

Saving Lives Together

“A Framework for improving Security Arrangements among International Non-Governmental Organisations / International Organisations and the United Nations”

Guidelines for the Implementation of the “Saving Lives Together” Framework

July 2016

The Saving Lives Together (SLT) initiative was created in recognition of the fact that the organisations of the UN Security Management System (UNSMS), International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) and International Organisations (IOs) face similar security challenges when operating in volatile environments. SLT was established to provide a framework to improve collaboration on common security concerns and enhance the safe delivery of humanitarian and development assistance.

These guidelines were developed to support the implementation of the 2015 revision of the SLT Framework, which aimed to achieve a clear, more focused and systematic approach to security collaboration between the UN, INGOs and IOs.

These guidelines are provided as a tool for security managers in SLT partner organisations. They explain key principles, concepts, and processes, and set out practical steps and options for the effective implementation of the SLT Framework.

These guidelines are a first edition and will invariably have shortcomings. Therefore, the UN, INGO and IO security managers are encouraged to provide feedback to inform necessary additions and revisions. Feedback may be sent to the SLT Oversight Committee (SLT OC) through the UNDSS Communications Centre (email: undsscomscen@un.org) or through their respective INGO networks, such as eisf-director@eisf.eu or securityadmin@interaction.org.

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Annex – Saving Lives Together Framework

1. Principles and Objectives

- a. Saving Lives Together (SLT) is a series of recommendations aimed at enhancing security collaboration between the organisations of the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS)¹, INGOs and IOs (“SLT partner organisations”). It recognises the collectively experienced security threats and the importance of collaboration to support the safe delivery of humanitarian and development assistance.
- b. The objective of SLT is to enhance the ability of partner organisations to make informed decisions, manage risks and implement effective security arrangements to enable delivery of assistance and improve the security of personnel and continuity of operations.
- c. Although Saving Lives Together is a voluntary engagement by the SLT partner organisations, the success and effectiveness of the initiative is dependent on the commitment of all participating organisations to work collectively towards the mutual goal of improving the security of personnel and operations. Accordingly, organisations that wish to become SLT partner organisations must commit to the adoption and effective implementation of the principles, objectives and arrangements in the SLT Framework.
- d. To this end, SLT partner organisations commit to:
 - Establish security collaboration arrangements
 - Share relevant security information
 - Cooperate on security training
 - Cooperate on security operational and logistics arrangements, where feasible
 - Identify resource requirements for enhancing security coordination between the UN, INGOs, and IOs, and advocate for their funding
 - Consult on common ground rules for humanitarian action
- e. It is recognised that SLT partner organisations perceive and assess threats and vulnerabilities differently, accept different levels of risk, and implement security arrangements which they consider suitable for their organisation and operational conditions. SLT is designed to enhance and complement security risk management systems of SLT partner organisations, not substitute these systems and related arrangements.
- f. The United Nations and individual INGOs and IOs remain fully responsible for their own personnel, and the implementation of their individual security risk management measures.

¹ As identified in the UNSMS Security Policy Manual, Chapter II, Section G: “Saving Lives Together”, UNSMS member organisations are mandated to implement the “Saving Lives Together” Framework.

2. Criteria and Requirements for SLT Partnership Status

SLT Partner Organisations – Criteria and Requirements

The SLT partnership comprises UNSMS Organisations and International Non-Governmental (INGOs) and International Organisations (IOs) that are implementing and operational partners of United Nations Agencies, Funds and Programmes.

The following criteria will apply:

- a. INGO and IO Implementing and Operational Partners² of the United Nations: INGOs and IOs that have a contractual or treaty agreement to implement a programme or deliver a service for a UN Agency, Fund or Programme.
- b. Field presence/mission activity: SLT is focused on enhancing field related security management, in particular where volatile security conditions prevail. Accordingly, only INGOs or IOs with established field operations or significant field activity can be considered as SLT partner organisations, whether at the country or the global level.
- c. Adequate security risk management arrangements: Organisations that wish to cooperate under the SLT Framework are required to maintain internal security risk management procedures, adequate contingency planning and reliable arrangements to respond to security emergencies, including evacuation and medical support arrangements for their personnel.

National NGOs

While national NGOs cannot attain formal SLT partnership status and do not fall under the SLT Framework, they may be engaged and collaborate on security through specific mechanisms as relevant to individual contexts.

² The SLT OC will consider organisations, on a case by case basis, which may not have a contractual or treaty agreement with the United Nations.

