

Cluster Coordination Guidance

Guidance for FAO staff working at country level in humanitarian and early recovery operations



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and early recovery operations**

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

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About this guidance material

Audience: This guidance material is intended for FAO staff, in particular FAO Representatives and Emergency Coordinators at country level. It may also be useful for FAO staff at regional and headquarters levels and other agriculture and food-security stakeholders.

Purpose: To provide FAO staff with (i) essential information on the purpose and functioning of clusters, and the role and responsibilities of FAO within a cluster system, and (ii) practical guidance on what FAO staff need to do to fulfil those responsibilities. The focus is on clusters at the country level where FAO may lead, co-lead, or be a member of clusters dealing with food security, agriculture, livelihoods or nutrition.

Structure: Part I (chapters 1 and 2) provides essential information in the form of answers to frequently asked questions. Part II (chapters 3 to 6) provides practical guidance in the form of short aide-mémoire. The annexes provide key reference materials. All chapters provide cross-references to other documents where more detailed information and guidance can be found. The CD-ROM will include the documents referred to, with hyperlinks from the text.

Request for feedback

In the process of development, the Cluster Coordination Guidance has greatly benefited from comments, suggestions and advice.

This process of continual learning and improvement continues and in this spirit, suggestions for further improvement are welcomed and should be directed to:

clusterguidance@fao.org

[indicating "Feedback on cluster guidance" in the subject line]

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Acronyms and abbreviations

CAP	consolidated appeal process
CC	Cluster Coordinator
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CFSVA	comprehensive food security and vulnerability analysis (WFP)
CHAP	common humanitarian action plan
CLA	Cluster Lead Agency
DRM	disaster risk management
EC	Emergency Coordinator (FAO)
EFSA	emergency food security assessment (WFP)
ER	early recovery
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organizations of the United Nations
FAOR	FAO Representative
FSM	food security monitoring
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HIC	humanitarian information centre
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee ¹
ICCG	Inter-Cluster Coordination Group
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP(s)	internally displaced person(s)
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IM	information management
IOM	Inter-governmental Organization for Migration
INGO	international non-governmental organization
IPC	integrated phase classification
IRA	initial rapid assessment
LAT	Livelihoods Assessment Toolkit (FAO)
LEGS	Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards

¹ The IASC includes: OCHA, UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, FAO and WHO. Standing invitees are ICRC, IFRC, IOM, ICVA (International Council of Voluntary Agencies), Inter-Action, SCHR (Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response), RSGIDP (the Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons), UNHCHR and the World Bank.

M&E	monitoring and evaluation
NAF	needs analysis framework
NGO	non-governmental organization
OCHA	(UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PCNA	post-conflict needs assessment
PDNA	post-disaster needs assessment
POLR	provider of last resort (a function of a CLA)
RTE	real-time evaluation
TCE	Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division, FAO
ToR	terms of reference
UNDAC	UN disaster assessment and coordination (team)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	(Office of the) United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene (cluster)
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
3W	Who's Where doing What
4W	Who's Where doing What, When (since when and until when)

Different bullets indicate different types of information or guidance:

- ✓ = principles; what needs to be kept in mind
- ☑ = action points; what needs to be done
- ⊗ = what to avoid
- 📖 = reference documents; where to look for further guidance
- = components of the issue being discussed


Chapter 1

PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONING OF CLUSTERS

1.1 Why clusters?

The cluster approach is the mechanism used by international humanitarian actors since 2006 for responding to large-scale complex and natural humanitarian emergencies requiring a multi-sectoral response. It involves sectoral groupings – called ‘clusters’ – of international and national agencies/NGOs coordinated by designated Cluster Lead Agencies (CLAs), to support and/or complement wherever possible the efforts of national authorities in key sectors of preparedness and response. The objectives are:

- to ensure effective coordination of humanitarian and early recovery assistance, especially among international assistance organizations with and in support of national entities; and
- to enhance predictability, accountability and partnerships in response (especially international response) through, in particular, the designation of CLAs reporting to the humanitarian coordinator with clearly-defined responsibilities (this being the principal difference between the “cluster approach” and other sector coordination mechanisms).

 IASC *Guidance Note on using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response*, 2006 (in English, French, Arabic, Spanish).

 See also:

<http://oneresponse.info/Coordination/ClusterApproach/Pages/Cluster%20Approach.aspx>

1.2 Why are clusters important for FAO?

Clusters provide an opportunity for FAO to help assure appropriate emergency response and promote recovery from the earliest possible moment in sectors of concern to FAO, and to mobilize resources for both the sector as a whole and FAO’s own interventions. This links directly to FAO’s Strategic Objective I (see box below). It also enables FAO to “*capitalize on [its] main comparative advantage: matching know-how with resources in building back better the livelihoods of farmers, herders and fishers by providing information... [ensuring] coordination... and providing assistance in partnership with other organizations.*”²

A cluster focussing on food security (and/or livelihoods) also provides a mechanism for a holistic approach to food security (and/or livelihoods). This includes the opportunity for FAO to ensure that all concerned recognize that

2 Director, Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division, Sept. 2005.

household gardens and small livestock can be important elements of the food security of households that are not generally considered to be dependent on agriculture, and that such activities must be considered and supported.

FAO Strategic Objective I: “Improved preparedness for, and effective response to, food and agricultural threats and emergencies.”

This is to be achieved through three organizational results, namely:

Countries' vulnerability to crisis, threats and emergencies is reduced through better preparedness and integration of risk prevention and mitigation into policies, programmes and interventions;

Countries and partners respond more effectively to crises and emergencies with food and agriculture related interventions; and

Countries and partners have improved transition and linkages between emergency, rehabilitation and development.

Clusters provide an opportunity to contribute to accomplishing the above results – especially 2 and 3 but also 1 in the context of recovery activities.

1.3 What clusters (which sectors)?

At country level, the humanitarian (or UN resident) coordinator in consultation with Humanitarian Country Team (HCT)³ members decides on:

- a set of clusters appropriate to the particular country and situation; typically, this includes one or more clusters covering aspects of concern to FAO (food security, agriculture, livelihoods and nutrition) as well as clusters for health, water, etc.; and
- a lead agency (or co-lead agencies) for each cluster taking account of the in-country capacities of the different agencies working in the sector concerned.

Arrangements are approved by the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator and the IASC principals.⁴

Where a very large and diverse geographic area is affected, the humanitarian (or UN resident) coordinator and the HCT may also decide on a decentralized

3 For information on the composition and responsibilities of HCTs, see *IASC Guidelines for Humanitarian Country Teams*, Nov. 2009

4 The IASC “principals” are the senior headquarters staff members who represent their organizations in regular meetings of the IASC working group.

system of zonal clusters or “hubs” for planning and managing humanitarian response in different parts of the country.⁵

In early 2010, FAO was participating at country level in:

- 9 agriculture clusters (including one “agro-pastoral”);
- 11 food security clusters;
- 15 clusters combining food security with agriculture, nutrition or livelihoods (including one “food and agriculture”);
- 3 clusters combining agriculture with livelihoods; and
- 4 livelihoods clusters.

FAO was leading 11 of these clusters and co-leading another 12 with WFP. In 11 other cases, FAO was co-leading with UNDP, the government or an NGO, or involved in multiple-co-leadership combinations with 2, 3 or 4 other entities including UNICEF. In addition, FAO was participating in a further 3 food security clusters led by WFP, 4 early recovery clusters, one social protection cluster and one “humanitarian coordination” cluster.

At global level, FAO has been designated as lead agency for a global agriculture cluster⁶ and, at the time of writing, FAO and WFP are discussing arrangements to establish instead a broader global “food security” cluster.

The global clusters and cluster leads as of early 2010 are:

Sector or Area of Activity	Global Cluster Lead
Agriculture	FAO
Camp Coordination/Camp Management (CCCM):	UNHCR (<i>IDPs from conflict</i>); IOM (<i>IDPs from disaster situations</i>)
Early Recovery	UNDP
Education	UNICEF & Save the Children

5 In Sudan, for example, zonal clusters have been established for the three Darfur States as well as other regions.

6 The Global Agriculture Cluster has not (yet) been convened but the following organizations and institutions have been identified to participate in it alongside FAO: Action Contre La Faim (ACF), CARE, Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR), German Agro Action (GAA), GTZ, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Inter Action, International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Rescue Committee (IRC), OCHA, OHCHR, OXFAM, Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons (RSGIDP), Save the Children UK, Save the Children USA, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, and World Vision International (WVI).

Emergency Shelter	UNHCR (<i>IDPs from conflict</i>); IFRC (Convener) (<i>IDPs from disaster situations</i>)
Emergency Telecommunications	OCHA/UNICEF/WFP
Health	WHO
Logistics	WFP
Nutrition	UNICEF
Protection	UNHCR (<i>IDPs from conflict</i>); UNHCR/OHCHR/UNICEF (<i>IDPs from disasters and civilians other than IDPs affected by conflict</i>)
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)	UNICEF
Cross-cutting issue	Cross-cutting issue Lead
Age	HelpAge & WHO
Gender	UNFPA & WHO (as co-chairs of the IASC sub working group on gender)
Environment	UNEP
HIV and AIDS	UNAIDS (as lead IASC Task Force on HIV and AIDS)

Clusters, food-security, livelihoods and agriculture...

The titles and foci of clusters relating to food, agriculture and livelihoods have varied among countries, as described in the preceding text. With the formation of a global food security cluster jointly led by FAO and WFP, it is anticipated that most countries will in future establish “food security” clusters.

Agriculture is an important component of food security at the aggregate level and of the livelihoods and food security of many households. It is therefore an important consideration for any food security (or livelihoods) cluster. Other important elements include cash incomes, remittances, markets and trade as well as the institutions and systems that support all those components and those that support agriculture. It is important that the Cluster (whatever its title) consider all these aspects in a comprehensive and holistic manner.

In some cases it may be useful for a food security (or livelihoods) cluster to create separate working groups to address specific practical issues relating to the distribution of food assistance (food, cash or vouchers) and the technical and practical issues relating to agricultural recovery and other livelihood issues, for example. It is essential, however, that a holistic, integrated approach to food security is reflected in Cluster meetings, work plans and overall strategies as well as in the CHAP, flash and consolidated appeals and in advocacy and resource mobilization.

1.4 Who are cluster members; how does a cluster work?

A cluster at *national level* should include organizations providing humanitarian and/or early recovery assistance and services for the sector in the affected area. For food security, agriculture, livelihoods and nutrition clusters, this typically includes UN agencies (e.g. FAO, WFP, UNDP, UNICEF), other international organizations (e.g. IOM), the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (ICRC, IFRC and the national society), international NGOs and key national NGOs. Representatives of key private-sector associations/entities may also be included on a case-by-case basis. A senior government official may chair or co-chair meetings but the government is not normally a “member” of the cluster as such – see 1.10 below.

A cluster at *zonal/hub level* includes organizations providing humanitarian and/or early recovery assistance and services for the sector in the zone concerned and any other key stakeholders present at that level.

There is no prescribed structure or set of standard operating procedures for a cluster; these should be defined according to the particular situation including the scale, phase and anticipated duration of the emergency.⁷ A cluster may create working groups, standing or temporary, to deal with specific sub-sector topics (e.g. agriculture, livestock) or tasks (e.g. screening proposals for CERF funding, proposing standards). As an example, a fisheries and aqua-culture committee was formed in Bande Aceh, Indonesia to coordinate recovery efforts in that sub-sector following the tsunami. Working groups have also been used in Haiti, Myanmar and Pakistan. In some cases it has been found appropriate to create a small “steering group” to guide the work of the Cluster as a whole.

1.5 What are the responsibilities of a cluster lead agency (CLA)?

The designated country-level CLA (FAO or another competent organization):

- accepts the responsibilities defined in the ToR of a CLA (see annex B) and assures the satisfactory performance of the cluster (at national level and, where appropriate, at zonal/hub level) and all other CLA functions including liaison with national authorities, representation, resource mobilization and reporting for the cluster as a whole;

⁷ Section 12.2 of the *WASH Cluster Coordination Handbook* provides different models for cluster structure with the perceived advantages and disadvantages of each model.

