or SECO financed projects and programs (hereinafter jointly referred to as an 'intervention'). It is based on the OECD Development Assistance Committee evaluation criteria.⁴⁴ If specific results are not yet measurable at the time of the assessment, it requires analysing the likelihood of achieving impact and sustainability. All applicable sub-criteria should be scored and a short explanation should be provided. Additional sub-criteria may be added.

Select the corresponding number (0-4) representing your rating of the sub-criteria in the column "score": 0 = not assessed; 1 = highly satisfactory; 2 = satisfactory; 3 = unsatisfactory; 4 = highly unsatisfactory

- **Highly satisfactory** (HS) – there were no shortcomings in relation to the intervention's relevance, coherence and efficiency; the objectives at outcome level were fully achieved or exceeded and are likely to have a significant impact, which will be sustained in the future.
- **Satisfactory** (S) – There were moderate shortcomings in relation to the intervention's relevance, coherence and efficiency. Most intended objectives at outcome level were achieved (or for mid-term: are likely to be achieved). The likelihood of achieving intended impact or sustainability of the intervention's benefits is reasonable.
- **Unsatisfactory** (U) – There were important shortcomings in relation to the intervention's relevance, coherence and efficiency, in the achievement of its objectives (N.B. if outputs are achieved, but do not result in the expected outcomes, consider rating relevance and/or effectiveness as unsatisfactory). The likelihood of achieving intended impact or sustainability of the intervention's benefits is questionable.
- **Highly unsatisfactory** (HU) - There were very severe shortcomings in relation to the operation's relevance, coherence and efficiency. Intended objectives have not been achieved, achievement of intended impact or sustainability of benefits are highly unlikely.
- **Not assessed** (na) – The criteria statement cannot be assessed. Please explain and provide details in the justifications section.

Title of the evaluated intervention: SDC support to the Geneva Technical Hub

Evaluation type: Prospective review

Evaluator(s): Malene Wiinblad & Lida Rodriguez

Date of the evaluation: 19.09.2023

⁴⁴ For more guidance see: Better Criteria for Better Evaluations. Revised Evaluation Criteria. Definitions and Principles for Use, OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation, 2019.

Key aspects based on DAC criteria	Score	Justification (Provide a short explanation for your score or why a criterion was not assessed)
Relevance Note: the assessment here captures the relevance of objectives <u>and</u> design <i>at the time of design</i> and <i>at time of evaluation</i>		
1. The extent to which the objectives of the intervention respond to the needs and priorities of the target group.	1 - highly satisfactory	The GTH original concept responds to the need within the humanitarian sector and the target groups, the Global Compact on Refugees and UNHCR Strategic Framework on Climate Resilience and Environmental Sustainability
2. The extent to which the objectives of the intervention respond to the needs and priorities of indirectly affected stakeholders (not included in target group, e.g. government, civil society, etc.) in the country of the intervention.	0 - not determined	External actors are not monitored and therefore they could not be part of the review because they were not systematically included within the implementation strategy.
3. The extent to which core design elements of the intervention (such as the theory of change, structure of the project components, choice of services and intervention partners) adequately reflect the needs and priorities of the target group.	2 - satisfactory	Theory of change (ToC) was not designed. The GTH now responds to ad hoc needs from UNHCR operations which is a limited response taking into consideration the original GTH concept to respond to a more global agenda and multi-actor needs. Systemic problems are not identified
If an additional sub-criteria is relevant please formulate it here	select	Click here to enter text.
Coherence		
4. Internal coherence: the extent to which the intervention is compatible with other interventions of Swiss development cooperation in the same country and thematic field (consistency, complementarity and synergies).	2 - satisfactory	GTH concept is coherent with the SDC and UNHCR strategies. In the research strategy a more collaborative and participatory approach needs to be implemented to correspond to the KFPE North-South research principles. Also a dissemination platform with a knowledge management strategy is needed.
5. External coherence: the extent to which the intervention is compatible with interventions of other actors in the country and thematic field (complementarity and synergies).	2 - satisfactory	The intervention is based on case-by-case requests without a more holistic approach at country or regional level that would allow more complementarity and synergies with external partners and included potential leverage effects at global, regional and country level.
If an additional sub-criteria is relevant please formulate it here	select	Click here to enter text.
Effectiveness		

