
gish



GISF ANNUAL REPORT

2021



Key Highlights
January - December 2021

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Global Interagency Security Forum



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HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021

EVENTS:
37 ROUNDTABLES
25 WEBINARS
3 HYBRID FORUMS

MEMBERSHIP
12 NEW MEMBERS
8 NEW BUSINESS PARTERS
AND AFFILIATES

ORIGINAL RESEARCH
2 PUBLICATIONS:
ACCEPTANCE
PARTNERSHIPS

01. OVERVIEW

WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

GISF is a member-led NGO forum that drives positive change through our global network of over 135 humanitarian, development, and human rights member organisations operating internationally. GISF strives to strengthen the security risk management capacity and effectiveness of organisations promoting the physical and psychological wellbeing of all staff through networking, coordination, collaboration, and information sharing. GISF builds and strengthens collective knowledge and skills and believes that breaking down silos and pooling expertise from a variety of sectors is crucial for improving humanitarian security risk management. We are committed to achieving sustainable access to populations in need and keeping aid workers safe, through driving improved security risk management policy and practice.

GISF has developed a strong, global reputation as a leading voice for NGOs on security risk management, emphasised by the support of existing and prospective members. GISF has continued to meet objectives, the requirements of member organisations and the broader NGO sector. GISF ensures the right balance and blend of many types of products, services, and opportunities for engagement, networking, sharing of good practice, and learning, whilst promoting an inclusive approach.

GISF provides a wide range of resources which promote awareness, preparedness, and good practice for security risk management, supporting the aid sector to improve access and impact for crisis affected populations, including:

- Production of original research reports, guides, articles, podcasts, and blogs;
- Delivery of capacity strengthening workshops and events that aim to strengthen capacity and provide networking opportunities, bringing together GISF members with those of other networks, and experts from academia, the private sector and elsewhere;
- GISF website and library, providing on-line resources and services;
- GISF Chat, providing an opportunity for members to share information and direct support; and
- Participation in a wide range of thematic and sectoral events, meetings, networks and groups to ensure that security risk management is considered, silos are broken down, the needs of GISF members are met and their voice is heard in global debates.

GISF continues to provide an effective trusted network both within its membership and to the broader humanitarian community for sharing information which enables the development and dissemination of good practice throughout the sector.

A short film outlining the history and values of GISF and the transition to GISC can be found here: <https://gisf.ngo/about/who-is-gisf/>



The continued growth in GISF membership, and participation by current members and other stakeholders across the wide range of our activities, demonstrates GISF's strengths in terms of influence on operational practice in security risk management and our meaningful contribution to improving humanitarian access.

OUR VALUES

INNOVATION

COLLABORATION

INCLUSIVITY

GISF has continued to attract institutional funding enabling us to meet our goals and objectives. This has been key to delivering projects that respond to existing needs in the sector, strengthening GISF as a centre of excellence, and extending our reach as a global actor through networking, coordination, collaboration, and information sharing, whilst upholding our values of innovation, collaboration, and inclusivity.

THE PROGRAMME OUTCOMES THAT DRIVE GISF

1

Outcome One

Information shared, and networks strengthened to improve humanitarian security risk management.

2

Outcome Two

Stakeholders have recognised the importance of good practice for inclusive and effective SRM in the humanitarian space.

3

Outcome Three

SRM skills and knowledge improved within the humanitarian space.



GLOBAL MEMBERS

The comprehensive range of members and stakeholders that rely on GISF services, demonstrates GISF's unique position as the key trusted NGO security organisation with a wide range of global members, an expansive network, and extensive relationships with other essential stakeholders. The close relationship maintained with members also facilitates adaptability to changes in the sector, ensuring our actions remain relevant.

Since going global in 2020, GISFs ability to meet objectives and better serve the needs of members and the wider humanitarian sector has gone from strength to strength. The North America office is pleased to be building momentum and engaging new members.

In 2021 we welcomed five new North American members and celebrated a year full of dynamic discussions and research, as well as contributing to contributing to organising over 90 events.