- appoints a Cluster Coordinator (CC) and assures the necessary supporting staff and services to enable the CC to fulfil the cluster coordination functions, including information management, listed in Annex D; and
- for a large-scale operation, designates out-posted staff as zonal cluster coordinators in each operational area or designates zonal lead agencies in areas where the CLA itself is not present or not adequately represented.

The country representative of the CLA is accountable to the HC (or RC) for fulfilling the CLA responsibilities (see Annex C). Wherever possible, the CC should be dedicated full-time to the cluster function and not have any management responsibility for the CLA's own programme activities, which should be coordinated by a different individual.


Expectations of Cluster Lead Agencies – Lesson from Haiti one month after the earthquake

"In most of the twelve clusters established, cluster coordinators continue to struggle without the capacity required to coordinate efficiently the large number of partners involved in the operation... only a few clusters have fully dedicated cluster coordinators, information management focal points and technical support capacity, all of which are basic requirements for the efficient management of a large scale emergency operation. This lack of capacity has meant that several clusters have yet to establish a concise overview of needs and develop coherent response plans, strategies and gap analyses. This is beginning to show and is leading others to doubt our ability to deliver.

"Among the many lessons already identified from this disaster is the need for robust cluster coordination teams with adequate seniority to take charge of cluster coordination at the outset of the response. To place one person as a cluster coordinator is simply inadequate and falls critically short of what Global Cluster Lead Agencies have committed to...

"...Good coordination between clusters and within each cluster is needed not only to channel the contributions of UN agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, IOM and NGOs, but also: (1) to ensure close coordination with the efforts of national authorities; (2) to channel the contributions of the private sector; and (3) to make maximum use of the logistical support and other assistance provided by the military..."

[Extract from message of the Emergency Relief Coordinator to Global Cluster Lead Agencies, 15 Feb. 2010.]

 *Terms of Reference for Sector/Cluster Leads at the Country Level, 2006* (in Annex B).

1.6 How is cluster co-leadership managed?

In any situation where cluster leadership is shared between two (or more) "co-leads", the specific responsibilities of each co-lead must be clearly defined and explained to the HC, the government, and all Cluster participants/partners.

There is no one model and, as of early 2010, it is actually more a “co-chair” or “co-facilitation” arrangement in most cases: meetings are chaired on a rotating basis amongst the co-leaders while one (sometimes FAO) provides the CC and most of the related administrative and operational support. In a few cases those support responsibilities have rotated on an annual basis. NGOs have often been reluctant to take on real “co-lead” responsibilities for lack of resources.

Specific guidance is expected to be made available by the IASC Task Team later in 2010. In the meantime, attention should be given to ensuring effective and efficient leadership and support rather than trying to accommodate individual organizations’ desires for visibility and a “piece of the cake”.

1.7 What is expected of a cluster coordinator?

The generic terms of reference for a cluster coordinator (CC) are in Annex D. The CC facilitates and leads the work of the cluster and ensures coordination with other clusters, as needed. The role is one of facilitation. It is *not* a “technical” function. It requires skills in human relations, planning and management, a broad understanding of the sector concerned (e.g. food security), knowledge of the country, and experience in previous emergencies including the planning and monitoring of inter-agency responses.

A Cluster Coordinator is expected to:

- ✓ enable cluster partners to be more effective by working together, in coalition, than they could individually, and to maximize the benefit for the target population of the Cluster partners’ individual inputs and efforts;
- ✓ provide leadership to and work on behalf of the Cluster as a whole, facilitating all Cluster activities and maintaining a strategic vision;
- ✓ ensure that needs, risks, capacities and opportunities are assessed and understood as best possible at all stages of the humanitarian response, and that information is shared;
- ✓ generate the widest possible consensus on priorities and a cluster/sector crisis response strategy that addresses the priority needs and risks in the sector, incorporates appropriate strategies, and promotes appropriate standards;
- ✓ work with Cluster members collectively and individually to identify gaps in response and try to ensure that available resources are directed to addressing priority problems and that assistance and services are provided equitably and impartially to different areas population groups on the basis of need;
- ✓ advocate and mobilize resources for the Cluster as a whole, including to fill gaps;
- ✓ ensure the effective integration of cross-cutting issues into the cluster’s activities and strategies; and
- ✓ ensure coordination with other clusters in all activities relevant to the sector.


The CC is accountable to the CLA, cluster members/partners and, like all other actors, to the affected population.

1.8 What is expected of cluster participants/partners? ⁸

Current IASC guidelines do not specify responsibilities for cluster members other than the CLA but it is generally expected that cluster members will:

- subscribe to the overall aims of the cluster approach;
- be proactive in exchanging information, highlighting needs and gaps, and reporting progress, participating in lessons-learning processes, and building local capacities;
- share responsibility for Cluster activities including assessing needs, developing plans and guidelines, communicating information and agreed messages, mobilizing resources and organizing joint training; and
- respect and adhere to agreed principles, policies and standards, and implement activities in line with agreed priorities and objectives.

Individual organizations determine the level of their participation. The cluster approach does not require that humanitarian actors be held accountable to the CC or CLA. Individual organizations can only be held accountable to the CLA when they have made formal commitments (e.g. signed an agreement).

There is no generic IASC guidance on the roles of cluster participants/partners but the Health Cluster has developed a matrix showing roles within a country-level health cluster including partners as well as the CLA and CC – see  *Health Cluster Guide*, 2009, Figure 1c at the end of section 1.3.

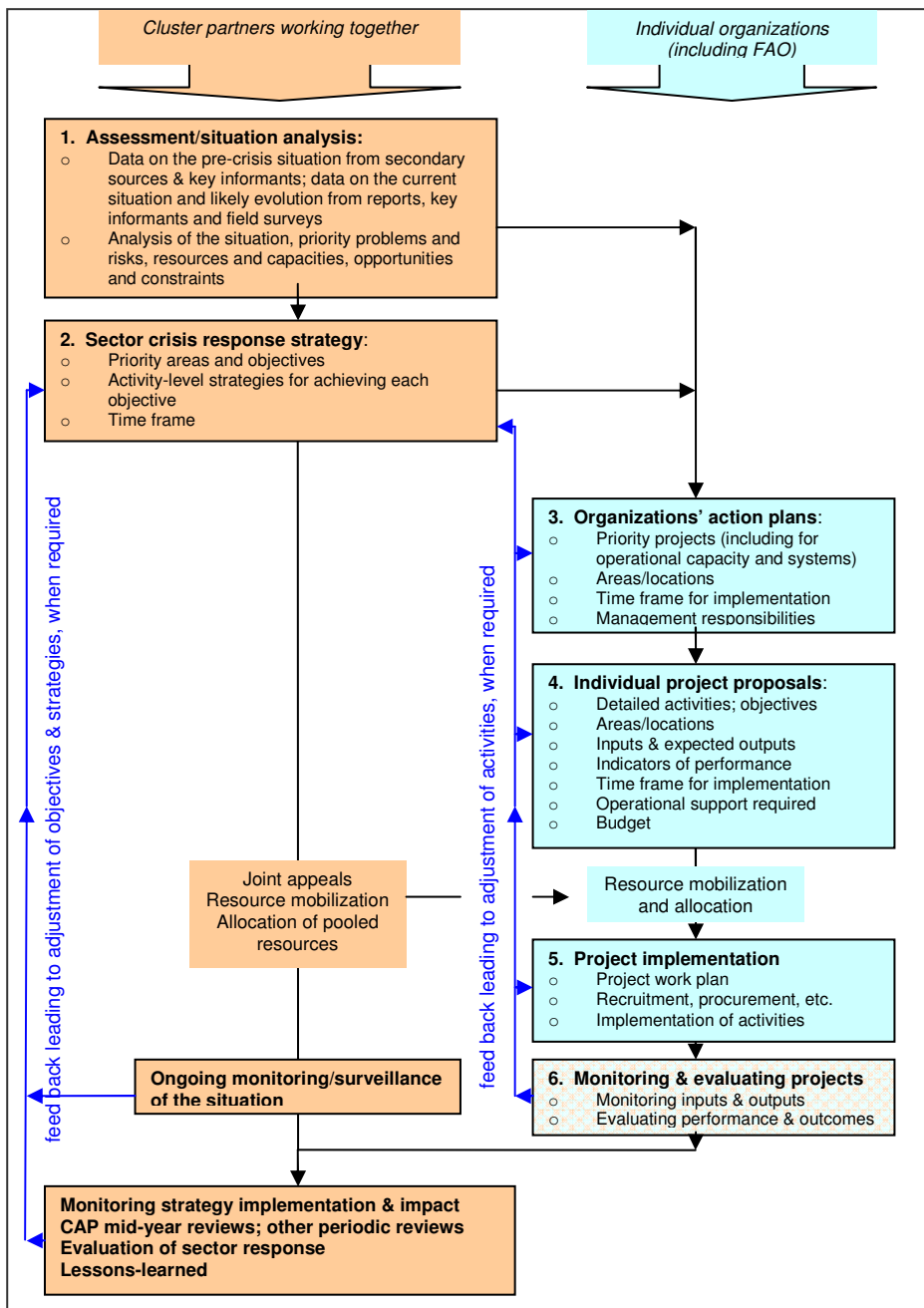
1.9 How do cluster activities relate to those of individual organizations?

Ideally, cluster members work together to: (i) gather and analyse information on the situation; (ii) agree on the priority problems and risks, objectives, an overall response strategy, standards for assistance, and who will do what where; and (iii) monitor overall progress.

Within that overall framework, individual organizations draw up their own plans of action and design, implement, monitor and evaluate their own projects.


The diagram below (on the next page), adapted from the *Health Cluster Guide*, shows the relationship between cluster analysis and planning activities and the planning and project implementation activities of individual organizations/Cluster members.

⁸ This includes FAO when a member but not CLA.



1.10 How does a cluster relate to national authorities?

The cluster serves as a bridge between national (and zonal) authorities and international and NGO humanitarian assistance agencies working in the sector. It provides the government with a single point of contact with assistance agencies in each of the main sectors. A senior government official is invited to chair or co-chair Cluster meetings in many cases.

 *Operational Guidance for Cluster Lead Agencies on Working with National Authorities*, draft, IASC, January 2009.


1.11 What is the relationship with other coordination structures?

The cluster approach is intended to strengthen, not replace, any existing sectoral coordination mechanisms. Where an existing mechanism ensures coordinated action among all important actors, the identification and filling of any gaps in response, and accountability, it is neither necessary nor appropriate to establish clusters separately – see IASC guidance in Annex A.

1.12 How is inter-cluster coordination assured?

The HC is responsible to ensure inter-cluster coordination (and inter-sectoral coherence). In general:

- **policy-level** inter-cluster coordination is assured by CLA country representatives meeting together under the chairmanship of the HC (or RC) in the context of the humanitarian country team or in separate meetings as and when needed; and
- **strategic and operational** inter-cluster coordination is assured by the cluster coordinators (CCs) meeting, usually under the chairmanship of the OCHA team leader, in the context of regular meetings of an inter-cluster coordination group (ICCG).

 *Guidance for inter-cluster coordination groups at country level*, draft, IASC Task Group, February 2010.

1.13 What principles underlie the Cluster approach?

Two basic sets of principles underlie the Cluster approach and are expected to be adhered to by all Clusters and Cluster participants/partners:

Humanitarian Principles: As per UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182 (19 December 1991), humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance

with the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality. Adherence to these principles reflects a measure of accountability of the humanitarian community.