3. Global and Field Level SLT Partnership Arrangements

Global SLT Partnership Status for INGOs and IOs

INGOs and IOs may attain global SLT partnership status through the exchange of a Letter of Understanding (LOU) between the headquarters of the respective INGO or IO and UNDSS.

The admission process for global SLT partnership status will be administered by SLT Working Group in accordance with the following process:

1. Expression of interest: An individual INGO or IO will express interest in the formalisation of the SLT partnership to SLT OC or the SLT OC will write to individual INGOs or IOs offering the exchange of a Letter of Understanding (LOU)
2. Review:
The SLT Working Group will:
 - a. Review whether the INGO/IO meets eligibility criteria and requirements for SLT Partner Status
 - b. Confirm the ‘implementing/operational partner’ status with the respective UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, or UN Departments/Offices
 - c. Make a recommendation to the SLT OC regarding the establishment of a global partnership status for review and decision
3. Finalisation:
The SLT OC reviews the recommendations of the SLT WG:
 - i. If the SLT OC approves global partnership status, UNDSS will formalise the exchange of the Letter of Understanding (LOU)
 - ii. If SLT OC rejects global partnership status, a formal letter will be sent to communicate and explain the decision to the respective INGO or IO

Country Level SLT Partnership Arrangements

Only INGOs or IOs fulfilling the criteria and requirements for SLT partner status as set out above can be admitted as SLT partners at country level.

UNDSS at country level will maintain a list of all INGOs and IOs that are confirmed and active SLT partner organisations. Where an INGO security co-ordination platform is established and has responsibility for security collaboration with the UN, it will share its member list with the UNDSS field office.

Confirmation of Eligibility for SLT Partnership – two options:

- a. Global SLT partners: UNDSS HQ will maintain a list of INGOs which have obtained global SLT partnership status, and share this list with UNDSS, Designated Officials and OCHA in the field.
- b. Country-level confirmation of eligibility: Country offices of UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, and UN Departments/Offices, will determine whether an INGO or IO is an ‘implementing’ or ‘operational’ partner and confirm this status to UNDSS (through UNDSS SLT focal point(s)). If an INGO security co-ordination platform is established and has responsibility for security collaboration with the United Nations, its members will be eligible for SLT partnership.

If there are cases at country level, where the eligibility for SLT partnership of an INGO/IO under the above listed criteria is not clear, these should be referred to the SLT Working Group for review.

Infractions of the SLT Framework

UNSMS organisations will address infractions of the SLT Framework by their personnel through their respective rules and regulations.

SLT partnership status may be suspended or rescinded in cases where INGOs or IOs and/or their personnel:

- Are no longer considered as ‘implementing or operational partners’
- Act in contravention of SLT principles and objectives
- Object to or are unable to collaborate in line with the SLT framework and implementation guidelines
- Deliberately breach confidentiality procedures set out in these guidelines

Authority to Suspend SLT Partnership Status

At country level, SLT partnership status may be suspended by the Designated Official for Security after consultation with the respective INGO, and based on concurrence of UNDSS, OCHA and the INGO representative(s) for security collaboration under SLT.

If consensus cannot be reached at field level, the issue should be handled within the ‘Feedback Mechanism’ (outlined in Section 12 below) and referred to the SLT WG. The final decision on suspension of SLT partnership status rests with the SLT OC.

4. Coordination Mechanisms and Arrangements

- a. To achieve SLT objectives, security managers in UNDSS, UN agencies, funds and programmes, INGOs and IOs should establish SLT collaboration mechanisms.
- b. SLT collaboration mechanisms may be established at country level, and replicated at area/regional level where required (linked with the UNSMS arrangements under the Area Security Coordinator where applicable).
- c. It is recognised that SLT works best where security collaboration is achieved through committed focal points. As there is no worldwide coordination system applicable to INGOs and IOs, it is essential that the INGO and IO communities organise respective country/area-level mechanisms and nominate security focal points to interface with UNDSS.
- d. Notwithstanding the importance of collaboration mechanisms, these are not intended to prevent direct communications between individual organisations.

The following table comprises possible collaboration mechanisms/models and related arrangements.