SECTOR COLLABORATION

We continue to break down silos by bringing together expertise from a variety of networks and sectors, to strengthen collective practices regarding SRM, including participation in a wide range of thematic and sectoral events, meetings, networks and groups, such as Saving Lives Together (SLT), Humanitarian-to-Humanitarian (H2H), and Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week (HNPW).

4

New Business Partners

4

New Affiliates

5

New NA Members

+90

Events

Business Partnership Programme (BPP)

GISF revitalised the BPP in 2021.

Our current Business Partners include Dragonfly (formerly Risk Advisory), Proelium Law LLP, RSM Consulting, and Control Risks (who became a partner in 2021).

In 2021, Dragonfly facilitated four webinars for GISF on topics including the strategic outlook for 2021, West Africa, Afghanistan, and Yemen. By becoming a business partner, companies are able to support and have a meaningful impact on over 135 humanitarian organisations.

Affiliate programme

In 2021, four new affiliates joined us meaning by December 2021 we had 19 Affiliates, who have access to a specific range of information and benefits but are not members.

GISF continues to formalise its relationships with non-members, including consultants, not-for-profits and small for-profit organisations.

The affiliate programme enables sharing and knowledge transfer and provides an opportunity for communication and collaboration for the benefit of the sector and security risk management as a whole. GISF Affiliate (Service Provider) status is available to individuals and organisations with specific experience in supporting NGO security risk management in the humanitarian and international development sector.

02. HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights of the Programme: Key Achievements and Challenges

021. OUTCOME 1: INFORMATION SHARED AND NETWORKS STRENGTHENED TO IMPROVE HUMANITARIAN SRM



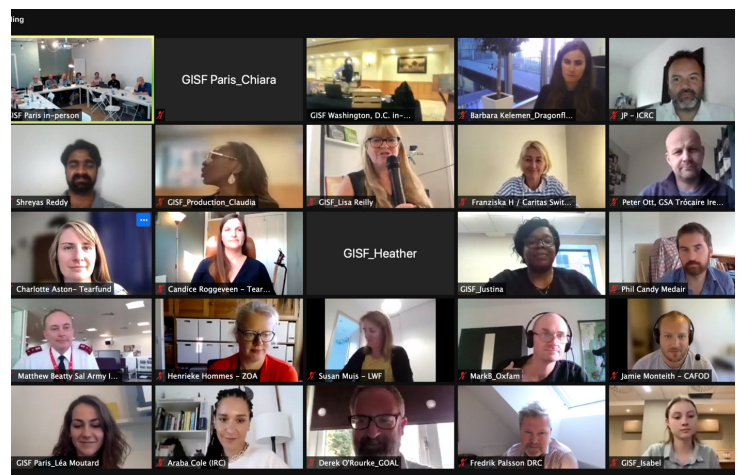
FORUMS

The GISS forums are a primary mechanism that foster stronger relationships and improve trust throughout the humanitarian security risk management sector. They are well attended, and rated highly on quality and relevance, scoring an average of 3.5/4 in 2021.

GISS has continued to adapt to the pandemic, holding three hybrid forums in 2021:

- March** due to lockdown measures, we held a fully virtual global forum
- June** a North American hybrid forum
- Sept** we successfully held our first global hybrid forum with three components: virtual, and in-person in Washington D.C., and Paris.

Managing a global event across three time zones required a lot of planning but was managed successfully and received positive feedback from members. Offering an online element of forums has enabled wider participation, for example from regional Security Focal Points, and brought a rich and fruitful level of experience and knowledge to discussions. Although held across three hubs, it maintained the essence of GISS's in-person events and included networking opportunities and a chance to feed into upcoming research and initiatives.



“ One member wrote ‘Grateful for the GISS team and their work. I am always impressed and really happy that there is future thinking leadership in place! GISS is a much stronger platform than EISS could have been going forward’.

KEY TOPICS COVERED DURING THE SEPTEMBER FORUM:

- Acceptance
- Security in a digital world
- Resilience
- Context session on Myanmar



“ Thank you and the GISF team for all the information sharing, arranging of forums, webinars, events etc. which have helped to support the knowledge and development of our personnel as we work in sometimes challenging situations. I wish you all well in the future. - GISF Member

As we continue with virtual working, our monthly Peer Learning and Exchange sessions provide members with an opportunity for informal chats and discussions that previously took place in event and forum breaks. They have helped members connect on specific issues, and have kept the Secretariat in touch with members concerns and priorities.