- ✓ *Humanity*: Human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found, with particular attention to the most vulnerable in the population, such as children, women and the elderly. The dignity and rights of all victims must be respected and protected.
- ✓ *Neutrality*: Humanitarian assistance must be provided without engaging in hostilities or taking sides in controversies of a political, religious or ideological nature.
- ✓ *Impartiality*: Humanitarian assistance must be provided without discriminating as to ethnic origin, gender, nationality, political opinions, race or religion. Relief of the suffering must be guided solely by needs and priority must be given to the most urgent cases of distress. (OCHA)

Principles of Partnership defined in *A Statement of Commitment*, Global Humanitarian Platform, July 2007. [<http://www.globalhumanitarianplatform/pop.html>]


- ✓ *Equality*: Equality requires mutual respect among members of the partnership irrespective of size and power. The partners must respect each other's mandates, obligations and independence and recognize each other's constraints and commitments. Mutual respect must not preclude organizations from engaging in constructive dissent.
- ✓ *Transparency*: Transparency is achieved through dialogue (on equal footing), with an emphasis on early consultations and early sharing of information. Communications and transparency, including financial transparency, increase the level of trust among organizations.
- ✓ *Result-oriented approach*: Effective humanitarian action must be reality-based and action-oriented. This requires result-oriented coordination based on effective capabilities and concrete operational capacities.
- ✓ *Responsibility*: Humanitarian organizations have an ethical obligation to each other to accomplish their tasks responsibly, with integrity and in a relevant and appropriate way. They must make sure they commit to activities only when they have the means, competencies, skills, and capacity to deliver on their commitments. Decisive and robust prevention of abuses committed by humanitarians must also be a constant effort.
- ✓ *Complementarity*: The diversity of the humanitarian community is an asset if we build on our comparative advantages and complement each other's contributions. Local capacity is one of the main assets to enhance and on which to build. Whenever possible, humanitarian organizations should

strive to make it an integral part in emergency response. Language and cultural barriers must be overcome.

1.14 How are cross-cutting issues dealt with?

The HCT agrees on the cross-cutting issues that are important in the local context and to be taken into consideration by all clusters – normally age, environment, gender and HIV/AIDS. Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) may also be included in some cases. All clusters have a responsibility to mainstream the agreed cross-cutting issues throughout their activities from sectoral assessments to response planning, monitoring and evaluation. Protection issues must also be taken into account by all clusters notwithstanding the fact that a separate Protection Cluster is established in many cases. Cultural and ethnic sensitivity can also be important.

A focal point for each cross-cutting issue is designated within each cluster – this should be an organization that has particular competence in the topic – and the focal points for each issue meet together regularly. Where needed, advisers may be recruited and assigned in the HC’s office to provide expert advice and leadership on particular cross-cutting issues: this may include chairing meetings of the focal points. Some issues, notably gender, may be coordinated through existing country-level mechanisms.

 *Handbook for RCs and HCs on Emergency Preparedness and Response*, draft Jan. 2010, chapter IV.

1.15 How is early recovery promoted and coordinated?

Each cluster is responsible for promoting recovery activities, including relevant capacity-building, within its sector from the earliest possible moment, especially following a natural disaster. A focal point for early recovery (ER) is designated within each cluster: this should be an organization that has a long-term, development-oriented presence in the country. These focal points link together in an “Early Recovery Network”. Normally, UNDP recruits and assigns either an ER adviser who provides technical support and guidance to the HC or an ER coordinator who facilitates the ER Network. Exceptionally an early recovery cluster may be formed to deal with any important aspects of recovery that are not covered by other clusters.

1.16 What does being “provider of last resort” involve?


Where necessary, and depending on access, security and availability of funding, the CLA, as provider of last resort, must be ready to ensure the provision of

services required to fill critical gaps identified by the cluster. Where critical gaps persist in spite of concerted efforts to address them, the CLA is responsible for working with the national authorities, the HC and donors to advocate for appropriate action to be taken by the relevant parties and to mobilize the necessary resources for an adequate and appropriate response.

The “Provision of Last Resort” (POLR) function should be activated when:


1. the Cluster agrees that there is an important life-threatening gap in the sector response;
2. one or more of the agreed benchmarks⁹ for the sector response as a whole is not being met; and
3. evidence suggests that a significant proportion of the target population is at risk of avoidable death if the gap is not filled urgently.


Serving as provider of last resort is to be satisfied, and to have all partners satisfied, that all possible efforts have been undertaken to fill agreed priority gaps calling on additional local and international partners and advocating for additional donor commitment.

 *Operational Guidance on the concept of Provider of Last Resort*, IASC 15 May 2008.

1.17 How do Clusters work with peace-keepers and military forces?

Coordination with peace-keeping or other military forces may be necessary in some emergency situations to gain access to certain affected populations and deliver humanitarian assistance. Such coordination should always be undertaken through the HC/RC and the inter-cluster coordination mechanism supported by OCHA. Strict adherence to international humanitarian law must be ensured and care taken to guard against too close affiliation with the military or even giving any perceptions of such. The HCT should define common policies and approaches to the use of armed guards or escorts by humanitarian agencies on the basis of existing IASC-agreed guidelines.

 *Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief*, version 1.1, OCHA Nov 2007.

 *Civil-Military Guidelines and Reference for Complex Emergencies*, IASC 2008.

⁹ Benchmarks for the sector should be agreed by the Cluster on the basis of relevant national and international standards – see 3.6.

 *Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups*, IASC 2006.

[Guidance on the rationale and legal basis for negotiating with armed groups (chapters 1-3), and negotiation tips on various issues (chapters 4-6)]

1.18 What is the role of UN-OCHA in Cluster coordination?

OCHA plays a key role in supporting the HC/RC and HCT in four key areas of competency: coordination; information management; advocacy and resource mobilisation; and policy development. This includes coordinating and facilitating joint planning, prioritization, and humanitarian financing such as Flash and Consolidated Appeals, CERF applications, country-based pooled funds, including assuring inter-cluster coordination. OCHA also plays an important role in advocacy, securing humanitarian access, ensuring adherence to humanitarian principles and attention to cross-cutting issues, and working with donors to mobilize resources for the overall operation.

OCHA does *not* manage or provide secretarial support to individual Clusters.

A humanitarian information centre (HIC) managed by OCHA *may* assist clusters in information management.

1.19 What is the role of regional coordination mechanisms?

In some regions, regional clusters or equivalent sectoral inter-agency coordination mechanisms exist and support the coordination of action within as well as among countries of the region or a particular sub-region. For example:

Regional-level coordination – example from West Africa

An IASC Food Security and Nutrition Working Group (FSNWG) was established for West Africa/Sahel in 2006 with clearly-defined ToR. It is co-led on a 3 month rotational basis by FAO, UNICEF, WFP and Oxfam. OCHA provides secretarial support. The WG comprises: IFRC, French Red Cross, World Vision International, Oxfam-GB, Save the Children UK, Helen Keller International, Aquadev, ECHO, French Embassy, OFDA, OCHA, WFP, FAO, WHO and UNICEF. It meets once a month but can convene ad hoc meetings whenever necessary.

The WG has functioned effectively, is well regarded by UN agencies, governments and donors alike, and has been instrumental in coordinating humanitarian assistance on food-security-related matters throughout the region. Its importance has been demonstrated during the spate of natural disasters that affected the region in 2009.

FAO is represented by the Sub-Regional Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Office for West Africa and Sahel and this participation has considerably contributed to the growth of the Organization's emergency programme throughout the region.

Chapter 2

FAO'S CLUSTER-RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 What are FAO's cluster-related role/responsibilities?

FAO is committed to mainstreaming the Cluster Approach and to fulfilling country-level CLA responsibilities whenever called on to do so.

FAO contributes as a member of the country-level Humanitarian Country Team to defining a cluster structure appropriate to the particular context.

If/when designated as a cluster lead or co-lead FAO must:

- ensure necessary capacity to fulfil cluster-lead responsibilities separately from the planning and management of FAO's own response;
- designate a CC to:
 - o convene and manage meetings and ensure coordinated support to national authorities and efforts, as appropriate;
 - o assure efficient information management;
 - o coordinate assessments and analysis;
 - o build consensus on response priorities, strategies and standards (forming working groups as needed); and
 - o coordinate the preparation of relevant sections of inter-agency appeals, etc. (see 1.17 and Annex D).
- monitor cluster/sector performance;
- mobilize resources for all the above [see 2.2]; and
- serve as “provider of last resort” [see 1.16].

In all cases (whether FAO is CLA or not), FAO should:

- be a member and contribute actively to the work of any cluster dealing with food security, agriculture, livelihoods or nutrition;
- provide technical advice and support to cluster members and relevant national authorities as needed (particularly in relation to priorities and the principles and standards to be observed); and
- identify needs for specific FAO assistance and plan FAO's own plan of action/ programme in the context of the cluster-agreed priorities and strategies consistent with the organization's mandate and capacities.

FAO must also ensure that *medium- and long-term perspectives* are kept in mind in the planning of sector response by promoting agricultural recovery and the re-building of livelihoods and food security from the earliest possible moment – and discouraging short-term actions that could have negative long-term effects.

2.2 How does FAO fulfil its cluster-related responsibilities at country level?

A full-time cluster coordinator is needed (supported whenever possible by a full-time information manager), at least for an initial period, for any **major humanitarian crisis** that has serious implications for agriculture and the food security of large numbers of people. This may be indicated by:

- ✓ the categorization of the situation as red (“threat to life/livelihood”) in the Early-Warning-Early-Action (EWEA) quarterly report of the IASC sub-working group on Preparedness and Contingency Planning;¹⁰ *or*
- ✓ the categorization of the situation of large populations as red (“humanitarian catastrophe”) or orange (“humanitarian emergency”) in an Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) report, *except* for situations where the majority of the affected people are refugees.¹¹

In such situations, FAO will do everything possible to assure the necessary resources to assign a full-time CC (and information manager): “double-hatting” will be avoided wherever possible. However, the appointed CC will generally arrive in the country a few days after the onset of the crisis and, in the meantime, the FAOR and country office must cover the CC role as best they can, in consultation with TCER.

Specific funding to support CLA and CC functions must be secured by including coordination support projects in inter-agency flash appeals and consolidated appeals, and by following up with local representatives of donors to mobilize the required resources [see 5.3].

The need to continue maintaining a full-time CC (and information manager) will be reviewed when the situation is no longer characterized as red in the EWEA report.

Examples

For response to cyclone Nargis in Myanmar in 2008, FAO was able to provide a full-time Coordinator, a full-time Information Manager and related support services for an Agriculture Cluster for 12 months, thanks to a special contribution from UK-DFID.

10 TCE has access to these EWEA reports and will inform country offices accordingly.

11 For refugee situations, coordination is assured by UNHCR; CLAs may not be designated. In addition, agriculture may not be a priority and leadership in food security may more appropriately be taken by WFP.

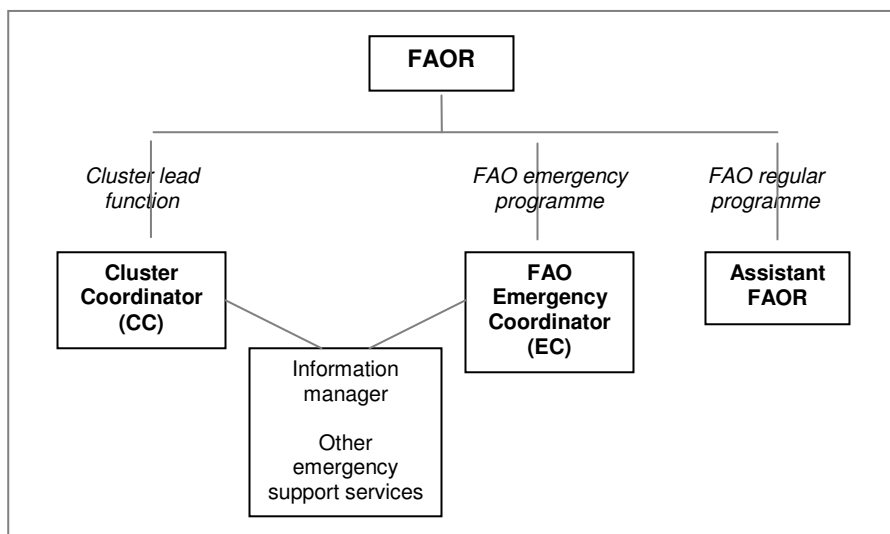
For response to the earthquake in Haiti in January 2010, FAO fielded a “surge team” including a full-time Agriculture Cluster Coordinator and a full-time Information Manager. Within 5 days of the event, the Cluster was functioning and 3 weeks later included 80 participating organizations.