INGO and IO Actions	UN Actions
<p>The INGO and IO communities should each establish one of the following three mechanisms for their respective members (the approach taken and mechanism established by the INGOs and IOs may differ):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>SLT Focal Point Representation</u>: Representatives are designated as focal points by their respective communities to interface with the UNSMS/UNDSS. 2. <u>Coordination Forum</u>: Existing coordination fora integrate security within their agendas and appoint representatives/focal points to interface with the UNSMS/UNDSS. 3. <u>Security Platform</u>: Security platforms are established (separate from any existing coordination forum) and interface with the UNSMS/UNDSS.³ <p>INGOs and IOs may require separate representation vis-à-vis the UN. In such cases, the different communities are required to organise their representation or interface with the UNSMS/UNDSS.</p>	<p>In the UN, SLT Framework implementation is formalised in a UNSMS policy⁴ which is binding on all member organisations.</p> <p><u>UNDSS</u> at field and HQ level will function as the focal point⁵ for SLT security cooperation on behalf of the UNSMS, in close cooperation with UN Agencies and OCHA. At ‘enhanced’ SLT implementation level (see below), UNDSS at field level will nominate a security focal point for SLT, providing a strong link with the INGO and IO representation mechanisms.</p> <p><u>OCHA</u> will support SLT collaboration between INGOs, IOs and the UN through the established fora (HCT, cluster system, etc.).</p> <p><u>UNDSS</u> HQ will support direct coordination by sharing a global directory with country coverage and contact details of UNDSS personnel at regular intervals.</p>

³ This role may be taken over by an INGO with the specific function of coordinating and supporting security management for INGOs.

⁴ *UNSMS Security Policy Manual, Chapter II, Section G: “Saving Lives Together”.*

⁵ In countries in which no UNDSS office is established, the UN Country Security Focal Point will function as the focal point for SLT.

UN-INGO Representation in fora and meetings

INGO / IO / UN representation at the various meetings and fora should be locally agreed at the country level.

- a. INGOs and IOs may:
 - Grant permission for nominated UNSMS representatives (normally UNDSS and/or OCHA) to attend relevant portions of their respective security fora and other relevant meetings
 - Establish a dedicated meeting with UNSMS representatives
- b. UNSMS/UNDSS may implement one or several of the following options:
 - Dedicated and regular security forum/meeting - normally co-chaired by UN (Chief Security Adviser, INGO and IO representatives
 - Participation of INGO and IO representative(s) at the UN Security Cell meetings
 - Attendance of INGO and IO representatives at UN Security Management Team (SMT) meetings. Generally, such attendance should be granted to the representative(s) nominated by their respective platforms or mechanisms.

Granting permission for INGO or IO representatives to attend UN Security Management Team (SMT) meetings is at the discretion of the Designated Official for Security. Such participation may be limited to the relevant portion of the SMT meeting, and should be considered exceptional, noting that UN SMT meetings are generally restricted to Heads of UNSMS organisations.

5. Management of SLT Implementation Levels

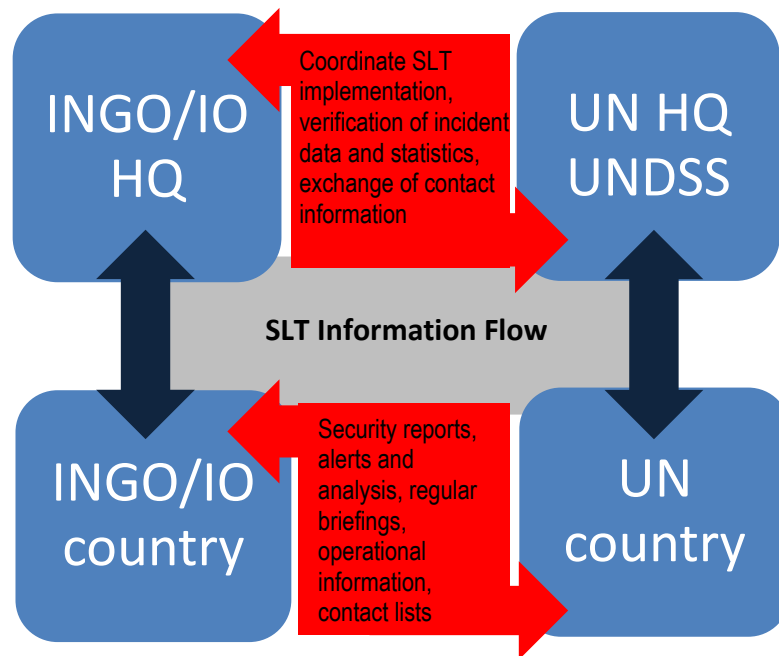
- a. SLT implementation is divided into two levels to reflect the degree and depth in collaboration necessary in different operating environments:
 - “Regular” SLT implementation: low/medium risk conditions
 - “Enhanced” SLT implementation: high/very high risk conditions, complex conflict environment and humanitarian emergencies.
- b. The SLT implementation level will apply for the geographical areas used by the UNSMS, i.e. areas under the authority of one Designated Official for Security. This may be entire countries or DPKO/political mission areas.
- c. The determination of the appropriate SLT implementation level will be made by the SLT OC in close consultation with SLT partner organisations at HQ and in the field.
- d. The SLT WG will review the list of countries/mission areas with ‘enhanced’ level SLT implementation every 6 months (or earlier if recommended by the field or members of the SLT OC) and:
 - recommend changes to the SLT implementation levels
 - recommend the addition/deletion of areas/countries
 - circulate the updated list to the SLT OC for review and endorsement
- e. UNDSS will circulate the list of countries/mission areas with ‘enhanced’ level SLT implementation to SLT partner organisations every 6 months and/or every time a change is made to implementation levels.

