SECRETARIAT OF THE RISK-INFORMED EARLY ACTION PARTNERSHIP (REAP)

Terms of Reference

1 Mandate and role of the Secretariat

The Secretariat is REAP's enabling arm, convening, coordinating and supporting the Partnership to ensure it delivers on its mandate and lives by its values: needs-led, collaborative, diverse and inclusive, complementary and coherent.

In practice, the Secretariat facilitates the work of the Governing Board, co-Chairs, Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) and working groups, ensuring coherence across all governance bodies. It provides operational, technical and communications support, while safeguarding transparency, inclusivity and accountability. The Secretariat supports the Governing Board by stewarding resources effectively, managing Secretariat operations and core REAP functions, and ensuring transparent reporting and accountability to partners and funders.

The Secretariat acts as an impartial broker and facilitator, much needed in this diverse and complex community of actors, ensuring the Partnership remains focused, credible and strategically aligned across its Partners.

2 Purpose

The Secretariat exists to:

- **Ensure a functioning Partnership:** Provide operational and technical support to the Governing Board and Co-Chairs, SAG, working groups, and the wider Partnership.
- **Enable change:** Support delivery of REAP's Strategy 2030, with a focus on climate-vulnerable communities.
- **Connect Partners:** Identify and engage Partners to ensure alignment, harmonization, effective communication, and generation of ideas across the Partnership to fulfill the sensemaking, policy, and financing pillars of the strategy.
- **Steward REAP's knowledge, learning, and advocacy:** Facilitate shared learning and strategic decision making for the Partnership, and for the wider community with a focus on policy and financing.
- **Manage Partnership finances:** Steward resources secured by the Governing Board, ensuring effective management, transparent reporting and accountability for Secretariat operations and core REAP functions.

3 Composition and hosting

- The Secretariat is a small professional team, hosted by the IFRC.
- The Secretariat is composed of:

- A small team of full-time employees based in Geneva (4 people) and Addis Abeba (2 people), mainly tasked with the overall coordination and operational delivery of the activities of the Partnership.
- An expanded Secretariat team that includes part-time partner staff on loan, secondees, regional focal points, consultants, PhD students and interns, mainly leading on specific thematic or geographic files on behalf of the Partnership.

- Staff composition should reflect REAP's diversity values (gender, geography, institutional balance). This will be advanced not only through Secretariat hires, but also by drawing on extended secretariat (interns, consultants) and secondees provided by Partner organizations, which embed diverse perspectives and strengthen capacity while keeping the Secretariat lean.
- The Head of Secretariat serves as an ex officio (non-voting) member of the Governing Board.
- Technical expertise shall be drawn from secondees, consultants, or partner organizations as needed.

4 Core functions and responsibilities

4.1 Governance support

- Organize meetings of the Governing Board, SAG, and working groups.
- Prepare Board agendas, briefing packs, and meeting summaries in consultation with the co-Chairs.
- Maintain governance records, including rotation calendars, membership lists and public decision logs.
- Support induction and mentoring of new Governing Board members.
- Manage transitions in governance structures, including working with the Board co-Chairs to forecast upcoming rotations and ensure smooth leadership transitions, supporting constituencies in nominating Governing Board representatives in line with diversity safeguards.
- Operate within delegated authority, i.e. decisions reserved for the Governing Board are not taken by the Secretariat but are escalated to the Board for decision.

4.2 Partner engagement and convening

- Maintain regular communication with existing Partners, ensuring timely updates and accessible information.
- Identify and engage potential Partners, growing the diversity of voices across the Partnership.
- Organize and support partnership-wide events, webinars, and consultations to foster inclusion and ownership.
- Facilitate regional engagement through regional bodies and platforms.

- Utilize robust information management systems to monitor trends in partner engagement and take action based on the data, for example by reengaging inactive Partners.

4.3 Strategic alignment and delivery

- Facilitate implementation of the Strategy 2030, including via the design and delivery of the REAP Operational Plan.
- Coordinate the implementation of REAP workstreams and initiatives, ensuring alignment with the REAP Strategy 2030 and the Governing Board's recommendations. This includes supporting partners interested in launching and leading REAP Working Groups, participating in REAP Task Forces, developing joint publications, organizing conferences or side events in conferences, among others.
- Monitor risks and progress, and provide evidence-based recommendations to the Board.

4.4 Knowledge, learning and advocacy

- Facilitate knowledge exchange and learning activities by convening Partners.
- Facilitate meta-analysis of knowledge created by REAP Partners.
- Monitor policy and financing trends in the early warning early action ecosystem.
- Track REAP Partner outcomes and impact and ensure lessons feed into Board decision-making.
- Coordinate preparation of the annual report for Governing Board approval, based on Partnership inputs.
- Support joint advocacy on financing and policy integration, ensuring REAP adds value and coherence.
- Maintain REAP's website, communications, and knowledge platforms, while amplifying Partner knowledge, evidence, and expertise through coordinated communications and outreach activities.

4.5 Administrative and financial management

- Manage Secretariat staff, consultants, secondees, staff on loan and interns.
- Oversee financial management, budgeting, and funding reporting (under IFRC hosting arrangements).
- Support the Governing Board in mobilizing resources for Secretariat operations and core REAP functions.
- Ensure compliance with IFRC hosting agreements and relevant policies.

5 Accountability

The Secretariat is accountable to the Governing Board through its co-Chairs, and undertakes the following:

- Delivers annual work plans and budgets for approval.

- Submits regular progress, financial, and risk management reports.
- Provides evidence for strategic decision-making.
- Conducts regular light-touch Partnership health checks, e.g. through the monthly Partnership calls, and supplements them with annual in-depth satisfaction surveys of the Board, SAG, working groups, and Partnership.
- Coordinate with IFRC as the Implementing Partner of CREWS.

In performing its functions, the Secretariat acts as an impartial broker across the Partnership. While hosted by IFRC, it operates under the authority of the Governing Board and must prioritize REAP's collective interest and Strategy 2030 above any institutional priorities of the host organization or secondees. At the same time, all Secretariat staff remain fully accountable to IFRC policies and procedures—including on HR, fraud, safeguarding, and compliance—which cannot be overridden by the Governing Board. In such cases, the IFRC will notify the Governing Board of any decisions that affect Secretariat operations.

6 Review

As part of the overall governance review, a mid-term review will be conducted to assess the Secretariat's performance and these ToRs. This process will assess the Secretariat's delivery against its mandate and confirm that its role boundaries, escalation practices, and alignment with REAP's Strategy 2030 remain appropriate.