Membership

138 members | 93% of members engaged

GISF membership continues to expand, from 45 members 10 years ago to 138 by the end of December 2021, with 90 full members and 48 associate members.

In 2021 alone, GISF has accepted 12 new members (three full and six associate), including six across North America as our global reach continues to grow. GISF continues to explore membership and networking opportunities from the global south, to ensure that the organisation reflects a truly global perspective.

GISF has continued to connect, through some in-person meetings but predominantly virtually, with members and prospective members in North America in several ways. Early in the year we held a North America community event with over 20 participants and a North America hybrid forum in June. North American perspectives were represented at various events throughout the year, including forums, workshops, roundtables and the GISF podcast.



12 NEW MEMBERS

- IOCC
- CARE USA
- Global Communities
- IsraAid
- Amnesty International
- Conciliation Resources
- Hope for Justice
- International Alert
- Reprieve International
- The Mastercard Foundation
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Open Society Foundations

MATTEROST: GISF_CHAT CHANNEL

368

registered users

During acute crises new chat channels have been established promptly, allowing members to exchange information and discuss operational challenges very quickly.

In 2021, the COVID-19 channel continued to engage members, and channels such as Haiti, Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Myanmar gained a lot of traction by providing members with a space to converge on present security and programmatic concerns.

GISF Website and Library

Our site uses up-to-date accessibility and readability practices, to serve all of GISS's key audiences in an inclusive way. GISS's online resource centre is an internationally recognised knowledge-sharing platform on security risk management for the humanitarian sector. Consisting of an extensive library of documents, original resources, the GISS Blog and more, it also provides easy access to NGO-appropriate training providers, events, consultants, and improved recruiting of NGO security staff. The member area of the website enables sensitive information and documents to be shared easily within the membership and not to the wider public, such as GISS forum notes, and organisational security policies and procedures.

Website/Comms Metrics	2020	2021	Growth %
New Website Users	76,439	150,281	+96.60%
Newsletter Subscribers	1,241	16,945	+1,265%
Twitter Followers	1,977	2,239	+13.25%
LinkedIn Followers	2,208	2,953	+33.74%
YouTube Subscribers	101	186	+84%
Library Items Uploaded	151	175	+15.89%
Unique documents downloaded (full library)	19,117	19,505	+2%

Social Media and Communications

1,007
new followers

GISS's social media footprint has continued to grow, gaining 1,007 users across LinkedIn and Twitter alone in 2021, enabling a much wider communication of key messages and sharing of good practice in humanitarian security risk management.

We began to use Agorapulse to better understand our audience and how to optimise our engagement with them. Towards the end of 2021, GISS reviewed its approach to communications and is in the process of developing an exciting new strategy following a workshop held for the whole team in November

GISS BLOGS



The blogs produced by the Secretariat and guest writers are designed to provoke thought and debate, and improve knowledge and practice on humanitarian security risk management, as well as increasing engagement between the Secretariat, GISS members and the wider sector.

JUST A FEW OF OUR BLOGS RELEASED IN 2021:

25

GISS blogs
published

- How to effectively advocate for aid workers' protection?
- Women, Security & COVID-19 – challenges and opportunities in the humanitarian space
- Breaking a culture of silence – counter-terrorism legislation's impact on humanitarian access negotiations in north-west Syria
- Contracting private security providers – a double-edged sword
- Living in a Taliban controlled Afghanistan as a female Afghan aid worker
- Getting security funding as a local NGO: experiences from Syria

022. OUTCOME 2: STAKEHOLDERS HAVE RECOGNISED THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD PRACTICE FOR INCLUSIVE AND EFFECTIVE SRM IN THE HUMANITARIAN SPACE.