6. Information Sharing

Obtaining relevant, timely, and accurate security information is a critical element of informed decision making, and it is therefore incumbent on all SLT partner organisations to commit to sharing relevant security information with each other.

The primary focus of information sharing under SLT is at field level, based on the principle that information is best communicated directly between key advisers and decisions makers at the local level.

Information Flow Diagram



To facilitate the country level collaboration and information sharing, UNDSS HQs will periodically circulate a DSS SLT Phonebook with contact details for all international UNDSS personnel deployed globally.

UNDSS HQs will also share an SLT Daily Report with INGO/IO HQ Focal Points – this report will comprise developments and incidents affecting UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes and will be derived from the UNDSS Daily Report to the UNSMS.

INGO and IO HQ security managers are strongly encouraged, as a matter of reciprocity, to alert UNDSS HQs on critical security incidents and/or developments, verify / follow up on security incidents, and consult with UNDSS as appropriate.

Limitations / Restrictions to Information Sharing

It is recognised that SLT partner organisations may have limitations on what information they can share due to internal confidentiality requirements, restrictions applicable to information originating from third parties, obligations to protect the privacy of their personnel and the credibility of their organisation.

It is therefore not expected that SLT partner organisations will provide information they consider confidential, in particular information that:

- Presents a risk to the safety of individuals who are mentioned in the documents
- Violates the duty of confidentiality that the organisation owes to a third party
- Compromises the confidentiality of the organisation's internal decision-making process, or
- Impedes the effective functioning of current or future operations

While taking the above limitations into account, SLT partner organisations should make every effort to disclose relevant security information, especially when such information may be critical to mitigate an imminent risk of injury or death of personnel or to respond safely and effectively to a security incident.

Sharing of Security Incident Reports, Alerts

The UNSMS, INGOs and IOs should, as far as possible, develop agreed mechanisms and procedures to ensure the timely sharing of security incident reports, alerts, and other security information.

These mechanisms/procedures should adhere to the following principles:

- a. Security information shared directly between SLT partners should be limited to personnel with security responsibilities and senior managers.
- b. It remains the responsibility of individual organisations to analyse the relevance of the reports/information and implement security measures which are appropriate for their organisation.
- c. Contact information lists for security officials should be maintained and shared at global and country level. Normally, 2-3 security/senior managers per SLT Partner Organisation should be sufficient.
- d. SLT partner organisations may request that the originator of the message, as well as specific security advice and measures are redacted prior to further distribution.

Information Sharing Arrangements

<i>INGO and IO Actions</i>	<i>UN Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INGO and IO representatives and platform/mechanism managers will establish procedures to ensure timely notification on all critical security developments and incidents through the following actions: • Maintain email and SMS lists to enable prompt notification • Establish standardised reporting formats • Establish circulation procedures for reports/alerts • Maintain a contact directory for all INGO and IO security focal points and share this with UNDSS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDSS will set up security information sharing procedures, including maintaining email distribution lists, to facilitate information sharing between the UNSMS to INGOs and IOs, including regular reports/alerts • UNDSS will circulate the contact information of relevant UN security personnel to INGOs and IOs • In countries in which a UN Security Information and Operations Centre (SIOC) is established, it will serve as the central security information hub for the UN in its security collaboration with INGOs and IOs • UNDSS will maintain close contact with host country security officials and diplomatic missions and distribute information obtained from these sources to INGOs and IOs, if appropriate and agreed by counterparts

Confidentiality

Participating organisations will ensure:

- a. The confidentiality of shared information and the appropriate use of the information within their organisations
- b. That the privacy of staff and other persons mentioned in the report/shared documents is protected - personal information should be removed from security reports and other shared documents as required
- c. That information received is not further distributed to third parties without the prior consent of the originating organisation.