However, it proved to be difficult to mobilize replacement staff in time to replace the surge team after 3 weeks. TCER is developing systems to try to avoid such problems in the future.

In other situations, due to resource constraints, the cluster coordination function will generally have to be fulfilled by the FAO Emergency Coordinator (EC) assigned by TCE in addition to his/her FAO programme planning and management functions – i.e. “double hatting”. In such cases, the EC must take great care to avoid any confusion between the distinct functions, particularly in Cluster meetings and meetings with national or zonal authorities.

Under overall IASC cluster arrangements, the country representative of the designated CLA (i.e. the FAOR when FAO is CLA) is responsible to the humanitarian coordinator for satisfactorily fulfilling the CLA functions and the CC reports to the CLA country representative. This responsibility of the country representative is reaffirmed in a letter signed jointly by the principals of the Global Cluster Lead Agencies, including FAO-TCE, in 2009 – see Annex C.

Possible FAO structure in a country dealing with a major humanitarian crisis



2.3 What are the responsibilities of a Cluster Coordinator?

The generic responsibilities of a CC are shown in annex D. The priority tasks can be summarized as follows:

- ✓ managing coordination at national and sub-national levels;
- ✓ assuring good assessment and analysis of the situation;
- ✓ avoiding gaps and duplication in response;
- ✓ leading the development of a Cluster response strategy;
- ✓ managing information (content and flow);
- ✓ promoting humanitarian principles and appropriate technical standards;
- ✓ monitoring strategy implementation and Cluster performance;
- ✓ building capacity (of national entities and Cluster partners);
- ✓ supporting the CLA in mobilising resources for the Cluster/sector; and
- ✓ reporting.

Precise responsibilities will depend on the nature and scale of the emergency, and the roles and capacities of the government and international community.

The skills required include:

- ✓ relational skills (networking, integration, motivation, moderation);
- ✓ management, planning and organization skills;
- ✓ analytical and information management skills;
- ✓ communication skills (written and spoken);
- ✓ strategic thinking;
- ✓ broad understanding of the sector; and
- ✓ familiarity with the country context.

2.4 What are the main challenges in leading a Cluster?

Responsibility without authority: The role is to facilitate the co-ordination process and contribute to a more effective humanitarian response. However, this responsibility comes without the authority to enforce compliance. Cluster participants/partners are not accountable to the CLA (or the HC) unless they have signed specific agreements. Achieving coordinated action to address priority problems and gaps depends on building consensus which in turn requires sensitivity and leadership based on good information, demonstrated competence, respect and trust.

Being an honest broker: The CC must remain independent and impartial, and act as an 'honest broker' without any FAO biases or prejudices when representing, negotiating or arbitrating on behalf of the Cluster. This is particularly important in relation to the selection of projects for inclusion in inter-agency funding appeals, the allocation of any pooled resources, and perceived influence of FAO in the cluster decision-making.

Partnership rather than technical expertise: Being effective in leading a Cluster requires FAO staff to leave behind the usual role and attitudes of a technical expert and adopt instead a partnership approach, engaging in dialogue with NGOs and others, involving them in policy and strategy discussions, and earning respect and trust.

Mobilizing resources: Resources will always be inadequate. The preparation of appeal documents and following up with donors must be recognized as being a core function, not an administrative chore! The CLA and CC must also ensure the mobilization of specific technical resources, when needed.

Other practical challenges typically include engaging national NGOs (may require considerable efforts in assuring translation) and agreeing on approaches to capacity-building and early recovery (and not undermining existing national structures).

2.5 What support can you expect from FAO HQ?

The Cluster Coordination Support Unit in TCER (see box below) will provide back-stopping support in relation to cluster coordination, programmes and communications to any FAO country office that takes on CLA (or co-lead) functions and responsibilities. The nature of that support and the manner of organization within HQ will depend on the scale of the crisis.

For Haiti in early 2010, focal points in TCER were designated for support to:

- ***cluster coordination:*** recruitment of a CC, practical guidance;
- ***programme-related activities:*** needs assessments including EFSA (with WFP) and PDNA (with UNDP, WB), developing a programme framework, project concepts for donors, and integrating DRM; and
- ***communications:*** information management coordination, web support, press and external communications/messaging.

Role of the TCER Cluster Coordination Support Group

The group is leading the overall effort to strengthen FAO's capacity to lead and coordinate sectoral responses linked to agricultural livelihoods and food security. The Group is tasked with, amongst other things:

1. The development of widely-endorsed guidance and tools to improve food security coordination, management and advocacy in emergencies, which integrate the aspects of cross-cutting issues such as environment, climate change and gender in food security emergencies.
2. The development of an integrated information management system that consolidates information from food security assessment, monitoring, surveillance and tracking systems to ensure commonly recognized and accessible data and analysis to support evidence-based recommendations and actions.
3. The establishment of rosters of qualified, experienced and trained field food security cluster coordinators to ensure the effectiveness of the country clusters and a functioning system of rapid deployment.
4. A strengthened and improved outreach of global food security cluster support to build country level capacity for emergency food security response, providing operational support to country clusters as required, and advocating and mobilizing resources for food security in emergencies.

The group implemented the first stage of a coordination mapping exercise providing key information on FAO's involvement end-2009 in clusters and related humanitarian coordination mechanisms as part of its emergency operations around the world.

Chapter 3

BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE CLUSTER

3.1 Getting started ¹²

What's needed – desired result

A mechanism exists to facilitate coordination of the assessment, planning and response activities of sector actors from day-1 of the crisis, including defining priorities, identifying and filling gaps, and preparing appeals.

Guiding principles

- ✓ Where a Cluster already exists, it is activated and sustained.
- ✓ Where there is no existing Cluster, the designated CLA (FAO or other organization) establishes one or otherwise ensures an appropriate mechanism to fulfil Cluster functions, complementing and strengthening existing coordination structures and processes at both national and sub-national levels. Parallel systems are avoided.
- ✓ Working groups are formed within the Cluster to deal with technical issues and detailed planning.
- ✓ Learn from the past.
- ✓ Ensure transparency in all cluster activities and the use of resources.

What to do

- ☑ Find out about existing *coordination structures* and mechanisms and how to complement and/or strengthen them.
- ☑ Find out how sector coordination processes operated in *previous emergencies* in the country, what worked well and what didn't, and why.
- ☑ Be proactive in gathering *contacts*. Engage experienced sector actors as early as possible [see 3.2].
- ☑ Get good *maps* of the country and the affected areas.
- ☑ Get and quickly review available information including:
 - *background (pre-crisis)* information;
 - *lessons* from previous emergency operations in the country;
 - any relevant preparedness/*contingency plans*; and
 - available information of the *current situation*.
- ☑ Plan the *immediate 24-hour* and *week-1 priority activities* (see below).

¹² This section is largely adapted from *WASH Cluster Coordination Handbook*, 2009.

Essential information for getting started

The following are essential for in-country personnel initiating a Cluster and for the pre-arrival preparation and self-briefing of any incoming Cluster Coordinator:

<i>Background (pre-crisis) information</i>	<i>Preliminary info on the current situation</i>
<p>Sector profiles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ (FAO country profiles...) ➤ (WFP CFSVA and FSM reports...) ➤ (World Bank sector profiles...) <p>General country profiles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/ ➤ http://countryanalysis.eiu.com/ <p>Contingency and emergency preparedness plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ (Inter-agency contingency plans...) ➤ National preparedness/contingency plans – ask from...? 	<p>Local sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ government disaster/emergency management office ➤ other agencies especially those already working in the affected area ➤ news-media <p>Web sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ www.reliefweb.org ➤ www.oneresponse.net

The first 24 hours

The box below shows typical priorities for the first 24 hours. Adapt the list to the nature and scale of emergency and timing of arrival of any incoming CC.¹³

Typical Priorities for the First 24-hours	
Preliminary actions for a newly arrived CC to get oriented:	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange briefing from the CLA country representative and the interim CC. 2. Get a security briefing. Can be arranged in advance. 3. Meet representatives of key sector actors who are present in-country (UN and INGO).
Preliminary actions to get started with a Cluster:	
(When FAO is designated as CLA or co-lead of a Cluster, these actions are to be taken by the FAOR, CC, or other designated staff member pending the arrival of the CC)	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Locate and talk to government partners (relevant line ministries/departments) and

13 A detailed *Mission Readiness checklist* that may be useful for an incoming CC can be found in *Managing WHO Humanitarian Response in the Field*, Annex G1 - http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/tools/manuals/who_field_handbook/g1.pdf

	<p>get details of existing structures, systems, capacities, key informants, and information on the current situation and expected evolution.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Attend a general coordination meeting, such as the inter-agency coordination meeting chaired by the government, the RC/HC or UN-OCHA, and establish contacts. 3. Set up an initial cluster coordination meeting e.g. fix time & venue; prepare agenda, poster for contact information, etc. 4. Review current information about the situation, e.g. Sit Reps, assessments, national contingency plans. 5. Establish data management system (in collaboration with UN-OCHA), e.g. contacts, information sources, capacity information. 6. Find out about, and input to, initial assessment processes e.g. what is being organised, by whom, where, what capacity is available. 7. Plan immediate and week one actions and priorities.
--	---

What do you want to learn from initial contacts:

- What information is already available and where can you find it?
- What is the current situation and state of response in the sector?
- What developments are expected in the situation and the sector response?
- What role is government taking? Who are the main government stakeholders in the sector?
- Who are the other key players in the sector response, where are they?
- Who are the best sources for relevant, up-to-date information?
- What coordination fora exist? Who leads them? How effective are they?
- Is there an existing inter-agency contingency plan? Is it being used? If not why not?

First-week coordination tasks

A written work plan for the first week-or-so will help to ensure that no important task is overlooked – see the sample below. The timeline will need to be reviewed and adjusted daily. An important element is defining the staffing and support requirements of the Cluster and including a corresponding project in the Flash appeal (as was done for Haiti in January 2010). Guidance for organizing the first Cluster meeting is provided in section 3.5.

Typical tasks for week 1	Days after disaster onset (approx)						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Building relations with Cluster stakeholders							
One-to-one meetings with the main stakeholders: government departments, INGOs, local actors, donors							
General (inter-sectoral) coordination meetings							
Collection of actor profiles and initial mapping of Who What Where When (4W) for the sector							
Establishing the Cluster							
Identifying the key sector actors to join the Cluster (UN, NGOs, donors, private sector)							
Setting up and holding the first Cluster meeting							
Regular Cluster coordination meetings							
Agreement on Cluster ToR, initial responsibilities for Cluster support functions, staff requirements							
Establishing Cluster operational systems							
Office and communications facilities (internet, phone, radio, etc.), transport, etc.							
Communication and contact management systems (email lists, Google group, website, etc.)							
Data management system							
Translators/translation services, etc.							
Coordinating assessments and response							
Review of existing available information (pre-crisis baseline and current situation)							
Preparation of and agreement on a <i>preliminary working scenario</i> (and week-1 response) [see 4.2]							
Preparation for <i>initial rapid assessment</i> – information requirements, data collection instruments, site selection, teams, training, etc. [see 4.3]							
Implementation of an initial rapid assessment – field visits, data collection, reporting, analysis... [see 4.3]							
Initial (3-4 week) response strategy with key objectives and indicators [see 4.5]							
Reporting and resource mobilization							
Daily Cluster sit-reps; inputs to inter-Cluster sit-reps							
Input to Flash Appeal; preparation of proposals for CERF funding [see 5.2, 5.3]							

First-month coordination tasks

The following are typical Cluster planning activities in the first month:¹⁴

	See:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue identifying and engaging sector actors including newly arriving organizations.	3.2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consolidate Cluster arrangements (may include establishing a steering group).	1.4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consolidate and refine the information management system and tools.	3.7
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complete the initial rapid assessment; disseminate the report rapidly.	4.3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regularly review and update the gap analysis and prioritisation of needs.	4.4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finalize sector components of the Flash Appeal and CERF proposals, if needed.	5.2 5.3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elaborate a (3-month?) Cluster/sector response strategy and action plan.	4.5
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Establish a process for ongoing monitoring and periodic reviews of the situation and the effectiveness of response in the sector.	4.4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Establish working groups (WG) for specific tasks or sub-sectors, if needed; agree on a focal point agency to lead each WG.	1.4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree on a focal point for each important cross-cutting issue.	1.14
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Develop and get agreement on Cluster/sector principles & standards.	3.6
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coordinate a comprehensive sector assessment or sub-sector assessments.	4.3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Formulate advocacy messages and develop a Cluster communications/advocacy strategy.	3.7
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiate Cluster contingency planning for foreseeable events or potential changes in the situation, if required.	3.8

Beyond the first month

The focus will be on:

- identifying and engaging new actors in the sector;
- coordinating follow-on coverage and the handing over of activities that remain important from Cluster participants/partners that leave to others who are able to take over;

14 This might be the first month of response to a rapid-onset emergency or the first month for establishing a new Cluster in the context of an ongoing protracted emergency situation.