Key aspects based on DAC criteria	Score	Justification (Provide a short explanation for your score or why a criterion was not assessed)
6. The extent to which approaches/strategies during implementation are adequate to achieve the intended results.	3 - unsatisfactory	GTH implemented mostly a case by case approach. Since 2023 a value chain and multisectoral approach were tested which conducted to a higher level of satisfaction among the country and regional UNHCR staff. There is no mechanism to promote implementation of technical solutions or mobilise funding for that.
7. The extent to which the intervention achieved or is expected to achieve its intended objectives (outputs and outcomes).	3 - unsatisfactory	GTH is monitored according to an outputs' based approach. Outcomes' indicators and overall progress monitoring is missing. Indicators on the uptake of recommendations were introduced in 2023. The change of the log frame during implementation has weakened to the focus on achieving the overall objective. The dissemination approach is not well defined lacking clarity on target groups and link to the overall objective.
8. The extent to which the intervention achieved or is expected to achieve its intended results related to transversal themes.	3 - unsatisfactory	No indicator on transversal themes, Despite, comprehensive guidance and knowledge on GAD, it is not mainstreamed in the technical solutions. Environment and climate change are considered and key part of the GTH strategy.
If an additional sub-criteria is relevant please formulate it here	select	Click here to enter text.
Efficiency		
9. The extent to which the intervention delivers the results (outputs, outcomes) cost-effectively.	3 - unsatisfactory	The risk matrix in the credit proposal is not considered. The investment as such is a high risk of leading to few results if the intervention strategy is not revised.
10. The extent to which the intervention delivers the results (outputs, outcome) in a timely manner (within the intended timeframe or reasonably adjusted timeframe).	2 - satisfactory	Outputs were timely delivered but there is no information about outcomes because of short term and case-by-case approach.
11. The extent to which management, monitoring and steering mechanisms support efficient implementation.	3 - unsatisfactory	Lack of strategic approach. In steering group no strategic people. Steering is management oriented. Management focused on responding to isolated requests and planning of missions. Technical group meetings were too focused on reporting on missions which led to no time for discussing the overall technical approach and identifying systemic problems to address. Not using online tools sufficiently. Not working as

Key aspects based on DAC criteria	Score	Justification (Provide a short explanation for your score or why a criterion was not assessed)
		a hub because there is too little interaction between GTH experts and researchers
If an additional sub-criteria is relevant please formulate it here	select	Click here to enter text.
Impact		
<p>12. The extent to which the intervention generated or is expected to generate 'higher-level effects' as defined in the design document of the intervention.</p> <p>Note: when assessing this criterion, the primary focus is the intended 'higher-level effects'. In the event that <i>significant</i> unintended negative or positive effects can be discerned, they must be specified in the justification column, especially if they influence the score.</p>	4 - highly unsatisfactory	No focus on implementation and impact partly because of change of log frame. The ToC is missing. Reporting structure is focused solely on accountability and not on learning
If an additional sub-criteria is relevant please formulate it here	select	Click here to enter text.
Sustainability		
13. The extent to which partners are capable and motivated (technical capacity, ownership) to continue activities contributing to achieving the outcomes.	0 - not determined	As it is a review, sustainability was not considered but recommendations for phase 2 were given based on the above.
14. The extent to which partners have the financial resources to continue activities contributing to achieving the outcomes.	0 - not determined	As it is a review, sustainability was not considered but recommendations for phase 2 were given based on the above.
15. The extent to which contextual factors (e.g. legislation, politics, economic situation, social demands) is conducive to continuing activities leading to outcomes.	0 - not determined	As it is a review, sustainability was not considered but recommendations for phase 2 were given based on the above.
If an additional sub-criteria is relevant please formulate it here	select	Click here to enter text.