SLT partner organisations should work together and consider the following actions:

- a. Establishing confidentiality rules/regulations for information management
- b. Developing and implementing an accepted common information classification system
- c. Developing good practice in relation to information management. This may include restricting access to sensitive security information by mechanisms such as secure files, data encryption, etc.
- d. Organisational email addresses should be used for sharing security information. Personal email addresses should only be permitted in exceptional cases and on a temporary basis.

Where an INGO or IO security coordination platform/mechanism is established, they will ensure that their members are informed of the confidentiality requirements listed above.

Sharing Sensitive Security Information

Sharing sensitive information requires trust. It is critical that recipients of information are known, and distribution channels are clear and controlled. Unnecessarily large distribution to unknown and unidentifiable persons and email addresses undermines trust.

Information sharing under SLT is limited to security purposes. Security information shared in connection with SLT is for the sole purpose of enhancing the security of personnel and, operations, and must not be used for any other purpose.

Security Analysis

The UN, INGOs and IOs should share security analysis and assessments to the extent possible with transparent and mutually agreed procedures. Security threat/risk assessments and risk analysis should be a standing item on the agenda of meetings/briefings.

INGO and IO Actions	UN Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and share security incident statistics. If there is an INGO or IO security co-ordination mechanism in place, it is good practice to maintain a central database of incidents and/or security information • Evaluate threat/risk analysis documents regarding possible relevance for the UNSMS - extract pertinent items for sharing (redact documents as required) • Compile and share lessons learned reports on critical incidents or other relevant security matters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and share security incident statistics • Redact/extract pertinent items from Security Risk Management process and Threat Assessments/Analysis for sharing • Compile and share lessons learned reports on critical incidents or other relevant security matters

Sharing of Analysis/Assessments

Sharing of security analysis and assessments is considered an essential element of SLT, as they can greatly assist SLT partner organisations with their own assessments and analysis based on the context of their specific operations and procedures.

However, neither the UN nor INGOs or IOs are expected to conduct analysis or assessments for other SLT partner organisations.

7. Operational Planning and Logistic Arrangements

Planning and logistics information should be shared, where appropriate, to enhance awareness and assist SLT partner organisations in their contingency planning and emergency response arrangements – the following categories should be considered (not exhaustive):

- a. Organisation
 - Office/premises locations
 - Staff and dependents numbers
 - Vehicle/transport capacity
 - Residential security measures and zones for international personnel (where established)
- b. Logistics
 - Road movement information (e.g. open/prohibited roads)
 - Air movement/airline safety information
 - Recommended hotels, conference/meeting venues;
 - Prohibited locations/venues
 - Communications
- c. Operational
 - Security measures and standards
 - Contracted security services, with a view to achieving a coordinated and/or common approach, where appropriate
 - Travel planning
- d. Contingency Planning
 - Evacuation and relocation of personnel and dependants as relevant
 - Hospitals/medical facilities and specialised medical doctors

In cases where UN, INGOs and IOs conduct operations jointly, security arrangements should be harmonized where or to the extent possible, including:

- Identifying permissible mission routes, locations/venues
- Establishing medical support arrangements - including the use of stand-by partners
- Sharing emergency communications arrangements – e.g. shared frequencies
- Implementing joint mission/movement monitoring
- Developing incident response and contingency plan
- Agreeing security escort arrangements

Evacuation/Relocation/Medical Support

- *Within the remit of the SLT framework, no guarantees can be provided and no liability assumed by INGOs, IOs or the United Nations for evacuation, relocation or medical support arrangements for the personnel of other partner organisations.*
- *The United Nations cannot cover INGOs or IOs in the United Nations Security Plan (and related arrangements for evacuation, relocation and medical support)*
- *Direct assistance and services may be provided, when feasible, and is usually on a reimbursable basis.*

De-confliction of Military Operations

“De-confliction” of UN, INGO and IO operations with military operations is handled by OCHA (for humanitarian organisations/ operations) as per their mandate. “De-confliction” does not fall under SLT.

8. Host Country Relations and Liaison

SLT Partner organisations may consult, where appropriate, on security coordination related to host country authorities and other local actors with a view to achieving a coordinated approach, e.g.:

- Security arrangements for premises
- Access arrangements/clearances to volatile areas
- Air movement coordination
- Road movement security (e.g. armed escorts⁶)

Responsibility for Host Country Legal and Administrative Affairs

SLT is not intended to in any way interfere with SLT partner organisations' legal and administrative responsibilities vis-à-vis host countries.