PRODUCTION OF ORIGINAL RESEARCH



PARTNERSHIPS

Joint Action Guide for local and international organisations

In April 2021, GISF published a 'Joint Action Guide for local and international organisations' to better collaborate on SRM. The guide builds on our innovative research paper 'Partnerships and Security Risk Management: from a local partners perspective' published in 2020. It includes various practical tools and guidance on improving partnerships' structure and promoting an equitable, transparent, and mutually beneficial approach to SRM within partnerships.

Since attacks on aid workers have been recorded, local and national NGO (L/NNGO) aid workers worldwide have been the most exposed to security risks. As efforts to 'localise' aid carry on and with it, partnerships multiply, we must ensure that international NGOs (INGO) and L/NNGOs address these risks within their partnerships. This guide offers tools and guidance on improving partnerships' structure and supporting better access to security risk management (SRM) resources for local NGOs in the humanitarian space, including advocacy

ACCEPTANCE

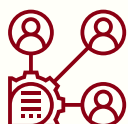
Achieving Safe Operations Through Acceptance

GISF creates a platform for NGO security focal points around the world to exchange information and identifies best practices in its pioneering research related to humanitarian access and SRM. In December 2021, we released 'Achieving Safe Operations Through Acceptance'. This collection of articles features different perspectives and experiences regarding opportunities and challenges for acceptance in humanitarian operations, including the impact of digital risks, counter-terrorism legislation, and humanitarian negotiations on acceptance.

The articles present diverging, and in some cases contradictory, viewpoints. We collaborated with a range of authors from unique backgrounds to provide different interpretations of why acceptance sometimes fails and recommendations and strategies for addressing current challenges. We ensured the publication represented a diversity of perspectives and hope they help to facilitate dialogue on these important issues and implicitly acknowledge that there is neither a single way to view nor to 'do' acceptance



"This week I took time to read all 10 articles on acceptance and SRM. Very worthwhile material. Thanks for sharing. Nice and to the point and with good diversity on different technical angles. I have sent the list to my entire team and have recommended them to read it whereby I highlighted 4 articles I liked particularly." - GISF Member on our Acceptance series



EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

GISF's reputation as the global coordination and resource hub, and centre of excellence for humanitarian security risk management continues to encourage high-level external engagement in strategic as well as practical discussions and events. GISC has continued to develop this approach, facilitating connections amongst NGOs, UN, academia, private and public sector, governments and think tanks, encouraging the development of relationships amongst security risk management professionals and members and non-members, reaching out and engaging with a wide range of different, global actors, organisations and sectors.

GISF promotes the voice of member organisations through regularly engaging in sector working groups and attending external events, ensuring that the NGO voice is both heard and listened to in debates which have implications for humanitarian security and access. Key regular groups include: H2H network, Security Institute - Inclusive Security Group, Saving Lives Together Working Group and Oversight Committee, WCAPS Orgs in solidarity, BOND groups on counter terrorism and sanctions, resilience and conflict sensitivity and gender.

External participation has strengthened the positive reputation of the network and extended member reach to high-profile academics and experts, providing opportunities for mutually useful relationships to be built between professionals in the sector.



In November 2021, GISC attended AidEx, the largest international event for the humanitarian

sector, in Brussels. We ran two workshops over two days on safety and security in a digital world and an impact session on staff care. Our executive director was invited to speak on the conference panel 'time to reform humanitarian action'.



826
participants

HUMANITARIAN NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS WEEK (HNPW)

For the first time, SRM was one of HNPW's 9 priority topics this year. Recognising GISC's leading role in supporting collaboration on SRM and improving aid workers' protection, GISC was selected to lead sessions on this critical topic. Bringing together experts from across the aid world, GISC co-hosted five open sessions in partnership with different actors such as the UN, ICRC, FCDO, and Manchester University. Session topics included: SRM in the Changing Global and Humanitarian Context; Sharing Risk: Building Stronger Partnerships; Acceptance & Access; Managing Security Risks in the Digital World; and A Person Centred Approach to SRM in Humanitarian Response. Across the three weeks the event was hosted, GISC had a total of 826 participants for its sessions.