- ☑ continuing regular Cluster meetings but adjusting their frequency to the needs of the situation and ensuring that all meetings are focused and productive;
 - ☑ consolidating information management and reporting systems;
 - ☑ assuring continuous regular monitoring the situation and sector response, organizing joint monitoring visits as and when appropriate;
 - ☑ continually up-dating and refining information and the situation analysis;
 - ☑ organizing periodic participatory reviews of the situation and progress, and agreeing adjustments to the Cluster objectives and strategies if/when needed;
 - ☑ keeping donors and all other stakeholders informed of priority needs in the sector;
 - ☑ issuing regular Cluster/sector reports/bulletins; and
 - ☑ organizing periodic joint lessons-learned exercises.
-

Tools and guidance

Tools from the WASH and Emergency Shelter clusters (to be replaced by examples of tools from agriculture and food security clusters, when found):

- 📖 WASH Cluster *Work Planning Checklist* (30 days).
- 📖 WASH Cluster, *Coordination Work Plan* (3 month), Bangladesh, Feb 2008.
- 📖 Emergency Shelter Cluster *mission deployment checklist*, IFRC 2006.
- 📖 *'How to Contact Us'* poster, ESC sample, Yogyakarta.
- 📖 *Practical tools and advice for Cluster Coordinators* [not an official IASC website] - www.clustercoordination.org
- 📖 *Field Coordination in Emergencies Toolkit* - used by coordination teams deployed by the Emergency Shelter Cluster co-chairs UNHCR and IFRC to chair in-country emergencies - <http://www.humanitarianreform.org/Default.aspx?tabid=301>

Useful personal skills guidance for a CC

[from *Managing WHO Humanitarian Response in the Field*, WHO 2008]

- 📖 Personal readiness checklist - http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/tools/manuals/who_field_handbook/g1.pdf
- 📖 Establishing an operations room - http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/tools/manuals/who_field_handbook/b4.pdf
- 📖 Managing stress - http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/tools/manuals/who_field_handbook/g5.pdf
- 📖 Personal security - http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/tools/manuals/who_field_handbook/h1.pdf

3.2 Engaging key actors; promoting the cluster

What's needed – desired result

All significant actors in the sector participate in Cluster meetings and related activities, commit to the aims of the Cluster, and work together to identify and address the priority needs in the sector. This includes UN agencies, other international organizations, national and international NGOs, and relevant national institutions and civil society organizations.

Guiding principles

- ✓ Inclusiveness.
- ✓ Prioritization: start with realistic objectives and adopt a progressive approach.
- ✓ Sensitivity to and respect for differing mandates, priorities and approaches.
- ✓ Mutual benefit: all participants/partners have something to gain.
- ✓ Transparency in all cluster activities and the use of resources.

<i>Approach needed:</i>	<i>Not:</i>
✓ leading based on trust, relationships, services	✗ direction based on line authority
✓ consensus building; shared decision-making	✗ unilateral decision-making
✓ facilitating, networking and enabling	✗ command and control
✓ equal partners	✗ implementing partners
✓ focus on sector and emergency as a whole	✗ focus on own agency's interests
✓ working "behind-the-scenes"	✗ trying to be out in front

Define realistic initial objectives, demonstrate value added and build trust hence get buy-in, then broaden the scope. Focus on the key priorities starting with what is most feasible and expand incrementally to address other concerns as and when possible.

Make sure all partners have something to gain: benefits may include access to more/better information or expertise, opportunities for common strategizing and planning, facilitated access to the affected areas, access to resources (transport, funds, etc.) from a common pool or through the identification of opportunities for sharing.

What to do; how to do it

- ☑ Proactively identify and involve all sector actors including local organizations and authorities. If there is no existing Cluster, get lists of sector actors – and their contacts – through relevant government departments, FAO and WFP country offices, existing sector coordination mechanisms, organizations working in the sector for a long time, and the “grapevine”. Contact them individually, explain the aims of the cluster and invite them to the first/next meeting.
- ☑ Encourage relevant government departments to attend Cluster meetings and get a senior official to co-chair.
- ☑ Arrange translation at meetings, where necessary, and translation of all key guidance materials.
- ☑ Maintain regular contact with all sector actors and build personal relationships.¹⁵
- ☑ Respect differing mandates, priorities and approaches. Seek to build consensus on needs, risks, objectives and how best to address them equitably with the resources available.
- ☑ Build trust through transparency and openness. Acknowledge constraints. Encourage dialogue.
- ☑ Understand partners’ expectations and constraints; ensure that expectations are realistic and seek ways to help them overcome constraints.
- ☑ Establish clear understandings on the information that is required from cluster partners, in what form and how often it should be presented. Keep it to the necessary minimum.
- ☑ Use the preparation of a flash appeal, a CHAP and CAP, and other inter-agency planning processes as opportunities to build a culture of collaboration, participation and partnership. Ensure that all partners have the opportunity to contribute to defining overall priorities and develop their own activities accordingly.
- ☑ Make sure that information about meetings, decisions and current sector issues are readily available to all actors. Make sure that meetings are productive [see 3.5].

15 Achieving coordination depends primarily on behaviour and inter-personal skills even though demonstrated technical competence also helps.

- ☑ Seek feedback from cluster members on the effectiveness of the Cluster and how it could be enhanced.
- ☑ In contacts with sector actors, especially during early contacts, emphasize the “key points” in the box below:

Key points in advocating the Cluster Approach

What is it?

- ✓ A dynamic approach to be adapted to each situation with the aim of optimising emergency response through collaboration and filling gaps where needed.
- ✓ A structure for rapid organisation of humanitarian response with accountability.

What is it not?

- ✗ It is not an attempt to undermine the government’s role, but helps to strengthen government coordination.
- ✗ It is not UN-centric, but brings together all three “families” represented in the IASC, i.e. UN agencies, the Red Cross Movement, and NGOs.

What does it offer?

to all:

- ✓ a structured approach improving predictability and quality of response;
- ✓ resources and capabilities to respond quickly and effectively; and
- ✓ a process for avoiding, and filling, gaps in the humanitarian response.

to government:

- ✓ continued control with improved speed, coverage, and quality of response;
- ✓ clear terms of reference and streamlined communications through pre-designated Cluster Lead Agencies;
- ✓ reduction in workload through Cluster role in organisation and coordination of efforts;
- ✓ critical external experience and technical expertise; and
- ✓ opportunity for attracting additional resources and popular support.

to INGOs:

- ✓ access to technical support and clarity on standards of response;
- ✓ reduced risk of duplication or conflict between agencies or beneficiaries;
- ✓ increased networking and means to engage with donors and government;
- ✓ collective power in advocacy, mobilising resources, etc.; and
- ✓ reduced risk of lone decision making and improved accountability to the affected populations.

to donors:

- ✓ more strategic and evidence-based rationale for funding;
- ✓ greater consistency and reduced duplication between proposals;
- ✓ closer dialogue and access to a range of implementing partners; and
- ✓ a more active role in response planning.

to local actors:

- ✓ increased chance of involvement in the response;
- ✓ access to resources and capacity building opportunities;
- ✓ better understanding of the international aid process, standards etc;
- ✓ access to donors and potential partners;
- ✓ means of promoting local interests and initiatives; and
- ✓ better organisation and access to information at local level.

[Reproduced with minor adaptations from the WASH Cluster Coordination Handbook, 2009]

Challenges likely to be faced

Some organizations have been reluctant to participate in Clusters because they believe it:

- * will be additional work and time consuming with many meetings and demands for information that may be difficult to gather;
- * will be of no tangible benefit: worse, it could limit opportunities to generate direct funding from traditional donors;
- * duplicates existing coordination mechanisms and undermines the government's role and authority for coordinating humanitarian response; and
- * will focus on and favour the interests of the CLA and UN agencies; the CLA will not be objective in the allocation of pooled resources.

Some organizations may be unwilling to be associated with certain other organizations. A few may be concerned that Cluster decisions might be contrary to their own priorities or mandates (e.g. ICRC's and MSF's requirements for independence).

Address these concerns by emphasizing the points in the preceding box.

Resolving conflicts, breaking impasses

Conflicts are inevitable within any group and, if handled well, can lead to growth and development of the group (Cluster) as well as of individual members, and better decisions and increased cohesion. Conflicts are reduced and more quickly resolved if the Cluster has a clear work plan and ToR. Some techniques for resolving conflicts and overcoming impasses in discussions¹⁶ as suggested in the box below.

Seeking consensus; resolving conflicts; breaking impasses

Seeking consensus

- ✓ Use active listening and questioning skills.
- ✓ Communicate openly.
- ✓ Focus on common goals and explore underlying interests.
- ✓ Identify and nurture aspects on which there is agreement.
- ✓ Remain calm and respectful to everyone, don't argue or demean anyone.
- ✓ Believe that agreement is possible and infuse this belief throughout the group.
- ✓ Break larger groups down into smaller groups tasked with specific responsibilities.

Resolving conflict

- ✓ Recognise symptoms (e.g. anger, disengagement, body language, cliques forming, non-attendance).
- ✓ Tackle it early.
- ✓ Identify the causes (e.g. lack of clarity, no common vision, methods of communicating, division of responsibilities, differing values, personalities, styles of working).
- ✓ Focus on core issue or problem: avoid previous disputes or 'getting personal'.
- ✓ Consider each point of view: use active listening.
- ✓ Invite suggestions on the way forward: focus on solutions and building consensus.
- ✓ Check agreement of all stakeholders: check back that everyone accepts the resolution.

What to do when impasse is reached?

- ✓ Remind all of the humanitarian consequences of failing to reach an agreement, how an agreement will benefit the populations you are all there to serve, and that the longer-term relationship and cooperation are at stake.

16 Impasse occurs when the key stakeholders are unable to perceive effective solutions to their dispute or differences. People feel stuck, frustrated, angry, and disillusioned. They might dig their heels in deeper, adopting extreme or rigid positions, or they might withdraw from the Cluster.

- ✓ Confer and invite suggestions - use probing questions.
- ✓ Retrace progress and summarise areas of agreement and disagreement.
- ✓ Find out where people stand, and how strongly they feel.
- ✓ Gather further information or 'evidence'.
- ✓ Build consensus in mixed small groups, e.g. working groups, then send representatives to Cluster steering group.
- ✓ Set a time limit, and then suggest that the issue goes to a majority vote.
- ✓ Meet with primary disputants and ask: 'What could be changed so that you could support it?'
- ✓ Bring disputing parties together at a separate time and facilitate conflict resolution and problem solving.

Be ready to accept acquiescence, e.g. "I don't see the need for this, but I'll go along with it" (non-support) or "I personally can't do this, but I won't stop others from doing it" (standing aside).