Accordingly, the UN, INGOs and IOs remain fully responsible individually for:

- *the appropriate accreditation/registration in host countries,*
- *obtaining all administrative clearances and licences, and*
- *the handling of legal and administrative issues in accordance with their status and applicable laws.*

9. Security Training

Where feasible, SLT partner organisations should offer participation in security training and consult on the development and delivery of such training.

The UN may offer the following types of training to the staff of INGOs and IOs:

- a. **SSAFE⁷ training**, training capacity should be planned so that INGO and IO personnel can be accommodated.
- b. Other UN security training and briefings at field level.
- c. Basic and Advanced Security in the Field online courses, accessible through several United Nations websites.
- d. Security management training and certification programmes

Funding for Security Training

- *Participation of INGO and IO personnel at UNSMS Security Training events may be on a reimbursable basis.*
- *SLT partner organisations should work together to identify funding requirements for training and advocate jointly for donor funding where required.*

⁶ IASC Non-Binding Guidelines on the Use of Armed Escorts for Humanitarian Convoys: <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/523189ab4.pdf>

⁷ Safe and Secure Approaches to Field Environments (UN Security Training)

10. Security Resources/Funding

In general, objectives and activities of SLT, like information sharing and mutual assistance, are achieved with existing resources without additional and/or dedicated funding. In exceptional circumstances, direct assistance may be on a reimbursable basis, e.g. provision of air transport and participation in training events.

If required, SLT partner organisations should support the inclusion in the Humanitarian Response Plans or similar funding mechanisms of additional funding for security measures to enhance access.

These may include:

- Security personnel, deployment and operational cost to reinforce existing security management capacity or cover additional geographical areas
- Security training
- Security aircraft, providing additional capacity for the relocation/evacuation of personnel, as well as medical support

11. Headquarters Support for SLT

To support the implementation of SLT and ensure its systematic and coherent implementation, the SLT OC has been established to provide leadership and HQ level support and coordination.

The SLT OC is comprised of representatives of UNDSS, OCHA, WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, ICVA⁸, InterAction, SCHR⁹, EISF¹⁰, and the InterAction SAG¹¹. The SLT OC is co-chaired by UNDSS and an INGO member of the SLT OC.

UNDSS and OCHA maintain focal points who will perform secretariat functions for the SLT OC.

The main coordination and support functions at the global level are performed by the SLT Working Group. Members of the Working Group are representatives from EISF, ICVA, InterAction, and the InterAction SAG, OCHA and UNDSS.

⁸ ICVA – International Council of Voluntary Agencies

⁹ SCHR – Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response

¹⁰ EISF – European Interagency Security Forum

¹¹ InterAction SAG – InterAction Security Advisory Group

SLT Oversight Committee (SLT OC)

The SLT Oversight Committee:

- a. Provides strategic guidance for the implementation of the SLT Framework
- b. Approves global SLT partnership for INGOs and IOs
- c. Oversees a feedback mechanism for the resolution of collaboration issues in the field and rules on issues referred to the SLT OC
- d. Promotes and disseminates good practice to enhance security collaboration between the UNSMS, INGOs and IOs
- e. Reports on the implementation of SLT to the IASC on an annual basis. UNDSS, on behalf of the SLT OC, will compile regular reports to reflect the status of SLT implementation globally, record new developments and initiatives, and publicise good practice
- f. Decides on the application of the SLT implementation levels ('regular' and 'enhanced')

SLT Working Group

The SLT Working Group will monitor the implementation of SLT, develop and coordinate global level initiatives, provide advice and make recommendations to the SLT OC.

In addition, the SLT Working Group will:

- a. Maintain and operate the feedback mechanism and follow up to resolve issues reported from the field
- b. Process applications for global SLT partnership status
- c. Conduct surveys and reviews
- d. Review the annual SLT implementation report for the IASC
- e. Review SLT implementation levels and make recommendations to the SLT OC

12. Feedback Mechanism

The SLT feedback mechanism has been created to address disagreements and issues, and matters which may have a serious impact on SLT.

Any SLT partner organisation may address any concerns/issues in relation to SLT to UNDSS HQ (undsscomscen@un.org), and/or the INGO consortia (e.g. EISF and InterAction), which will route the request to the SLT WG and/or SLT OC as required.

UNDSS will maintain case records.

SAVING LIVES TOGETHER

“A Framework for improving Security Arrangements among International Non-Governmental Organisations/International Organisations and the United Nations”

OCTOBER 2015

Objectives and Principles

Saving Lives Together, or SLT, is a series of recommendations aimed at enhancing security collaboration between the United Nations, International Non-Governmental Organisations and International Organisations (“SLT partner organisations”). It recognizes the collectively experienced security threats and the importance of collaboration to ensure the safe delivery of humanitarian and development assistance.