023. OUTCOME 3: SRM SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE IMPROVED WITHIN THE HUMANITARIAN SPACE.

10

Workshops

37

Roundtables

25

Webinars

WORKSHOPS



GISF has increased the range of virtual events, workshops and other learning opportunities on topics such working in partnership, how to do virtual training, and digital security.

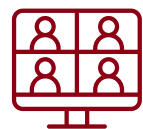
GISF delivered 10 highly rated capacity building workshops for members and other invited stakeholders. GISF's unique position enables the bringing together of expert facilitators and a wide variety of NGOs to share expertise and good practice, and to develop skills and encourage collaboration between individuals and agencies.

GISF WORKSHOP & TRAINING EVENTS '21

- Partners Workshops: MENA, West Africa, South Asia, East Africa, All Regions
- Training of Virtual Trainers (part 1 and part 2)
- Digital Security

WEBINARS AND ROUNDTABLES

GISF has developed and delivered 37 roundtables on contexts as they evolve and unfold such as: Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Ethiopia, Haiti, Myanmar, and DRC. 25 webinars were delivered, in collaboration with external partners, on topics ranging



from Person Centre Approach, Contracting Private Security Providers, Security and Safeguarding, COVID-19, and contexts such as Yemen and Afghanistan. Webinars and roundtables have proved to be an effective and impactful way of engaging members in specific topics of interest, allowing participants to exchange information and discuss operational challenges during acute crises with other members, and invited experts. As well as member only events, GISF conducted and engaged with open access events, to enable outreach to non-members, and other interested parties

SOME OF GISF'S WEBINARS IN '21

- Acceptance and Access
- Intersection of Security and Safeguarding
- Behind the Scenes: Safe Humanitarian Action
- Dragonfly: West Africa
- Saving Lives Together and UN/NGO Coordination Webinar

Type of Event	Total No.
FORUM	3
WORKSHOP	10
WEBINAR	25
ROUNDTABLE	37
TRAINING	3 (ToVT)
PODCAST	2
OTHER	12
TOTAL OVERALL	92

Podcast episodes 2021

Sept	Inclusive Security E1: Introducing a Person-Centred Approach
Nov	Inclusive Security E2: Operationalising Inclusivity



NEWSLETTERS

GISF keeps members and other stakeholders up to date via our newsletters, which focus on themes ranging from training opportunities, job vacancies, current research, blogs, opportunities for engagement, and spotlight specific themes related to security risk management and other relevant topics. In November 2021, we revised our communications strategy and are developing an exciting new format for newsletters that will be rolled out in 2022.



PODCASTS

The fourth GISF podcast series, **Inclusive Security**, was launched in 2021, exploring the theme through the lens of security risk management.

It looked at the elements of inclusive security, including aid workers personal characteristics and unique risk profiles, and what it looks like in the humanitarian context. This series identifies the challenges that operationalising inclusivity can bring and asks 'What do security managers need to know, and how can they stay up to date and keep producing and designing inclusive security procedures?'



COVID-19: Essential Guidance for NGO Security Risk Managers

GISF published nine new modules in the guidance series 'Keeping up with Covid: essential Guidance for NGO security risk managers'. The modules look at how SRM is impacted by the pandemic through the lens of policy and planning, operational security, and staff support. The modules released up to now comprise of topics such as: working with partners and the localisation agenda; digital security; acceptance and the changing security environment; inclusivity and security risk management.

GUIDES AND TRANSLATIONS

A lot of time was dedicated to developing the Spanish and French translations for our popular guides 'Partnerships and SRM: a joint action guide for local and international aid organisations', and 'Partnerships and SRM: from the local partner's perspective', these will be finalised and published in 2022. Similarly, our Humanitarian Toolbox and Collaboration Guide will be released next year following extensive groundwork undertaken for these projects in 2021.

ENGAGING YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Throughout the year we have been developing an internship portal that will allow GISF and its members so find well suited candidates to internship roles, and permit students to choose an area of choice to gain valuable experience in. It will be launched on our website in 2022.

We have continued to collaborate with Lille University and HCRI (Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute at Manchester University), exploring why mental health is an important consideration for SRM, advocating for humanitarian security, and to raise students' awareness of the topic.