[Condensed from Global WASH Cluster, *WASH Cluster Coordination Handbook*, 2009]

Tools and guidance

- 📖 Global WASH Cluster, *WASH Cluster Coordination Handbook*, 2009 - sections 2.3 *Managing contacts and communication* and 2.5 *Negotiating, consensus building and conflict resolution*.
- 📖 IASC Cluster-Sector Leadership Training (2007) Tip Sheets - *Leadership in Clusters and Building Consensus* - <http://oneresponse.info/Coordination/publicdocuments/Tip%20Sheet%202007%20Building%20consensus.doc>
- 📖 Useful detailed guidelines on consensus building - <http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/free/consensus.pdf>
- 📖 Useful detailed guidelines on facilitating consensus building in large groups - <http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/free/conslarge.pdf>
- 📖 Fostering partnerships, *Managing WHO Humanitarian Response in the Field*, Annex F5, WHO 2008 - http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/tools/manuals/who_field_handbook/f5.pdf

3.3 Mapping sector actors

What's needed – desired output

An always-up-to-date picture of the presence, activities and capacities of sector actors and the responses being delivered to populations in the affected areas.

Guiding principles

- ✓ The mapping of sector actors throughout the crisis-affected area(s) is a prerequisite for coordinated planning and action. It should be undertaken rapidly at the *onset* of a crisis, not later than the first cluster meeting, and be *up-dated* continuously during the early stages of response and at regular intervals once the situation has stabilized.
 - ✓ Arrangements for “mapping” are adapted to the country context but should generally include “Who is Where, doing What, When” (4W) data and information on the interests and capacities of the various sector stakeholders.
 - ✓ The 4W data are shared with OCHA as inputs to the OCHA-managed inter-sectoral 3W/4W database.
 - ✓ Data are disaggregated on the basis of geographic areas relevant for agricultural and livelihood analysis and planning purposes. (This may be at a lower, more detailed level than used for OCHA’s database.)
-

What to do; how to do it

- ☑ Check what information the government and OCHA already have, or are collecting at national and field levels, concerning organizations active in the sector. This might include contact addresses, general information about the organization, and the geographic areas where they are working. Cross-check that information to ensure that everyone is “on the same page”.
- ☑ Collect information on the sector activities/services that each actor is providing, or expects to provide in specific areas. Make the data available to OCHA for inclusion in the central 3W/4W database.
- ☑ Up-date all these data are regularly.
- ☑ Complement these activity-related data with additional information on each organization such as:

- their mandate, role, areas of expertise, objectives and the priorities they want to address;
 - the resources they have, what they hope to mobilize, and the types and quantities of assistance they intend (or might be able) to provide;
 - the geographic and service areas into which they plan (or might be able) to extend their activities;
 - when they expect to initiate any new activities, or extend activities to new geographic areas, and when to phase down and close particular activities;
 - their commitment (or willingness) to collaborate with others and work in partnership, and their interest in contributing to Cluster activities; and
 - their commitment to common humanitarian principles, evidence- and needs-based assistance, and attention to agreed cross-cutting issues including protection concerns.
- ☑ Undertake a **stakeholder analysis**: systematically examine the interests of each agency, organization, group and individual that has a direct or indirect interest in the sector and the activities of the Cluster, and whose attitudes and actions could have an influence on the outcomes of humanitarian and early recovery activities in the sector.¹⁷

The combined information is important for assessment and planning purposes but also provides the HCC with the understanding necessary to work with the various actors individually, or in groups, to increase their commitment to the Cluster's objectives (and reduce any opposition) and ensure effective, coordinated action.

Tools and guidance

- 📖 UNOCHA 3W website: <http://3w.unocha.org/WhoWhatWhere/>
- 📖 WASH Agency Reporting Template, 2008.
- 📖 Agency reporting form (in WORD format), UN-OCHA Lebanon.
- 📖 *Stakeholder analysis*, Health Cluster Guide, Annex E.
[A brief outline with references to other more detailed guidance]

¹⁷ Stakeholders may include militias and other non-State actors, for example, as well as donors and local political entities in addition to organizations actually providing assistance and services in the sector.

3.4 Supporting, and building the capacity of, national authorities

What's needed – desired result

International assistance and government efforts are harmonized for the benefit of the affected population, and national capacities are strengthened to cope with any future crises.

Guiding principles

“Each State has the responsibility first and foremost to take care of victims of natural disasters and other emergencies occurring on its territory. Hence, the affected State has the primary role in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory.” [UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182 of 1991]

Wherever and to the maximum extent possible:

- ✓ international humanitarian and early recovery assistance complements the relief and recovery efforts of national authorities;
- ✓ the activities of international humanitarian actors within and across clusters build on and strengthen the capacities of national authorities as well as national NGOs, grassroots organizations and other local actors;
- ✓ the Cluster mechanism and process is adapted to, supports and complements government coordination efforts; and
- ✓ do not create parallel structures for the delivery or coordination of assistance that could undermine or weaken existing governmental ones.




What to do; how to do it

- ☑ At the outset, check and assess the effectiveness of any existing sectoral coordination mechanisms and discuss with relevant national authorities whether and how their efforts might be strengthened by the adoption of a cluster approach.
- ☑ Invite an appropriate senior official to co-chair cluster meetings.
- ☑ Keep relevant officials fully informed on the role and activities of the cluster.

- ☑ Adopt government standards and protocols for the sector or work with relevant departments to agree on enhancements in line with international standards [see 4.5].
- ☑ Work together with relevant national authorities to ensure that all emergency programmes and activities are designed and implemented in ways that contribute to re-building local capacities. Try, in particular, to ensure that:
 - existing facilities and systems are used, reactivated and repaired, whenever possible;
 - existing in-country competencies are identified and used as much as possible;
 - local personnel are involved in all assessment, planning and response activities; and
 - training/re-training needs are identified and appropriate, task-oriented training provided as early as possible (with equality of opportunity for women and men).
- ☑ Discourage all sector actors from creating new, parallel systems, unless absolutely necessary.
- ☑ Try to get agreement among all the main sector actors on:
 - the importance of maintaining and, where possible, strengthening relevant national and sub-national level sector structures; and
 - how to avoid denuding those structures of key staff.¹⁸
- ☑ Identify existing in-country competencies and try to make sure that they are used to good effect.
- ☑ Facilitate international/national partnerships with and among NGOs to help build local capacity.
- ☑ Promote the Principles of Partnership reproduced in section 1.13.
- ☑ Maintain strict impartiality in any situation of conflict.

18 All-too-often, agencies recruit staff from government entities whose capacity is thus decimated making longer-term recovery more difficult!

Tools and guidance

-  *Operational Guidance for Cluster Lead Agencies on Working with National Authorities*, draft, IASC January 2009.
-  Global WASH Cluster, *WASH Cluster Coordination Handbook*, 2009 - section 2.2 *Managing and facilitating cluster meetings*.
-  *WASH Cluster Coordination Handbook*, section 1.2.1 *WASH Cluster Coordination Structure*, Global WASH Cluster 2009.

[Provides examples of different possible coordination structures and the perceived advantages and disadvantages of each: (i) CLA supporting an existing government-led mechanism; (ii) a Cluster alongside an existing government mechanism; (iii) a Cluster in the absence of any existing mechanism]

3.5 Holding successful Cluster meetings

What's needed – desired result

Cluster meetings provide an effective forum for participating organizations to efficiently exchange information and agree on priorities, strategies and joint or coordinated actions.

Guiding principles

- ✓ The first Cluster meeting is organised within 24-48 hours of crisis onset in case of a sudden-onset disaster (or the first 2-3 days following recognition of the need for coordinated action in case of a slow-onset crisis).
 - ✓ The frequency of subsequent meetings is tailored to the needs of the situation and the phase of operations.
 - ✓ The venue is readily accessible for all participants.
 - ✓ Each meeting is carefully prepared and a summary report circulated within 24 hours.
 - ✓ The CC does not wear two hats during a Cluster meeting. If the CC is from FAO, another staff member should be present to represent FAO.
 - ✓ Working groups are formed to deal with specific issues and report back to the Cluster as a whole.
 - ✓ Meetings focus on important new information about the situation and aspects that need collective consideration, decisions and action: other factual information is collected and shared in written form (to avoid long meetings).
-

What to do; how to do it (i) for all meetings

- ☑ Select a venue that is suitable in terms of accessibility, space, facilities and ventilation.
- ☑ Get a senior government official to chair or co-chair the meeting, if possible. Otherwise, co-chair with an appropriate NGO.
- ☑ Focus on key issues identified and agreed in advance with the co-chair.
- ☑ Prepare handouts with important new information and maps.

- ☑ Prepare posters or flip charts to record information you want to get from others, or cross-check, during or at the end of the meeting. (For the early meetings this includes, in particular, information on who is where and providing what kind/level of assistance.)
- ☑ Propose, and get agreement on, the frequency of meetings – e.g. twice a week during the initial acute phase, then weekly, then monthly once the situation has stabilized.
- ☑ Within 24 hours of each meeting, distribute a concise record of key items of information shared, decisions reached, follow-up actions required and responsibilities for those actions.

What to do; how to do it (ii) for the first Cluster meeting

- ☑ Invite all relevant governmental and other national entities as well and international sector actors.
- ☑ Prepare a realistic agenda – see the example in the box below.
- ☑ Prepare signing-in sheets for attendees to note their names, organizations, contacts (phone, email), where they are working (or intend to work), the kind of assistance/services they are providing (or intend to provide).

If there is *no existing* cluster or coordination group, contact the relevant government entity and the other main sector actors to arrange a first meeting with as many participants as possible. Invite heads of agencies (country directors) to the first meeting.

Possible agenda for a first Cluster meeting

1. Welcome and introductions (if feasible, depending on the number of attendees).
2. Outline/review the purpose and expectations of the Cluster.
3. Briefing (by the Gov't/CC) on the situation, priority problems and immediate actions required.
4. Information (from participants) on Who's Where doing What since When and until When, and major constraints.
5. Identification of important gaps in information and response.
6. Arrangements for a joint or coordinated initial rapid assessment (establishment of an assessment working group), and an information clearing house for the sector.
7. Next meeting – date, time, place, agenda items, anything participants are requested to prepare.

The agenda for the first few meetings will be broadly similar but include the establishment of working groups for specific topics or tasks – membership, leadership, arrangements for meetings, and deadlines for reporting back.

Problems typically encountered in early Cluster meetings include:

- ✘ limited understanding of (perhaps challenges to), the Cluster approach;
- ✘ diverse priorities and demands for information and action;
- ✘ poor support from government;
- ✘ conflicting information and forecasts of needs and response requirements;
- ✘ large numbers of participants – difficult to manage; and
- ✘ language difficulties.

These may be managed/reduced by:

- ☑ establishing contact with and meeting government partners *before* the Cluster meeting;
- ☑ requesting the government to chair the meeting or, if they prefer, to co-chair;
- ☑ providing everyone with copies of the agenda and notes on the Cluster Approach (e.g. the IASC Guideline) in advance;
- ☑ clearly and concisely presenting the role of the Cluster, what participants can expect from meetings and from the CLA and CC, and what is expected of participants;
- ☑ agreeing ground rules for the conduct of meetings and on mechanisms to facilitate rapid decision making;
- ☑ displaying available information on who is doing what, where, and having participants update it on the displayed sheets: avoid going round the room and asking for updates from all partners;
- ☑ inviting *new* agencies to *briefly* explain who they are and what they are doing where; and
- ☑ referring participants to previous meeting notes and briefing papers for information on the Cluster and decisions taken to date: avoid spending time going over previous discussions and decisions.

Tools and guidance

- 📖 Global WASH Cluster, *WASH Cluster Coordination Handbook*, 2009 - section 2.2 *Managing and facilitating cluster meetings*.
- 📖 IASC Cluster-Sector Leadership Training (2007) Tip Sheet - *Coordination Meetings* - <http://onerresponse.info/Coordination/publicdocuments/Tip%20Sheet%202007%20Coordination%20Meetings.pdf>
- 📖 *Chairing/facilitating a meeting, Managing WHO Humanitarian Response in the Field*, Annex F4, WHO 2008 - http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/tools/manuals/who_field_handbook/f4.pdf

3.6 Agreeing principles; ensuring standards

What's needed – desired result

The activities of all Cluster participants/partners are planned and undertaken in accordance with commonly agreed principles, and the assistance and services provided conform to agreed technical standards.