The objective of SLT is to enhance the ability of partner organisations to make informed decisions and implement effective security arrangements to improve the safety and security of personnel and operations.

To this end, SLT partner organisations commit to:

- Establish security coordination arrangements and forums;
- Share relevant security information;
- Cooperate on security training;
- Cooperate on operational and logistics arrangements, where feasible;
- Identify resource requirements for enhancing security coordination between the UN, INGOs and IOs, and advocate for funding; and
- Consult on common ground rules for humanitarian action.

It is recognised that SLT partner organisations perceive risks and assess vulnerabilities differently, accept different levels of risks, and implement security arrangements which they consider suitable for their organisation and operational conditions.

In this context, SLT partner organisations accept that they remain fully accountable for the safety and security of their personnel in accordance with their ‘duty of care’ obligations as employing organisations. Accordingly, organisations that wish to cooperate under the SLT Framework are required to maintain internal security risk management procedures, contingency planning and adequate and reliable arrangements to respond to security emergencies.

Implementation of SLT in the field will be achieved through the establishment of collaboration mechanisms at two levels: Regular and Enhanced. The arrangements associated with the two levels are designed to differentiate between “low/medium” and “high/very high” risk areas and the related security and operational conditions.

The SLT arrangements in the field will be supported by UN, INGO and IO headquarters security managers and through the SLT Oversight Committee. A feedback mechanism will be maintained for the resolution of coordination issues which may arise in the field.

Although Saving Lives Together is a voluntary engagement by the SLT partner organisations, the success and effectiveness of the initiative is dependent on the commitment of all participating organisations to work collectively towards the mutual goal of improving the security of personnel, operations and assets. Accordingly, organisations that wish to become SLT partner organisations must commit to the adoption of the principles, objectives and arrangements comprised in this framework.

Headquarters Support for SLT

UNDSS and OCHA will work with the headquarters of SLT partner organisations to achieve the following:

- Timely sharing of security incident reports and alerts;
- Timely responses to queries on SLT related issues;

- Supporting the resolution of security coordination problems which may arise in the field;
- Supporting the coordination of security incident response measures in the field;
- Sharing of contact information between security managers of SLT partner organisations;
- Collecting, compiling and cross-checking information for regular security reports and coordinate mutual assistance in maintaining relevant security incident databases;
- Making training events available to security managers of SLT partner organisations, when feasible;
- Organising workshops and conferences to enhance mutual knowledge and understanding of UN, INGO, and IO security collaboration;
- Exploring further areas of security cooperation between the UN, INGOs and IOs; seeking innovation and efficiencies in areas of security management.

To support the effective implementation of this framework with the required leadership and guidance, and to ensure monitoring and reporting, an SLT Oversight Committee¹ has been established to:

- Provide strategic guidance for the implementation of the SLT Framework;
- Monitor the implementation of the SLT Framework;
- Review and approve INGO HQs’ requests for admission to SLT partnership;
- Maintain a feedback mechanism for the resolution of coordination issues in the field;
- Identify and disseminate good practice to enhance security cooperation between the UNSMS, INGOs, and IOs;
- Report on the implementation of SLT to the IASC on an annual basis; UNDSS, on behalf of the SLT OC, will compile regular reports to reflect the status of SLT implementation globally, record new developments and initiatives, and publicise good practices;
- Monitor the application of the SLT Levels to ensure their coherence.

The SLT OC is co-chaired by UNDSS and a representative of an INGO SLT partner organization. UNDSS and OCHA will function as a Secretariat for the SLT OC.

SLT Partner Organisations

The SLT partnership comprises the following categories of organisations:

- United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS) Organisations;
- International Non-Governmental (INGOs)/ International Organisations (IOs) that are implementing or operational partners of United Nations Agencies, Funds and Programmes;

INGOs and IOs may request global SLT partnership status, which will be formalised through an exchange of letters of understanding (LOUs) between the headquarters of INGOs/IOs and UNDSS, upon review and agreement of the SLT OC.

SLT partnership is conditional to committing to implement the principles, objectives and arrangements comprised in this framework.

¹ The SLT Oversight Committee is comprised of representatives of UNDSS, OCHA, WFP, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, EISF, ICVA, InterAction, and SCHR. Other representatives of UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, INGO consortia, forums and individual INGOs may be joining the SLT OC per invitation.