GISF took its university programme forward, in the hope that this contributes to increased awareness of the importance of SRM for enabling sustainable access to populations in need and SRM as a profession amongst the future humanitarians of tomorrow. The virtual webinar was led by a panel of experts discussing career opportunities in security risk management, whilst also covering essential topics that are relevant to present day aid delivery. We gave out 45 HPass badges to external participants that participated across the entire webinar.

45

HPass badges



Arabic Translation

Security Risk Management: A basic guide for smaller NGOs

In our pledge to ensure our resources are accessible for all at a global level, we released our basic guide for smaller NGOs in Arabic this year. This guide is mindful of the limited resources and the specific challenges that smaller NGOs may face in trying to establish and maintain a security risk management framework.



Guides

Mobile guide: Managing Sexual Violence

GISF also published a number of other guides and translations, including: Private Security Providers, a mobile guide for Managing Sexual Violence online modules

This free, interactive guide aims to support aid agencies in preventing, being prepared for, and responding to incidents of sexual violence against their staff.

03.

OPERATIONS AND GOVERNANCE

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

GISF move towards independence

In the UK, we are in our second year of being hosted by Mines Advisory Group (MAG), based in Manchester. ChildFund remain the host of our team in the US.



The Steering Group met during the reporting period to discuss oversight of the GISF programme and finances. As the previous two-year strategic plan comes to an end in December 2022, the Steering Group and secretariat discussed the strategy for GISF going forward.

Following an in-depth look at our values and strategic objectives, it has been decided that GISF will commence its move towards independence when the current UK hosting arrangements, with Mines Advisory Group, expire in October 2023. The decision to become an independent NGO signifies an opportunity to expand our donor base, focus on our mission, future proof GISF, and not have to build and tear down every three years when as we change host.

GISF Secretariat

There was significant recruitment and change in the Secretariat team:

- Justina Amenu's role was upgraded to Business and Operations manager
- Panos Navrozidis was recruited as Deputy Director in North America
- Megan Hooson was promoted to Project and Membership Officer (EU)
- Chiara Jancke was promoted to Research Advisor
- Scarlett Moore joined us as Research and Comms Assistant
- Izzy Moore and Emily Daste joined as Project and Admin Assistants

04.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

We continue to monitor forums and events for quality and relevance to participants work; workshops are also evaluated for the impact and change-created in the participants approach to SRM. Throughout 2021, we have incorporated event feedback from our members, that we collect through methods such as evaluation and feedback forms or polls, into subsequent activities.

Salesforce, the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database, allows the Secretariat to capture the level of engagement of members, and provides a central database to source information about our various stakeholders. We have used it as a project management tool to support research and other projects to enable a more streamlined event management process. To build upon this, in 2021 we have begun working with an IT specialist to integrate our systems (i.e., salesforce and zoom) and streamline our efficiency in tracking and monitoring members, events and engagement going forward.



05. FINANCE

GISF BUDGET

GISF's budget is reviewed by the Steering Group on a quarterly basis, and GISC's finances are independently audited as part of the Host organisation's annual audit.) Cost effectiveness is considered in all activities, and was kept under review throughout the. Any external contracts awarded, considered cost efficiency as one of the criteria and any significant changes in planned budgets were discussed and agreed. Wherever possible GISC utilises the resources of members and other network members to remain cost effective.

2021 Income and Expenditure UK/EU (GBP)

INCOME		719,835
EXPENDITURE		580,054

2021 Income and Expenditure Americas (USD)

INCOME		622,221
EXPENDITURE		344,164

DONORS

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)
 USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA)

OUR MEMBERS

as of 31 December 2021



BASIC DATA

Chair Members:

Fredrik Pålsson (Danish Refugee Council)
Javier Sanchez (MAG)
Candice Roggeveen (Tearfund)
Phil Candy (Medair)
Carmen Dreyer (Childfund International)
Frances Nobes (World Vision International)
Marek Stys (People in Need)
Joan Arnan (Médecins sans Frontières - GVA)
Frederic Bardou (Action Contre la Faim)
Andrew Kirkham (Christian Aid)
Theresa Warzecha (GIZ)
Brian Kerr (HIAS)

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