Guiding principles

- ✓ All Cluster participants/partners commit to the general humanitarian principles and the principles of partnership in 1.13.
- ✓ The Cluster, in consultation with the HC and other clusters, may adopt additional, complementary guiding principles for behaviour and practice considered to be important in the particular local context.
- ✓ Assistance and services to the affected population are provided in line with established national standards for the sector or widely-recognized international standards, whichever are higher.
- ✓ Guidance and training relevant to principles and standards are made available to Cluster participants/partners, as needed.

Cluster participants/partners should also adhere to the *Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief*, included as annex 2 in the SPHERE Project Handbook.

What to do; how to do it

- ☑ From the outset, get agreement on the adoption by the Cluster of the general humanitarian principles and the principles of partnership in 1.13.
- ☑ Once the Cluster is functioning, consider forming a working group to review the possible need for (value of) defining a set of additional complementary guiding principles for behaviour and practice for sector actors. Coordinate with other clusters as appropriate through the ICCG.
- ☑ Ensure that relevant national standards and sector guidelines are known by all Cluster participants.

- ☑ If national policies and guidelines are not in line with widely-accepted international standards, consult with the government and other key sector partners and agree on the standards and best practices to be applied.
- ☑ Arrange for the preparation and dissemination of technical guidelines and organize joint training, if needed.
- ☑ Ensure that the monitoring and surveillance system collects and compiles the data necessary to monitor the application of standards [see 4.4].
- ☑ Visit project sites and observe the activities of Cluster participants; contribute to project reviews and joint training.
- ☑ Organize joint monitoring of the implementation of the agreed principles and standards and the sharing of experiences with a view to achieving a consistently high standard of assistance and services for all communities.
- ☑ Ensure/arrange briefings for *new organizations* arriving to work in the sector. When required, help the relevant national authorities to arrange such briefings. This may include:
 - national policies and programmes, and pre-emergency service coverage;
 - national and international expertise available;
 - relevant government structures and sector focal points in other organizations; and
 - details of arrangements to coordinate humanitarian and early recovery response in the sector.
- ☑ If deemed useful, invite experts on important cross-cutting issues to provide training and support for Cluster participants/partners in the effective application of agreed principles and standards.

Tools and guidance

- 📖 Global WASH Cluster, *WASH Cluster Coordination Handbook*, 2009 - section 7.1 *Establishing agreed guiding principles and standards* and section 7.3 *Promoting accountability to affected populations*.

3.7 Managing and communicating information

What's needed – desired result

The best possible up-to-date information on the situation and sector response activities is available at all times to all Cluster participants/partners, other sector stakeholders and other Clusters in useful, readily understandable formats.

Guiding principles

- ✓ Good information is critical to good decision-making and coordinated action, so good information management (IM) is needed from day-1.
- ✓ Cluster IM systems are compatible – linked if possible – with those of the OCHA-managed humanitarian information centre (HIC).
- ✓ IM systems and requests for information focus on what is really important and data that will actually be used, and take account of the context and resources available.
- ✓ Data are compiled and triangulated from as many sources as possible, and information is used responsibly.
- ✓ All data are critically reviewed for reliability, relevance and coverage before being used or disseminated.
- ✓ Information on the situation and sector activities is regularly disseminated to all stakeholders, and all sector actors regularly up-dated on contextual factors (political, social, economic, security, etc.) that could have implications for the planning and implementation of their activities.

Emergencies generate masses of disparate information that has to be organized systematically. Information that it not easy to retrieve when needed loses its usefulness. A good internal information management system also helps to reduce stress for emergency managers and staff.

A full-time information manager is needed in many cases as well as space to manage the receipt and organization of information, to display it in an accessible manner, and manage dissemination.

Information management responsibilities of CLAs

- ✓ Sector/cluster lead agencies are responsible for appointing individuals at the country level with the necessary expertise to be the sector/cluster IM focal point. Depending on the context, this may be the sector/cluster coordinator or there may be a need for sector/cluster lead agencies to appoint dedicated, full-time IM focal points with no other responsibilities.
- ✓ While it is important that there is one IM focal point per sector/cluster, IM resources and capacities can be shared across clusters at the country level where appropriate to promote economies of scale.
- ✓ Sector/cluster IM focal points are responsible for ensuring adherence to global IM norms, policies and standards and should treat the global level clusters and OCHA as a resource of information management expertise that can be called upon for advice, as well as for operational support, general guidance and training programmes.
- ✓ Sector/cluster IM focal points should support OCHA in the establishment of systems and processes to effectively identify and communicate with cluster partners including: contact list, meeting schedules, who does what where information etc
- ✓ Sector/cluster IM focal points, in collaboration with OCHA, should support the establishment of information sharing mechanisms to ensure availability of, and access to, up-to-date cluster specific information (e.g.. meeting minutes, standard forms, policy or technical guidelines, datasets etc).
- ✓ Sector/cluster IM focal points should contact the OCHA Information Management Officer to ensure coherence and coordination between *intra* and *inter* cluster information management initiatives.

[Reproduced from Operational Guidance on Responsibilities of sector/cluster leads & OCHA in Information Management, draft, OCHA 2009]

What to do; how to do it (i) **data collection, storage, analysis**

- ☑ Ensure **IM capacity** by mobilizing the skills needed from the FAO Country Office/CLA, partners, the government, recruitment (against a Cluster IM project), or collaboration with OCHA-HIC. The skills needed usually include:
 - information management;
 - GIS and database design and management; and
 - communications and news-media relations.
- ☑ Define the **types of information** needed to support Cluster activities and therefore to be collected, stored and made available to Cluster partners and other sector stakeholders – see box below.

Information that may need to be collected and stored/filed

- List of Cluster partners and other main stakeholders with contact details
- Cluster/sector situation reports and bulletins
- Cluster/sector crisis response strategy
- Assessment reports [see chapter 4]
- Appeals documents [see chapter 5]
- Contingency plans
- Guidelines on standards and best practices
- Summary minutes of Cluster meetings including working groups
- Periodic reports, reviews and evaluations of Cluster activities and sector response
- Background (pre-crisis) information including reports and evaluations of previous emergency operations
- Press releases and other formal Cluster communications

- ☑ Realistically assess the *capacities* of Cluster participants/partners to provide information and identify any requirements for related training and experience-sharing.
- ☑ Arrange *physical facilities* adequate for the management of information including desks, computers, filing cabinets and display boards.
- ☑ Establish good *filing systems* for both electronic and hard copy documents.
- ☑ List the *tools* (standard formats, templates, etc.) for recording and reporting by Cluster partners and make them available through a suitable website.¹⁹
- ☑ Establish links with any existing reporting systems; strengthen those systems or complement them with other reporting systems if needed.
- ☑ Arrange for information to be collected from all sources (including news-media reports).
- ☑ Ensure the systematic, critical review of all incoming data for reliability and relevance – see box below.

19 OCHA plans to establish an *inter-agency website* at the onset of every major crisis. Country-level clusters will be responsible for posting and managing the content of their own sector pages. Once available, the CLA and CC must ensure the development of the Cluster/ sector page. In the meantime, use an existing platform.

Reviewing secondary data for reliability and relevance

Evaluate:

- the data collection techniques used;
- the manner in which the techniques were applied in the field with particular attention to the adequacy and reliability of sampling;
- the geographic area and/or population groups covered;
- when the data were collected; and
- whether the reported findings appear to be reliable and representative of the situation and, if not, what the direction of the bias might be (under-estimation or over-estimation).

- ☑ Arrange for systematic *analysis* – including a gender analysis – of all data to generate information for planning, management, evaluation, and advocacy purposes.
- ☑ Ensure that information is handled and used responsibly, see box below.
- ☑ Ensure active participation in *inter-agency initiatives* in information management (HIC, IM working groups) to improve inter-agency sharing of information, get access to information on the potential causes of food security problems or risks and initiatives of other clusters that could be relevant for sectors of concern to FAO, and participate in establishing inter-agency IM standards.

Handling and using data and information responsibly

- ✓ Verify and record the sources and probable reliability of all data and information received.
- ✓ Cross-check – “triangulate” – data from different sources, whenever possible.
- ✓ Consider possible margins of error in data and the implications for decisions.
- ✓ Specify the source, date of collection and limitations of any data quoted or disseminated.
- ✓ When quoting data or reporting information, always provide analysis of its significance.
- ✓ In any situation of conflict or repression, respect the confidentiality of informants who do not wish their identities to be revealed.

What to do; how to do it (ii) disseminating information – managing external communications

- ☑ Arrange for the regular production of a Cluster/sector Bulletin or newsletter with procedures and deadlines for (i) the submission of information and articles and (ii) the rapid clearance of drafts by a small, Cluster-appointed editorial board.
- ☑ Disseminate the bulletin widely – to officials at all levels, UN agencies, NGOs, donors, news-media, etc.
- ☑ Post and regularly up-date information on an appropriate website (possibly integrated in the HIC website).
- ☑ Establish and cultivate contacts with local and international journalists and news-media representatives.
- ☑ Prepare press releases and organize press briefings whenever there is important information to publicize.
- ☑ Organize question-and-answer briefings and field visits for national and international journalists.
- ☑ Establish a photo-library: systematically collect and catalogue photos of the situation and significant events.
- ☑ Ensure sufficient, good translation capacity in all locally-relevant languages so that information promptly reaches all relevant actors.

Tools and guidance

- 📖 *Operational Guidance on Responsibilities of sector/cluster leads & OCHA in Information Management*, draft, OCHA 2009.
- 📖 IASC Cluster-Sector Leadership Training (2007) Tip Sheet - *Information Management* - <http://onerresponse.info/Coordination/publicdocuments/Tip%20Sheet%202007%20Information%20Management.doc>
- 📖 *WASH Cluster Coordination Handbook*, Global WASH Cluster 2009, section 3.1 *Managing information in emergencies: an overview*.
- 📖 *Equipping the office for good information management*, 4.2 in *Managing WHO Humanitarian Response in the Field*, WHO 2008.

3.8 Contributing to inter-cluster coordination

What's needed – desired result

Effective prioritization and coordination of international assistance among as well as within Clusters/sectors.

Guiding principles

- ✓ Overall inter-Cluster coordination (policies, etc.) is assured by the HCT, chaired by the HC, of which the FAOR is a member.
 - ✓ An inter-cluster coordination group (ICCG) of CCs, normally chaired by the OCHA team leader, provides a forum for discussion and coordination of plans and cross-cutting issues among clusters. Other multi-sectoral groups may be constituted for specific topics.
 - ✓ Clusters may arrange direct coordination with other related clusters.
-

What to do; how to do it

- ☑ Invite other clusters/sector groups to assign representatives to attend your Cluster meetings.
 - ☑ Assign representatives of your Cluster to attend the other Cluster meetings and report back to your next Cluster meeting.
 - ☑ Organize joint activities, e.g. a multi-cluster IRA [see 4.3].
 - ☑ Identify as early as possible the cross-cutting issues that have particular significance for the sector and use ICCG meetings to plan joint (or complementary) activities to address them appropriately.
 - ☑ Identify potential synergies and any overlaps among clusters in areas of concern to FAO. Establish joint plans with relevant other clusters to address issues relating to specific priority problems of common concern.
 - ☑ Develop common principles and advocacy strategies with other Clusters.
-

Tools and guidance

- 📖 *Guidance for Inter-Cluster Coordination Groups at the Country Level*, zero draft, IASC/OCHA, 2010.

Chapter 4

COORDINATING ASSESSMENTS AND RESPONSES

“Assessment” and “situation monitoring/surveillance”

Assessment and ongoing situation monitoring are complementary activities. Together with an understanding of the pre-crisis situation, they progressively enhance knowledge and understanding of (i) the situation and possibilities for addressing the identified problems and needs, and (ii) expediting the [re]establishment of livelihoods and food security.

- **Assessments** are time-limited exercises that provide information on the situation at a particular point in time on how the assessment team *expects* the situation to evolve, the risks that *might* be faced, and possibilities for action.
- **Situation monitoring/surveillance** is a continuous activity that provides information on a regular basis to up-date the situation analysis provided by the last assessment, identify trends and detect any significant changes or new threats.