SLT Cooperation in the Field – Regular Level

The essential goal at the Regular Level of SLT implementation is to create dialogue and information sharing arrangements to ensure that all SLT partner organisations have adequate access to relevant security information.

Coordination Arrangements

- INGOs and IOs will nominate representatives to interface and engage with the UNSMS. Where feasible, INGOs and IOs will establish a security coordination platform or use a coordination entity to interface with the UNSMS through UNDSS;
- INGOs and IOs may opt to grant observer status to nominated UNSMS representatives to attend relevant portions of the INGO and IO security forum meetings;
- UNSMS may opt to grant observer status to INGO and IO representatives to attend the relevant portions of the United Nations' Security Cell and/or Security Management Team meetings.
- UNDSS will function as the focal point for SLT security cooperation on behalf of the UNSMS, in close cooperation with UN Agencies and OCHA;

Information Sharing

- Obtaining relevant, timely and accurate security information is a critical element of informed decision making, and it is therefore incumbent on all SLT partner organisations to commit to sharing relevant security information with each other.
- Security information shared under the SLT framework is for the sole purpose of enhancing the security of personnel, operations and assets, and must not be used for any other purposes. Participating organisations commit to ensuring confidentiality of shared information and the appropriate use of the information within their organisation. Information received cannot be further distributed to third parties without the prior consent of the originating organisation. All assessments and decisions made on the basis of shared security information remain the responsibility of the individual organisations making those assessments and decisions.
- It is recognised that SLT partner organisations may have

limitations on what information they can share due to internal confidentiality requirements, restrictions applicable to information originating from third parties, obligations to protect the privacy of their personnel, and preserving the credibility and integrity of their organisation. However, SLT partner organisations should make every effort to disclose relevant security information, especially when such information may be critical to mitigate an imminent risk of injury or death.

- Security information sharing comprises the following: incident reports; situation reports; security alerts; security procedures, risk mitigation and contingency measures, as well as lessons learnt related to security incidents.

Operational and Logistics Arrangements

- SLT partner organisations will share logistics to enhance security arrangements and respond to security incidents where feasible, e.g. UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS);
- SLT partner organisations should seek to implement, where feasible, interoperable communications systems, advocate for the provision of frequencies, and assist each other in support and maintenance arrangements.

Security Training

- Recognising that UN, INGO and IO personnel operate in the same environment and that their security is often interlinked, it is advisable that security training is harmonised. Accordingly, SLT partner organisations will collaborate and consult on the development and delivery of security training, and offer participation or observer status at security training exercises, where feasible.
- In areas where the UNSMS establishes a Safe and Security Approaches to Field Environments (SSAFE) training, it will offer participation for INGO and IO personnel, if feasible.

SLT Implementation in the Field – Enhanced Level

When security conditions become more complex and challenging, information sharing and security coordination arrangements between SLT partner organisations should be enhanced concurrently. Accordingly, the goal of the Enhanced Level of cooperation is to achieve stronger and more effective information sharing, security coordination, and operational arrangements.

In areas with challenging security conditions, the elements of the Enhanced level SLT cooperation below should be considered and applied in addition to the Regular Level SLT components listed above.

Coordination Arrangements

Effective coordination mechanisms established and formalised:

- INGOs and IOs will establish a fully functioning security coordination platform to interface with the UNSMS;
- UNDSS will nominate a security focal point for SLT, providing a strong link with the INGO security coordination platform;

When required to provide additional capacity for security coordination with INGOs and IOs, and depending on capacity and availability of funding, UNDSS may establish a security support team.

Information Sharing

SLT partner organisations will:

- support the systematic sharing of security incident reports;
- establish regular security coordination meetings and briefings;
- share operational planning information, where relevant, in the interest of mutual security.

UNDSS and the INGO security coordination platform will:

- cooperate closely and enhance information sharing to enhance situational awareness for all SLT partner organisations;
- cooperate on security analysis, risk assessments, and operational planning, where feasible.

UNSMS Security Information and Operations Centres (SIOC), where established, will function as a central node for coordination and information sharing between SLT partner organisations.

Operational and Logistics Arrangements

SLT partner organisations will:

- Collaborate on security arrangements for jointly conducted operations, where applicable;
- Identify security requirements to be included in Consolidated Appeals (CAP), Strategic Response Plans (SRP), or other joint funding appeals;
- Consult on security coordination with host country authorities and other local actors with a view to achieving a coordinated and/or common approach where appropriate;
- Consult on contracted security services, e.g. security escorts, with a view to achieving a coordinated and/or common approach, where appropriate.