Cluster partners must agree on a coherent, coordinated set of assessment and situation monitoring activities adapted to the local context that identifies priorities and provides timely information to decision-makers in relation to both humanitarian and early recovery needs.

4.1 Promoting coordinated assessments and responses

What's needed – desired result

Responses by Cluster participants/partners are coordinated amongst themselves and with those of the government and other actors, and are based on the best available information and shared understandings of the situation, needs and priorities. (Duplications of effort and gaps in services are avoided/minimized.)

Guiding principles

- ✓ Assessment efforts are *coordinated* among partners and with national authorities to ensure coverage of all affected areas and populations, effective use of available assessment resources, common understandings and consensus on needs and response priorities.
- ✓ Assessments and situation monitoring – data collection, analysis and reporting – are *phased* and prioritized to meet decision-making needs during the first few days, weeks and months of response and then on an ongoing basis during any protracted humanitarian and early recovery assistance operation.
- ✓ Situation analyses, response analyses and response plans are *progressively refined* through an iterative process that addresses emergency/humanitarian needs and seeks to expedite recovery.

The process of situation analysis, response analysis, response planning and response implementation, with a feed-back loop through monitoring and evaluation, is illustrated below.

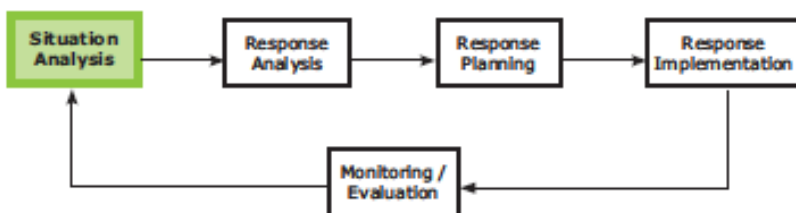
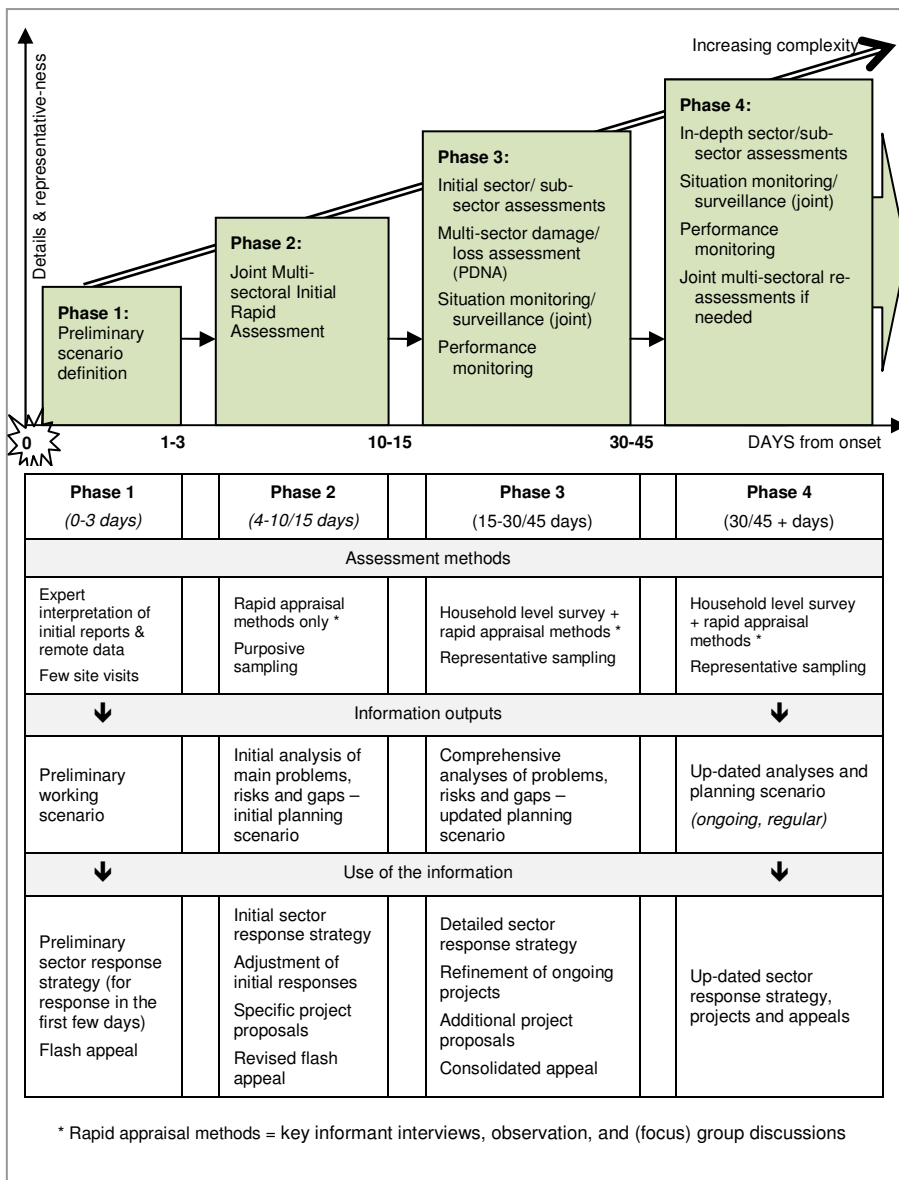


Diagram reproduced from IPC Technical Manual version 1.1, 2008

Data collection, analysis and reporting may be phased as illustrated in the figure on pg.58, adapted from the *Health Cluster Guide 2009* and drafts prepared in April 2010 by the IASC Needs Assessment Task Force convened by OCHA.

Phases of data collection, analysis and planning following a major, sudden-onset crisis



The time frames of the different phases may vary according to the context and there may not be a clear separation among the different phases. However, at the outset, on day-1, good “best guesses” in the context of a *preliminary scenario* are essential to inform food security response decisions in the first few days²⁰ [see 4.2], and good “information” is required within 10 to 15 days of any crisis onset in order to refine initial responses and inform funding decisions and the Flash Appeal [see 4.3]. More detailed information is then required to inform ongoing humanitarian assistance and the planning and implementation of recovery interventions.

Depending on the findings of the initial rapid assessment process (phase 2 in the figure on pg.58), detailed follow-on sector and/or sub-sector assessments and surveys may need to be undertaken in particular areas and should be coordinated among Cluster/sector actors. An agriculture assessment and recovery programme formulation mission organized by FAO-TCER typically corresponds to phase 3 and may be linked to a government-led, UN-EC-WB-supported PDNA, or a post-conflict needs assessments (PCNA).

All assessments should be “coordinated” among Cluster participants/partners – see box below. *Joint* assessments may be possible at the onset of a crisis if arrangements have already been agreed in the context of inter-agency contingency planning. Otherwise it is likely to require considerable time and effort to build consensus on indicators and methods and a *harmonized* approach will have to be adopted.

Coordinated – “joint” or “harmonized” – assessments

Efforts to coordinate assessments during large-scale emergencies do actually increase coverage, reduce duplication, lessen “assessment fatigue” amongst communities being assessed (and re-assessed!) and improve the amount and quality of data available to humanitarian agencies.

Joint assessments are those in which the primary data collection strategy, data collation and data analysis are aligned into a single process for multiple clusters and actors. In a joint assessment:

- a coordinated data collection form is used by all actors;
- there is a single analysis output containing data collected by all the actors;
- sampling methodology between actors is similar;
- mapping p-codes uses a common system;

20 Immediate food security response may include urgent humanitarian food assistance but also immediate action to ensure seeds for rapid re-planting in the days following a flood, for example.

- raw data is consolidated & stored in a single database for analysis; and
- ownership over the dataset is shared by multiple clusters/actors.

This type of assessment requires effective leadership from an agency with a recognized coordination mandate, additional resources allocated by participating agencies to interagency coordination, pre-disaster preparedness measures (pre-existing formats, protocols, etc.) and information management systems.

Harmonized assessments are distinguished from single agency assessments in that multiple actors are using:

- some of the same questions on their data collection forms;
- some of the same indicators in the analysis output;
- the same sampling methodology; and
- the same p-codes.

Harmonized assessments can take a number of forms. Some of the questions on the data collection forms may be common between clusters, while more cluster-specific and/or agency-specific information is gathered at the same time. Data may be collected separately by actors belonging to different clusters at different times and in different geographical areas. The raw data from harmonized assessments could be collated and stored in different databases, only integrating the data that is used for joint analysis. One perceived advantage of a harmonized assessment in comparison with a joint assessment is that the agency or cluster may feel better positioned to directly address some of its own priority information needs.

[From *Operational guidance for coordinated assessments in humanitarian crises*, draft, IASC NATF, April 2010]

What to do; how to do it

- If arrangements for phased assessment have been already agreed in advance in the context of an *interagency contingency plan*, proceed accordingly. *If not*, try to get agreement among as many as possible of the key sector actors, including the government, on an agreed approach – an adaptation of the figure on pg.58.
- Proceed with assessment – information gathering and analysis – activities as agreed, referring to the guidance in 4.2 and 4.3.

Tools and guidance

Guidance on overall approaches to assessment is expected from the inter-agency Needs Assessment Task Force during 2010.

Tools and guidance for conducting assessments are listed at the end of 4.3.

4.2 Agreeing a Preliminary Planning Scenario

What's needed – desired result

Response action in the first few days, in advance of the initial rapid assessment, is focused on what experience suggests to be the most critical issues.

A preliminary scenario is a concise statement (hypothesis) indicating: (i) what the impacts on the population and the sector are *expected* to be; (ii) how the situation is *likely* to evolve; and (iii) the kinds of interventions and assistance that *could* be needed (and what may not be needed).

What is the purpose of a Preliminary Planning Scenario?

The preliminary scenario drawn up at the onset of a crisis:

- ✓ helps to *focus* attention during the first few hours and days on what are likely to be the priority issues;
- ✓ provides a basis for immediate decisions on *actions* that may be needed to save and sustain lives, and initial decisions on the mobilization of human and material resources;
- ✓ informs the planning of the initial *assessment* by suggesting issues the assessment should give particular attention to, the areas that should be visited, and the specific information that should be sought; and
- ✓ provides a basis for the preparation of an initial/"flash" *appeal* while initial field assessments are continuing.

When drawn up with partners, the preliminary scenario helps to ensure *shared understandings* of the probable nature of the needs and risks, and thus facilitates collaboration in the initial assessment and coordination of initial responses.

Guiding principles

- ✓ The general nature of the impacts and risks arising from particular types of disaster are predictable, given knowledge of pre-crisis conditions in the affected area. (The details – the severity of impact, the numbers of people and institutions affected or at risk, and the speed with which the situation evolves – are situation-specific.)

- ✓ A preliminary “best guess” scenario for food security is:
 - drawn up within 12 to 24 hours of onset (for a sudden-onset crisis);²¹
 - prepared by locally-experienced experts on the basis of knowledge of the impacts of previous similar events in the same or similar areas, and preliminary information on the extent and severity of actual impact;
 - identify the distinct geographic zones and different kinds of households to be distinguished; and
 - refined progressively as more information becomes available and initial assessments produce a detailed, evidence-based situation analysis and a planning scenario.
- ✓ The preliminary “best-guess” scenario is drawn up together with Cluster partners and national authorities whenever possible, but preparation should not be delayed waiting for a large group to convene or be formed.
- ✓ Where an inter-agency contingency plan exists, the scenario in that plan is used as a starting point.
- ✓ Preliminary enquiries and scenario development are coordinated with efforts in other sectors (by other Clusters) and the UN disaster assessment and coordination (UNDAC) team, if present.

What to do – how to do it

- ☑ *If a contingency plan exists for this kind of event:* Look at the scenario(s) used in that plan and consider how the present situation may differ from the one envisaged when the plan was prepared.
- ☑ *If no relevant contingency plan exists:* Review the typical effects of the kind of event concerned and look at the reports of, and lessons-learned from, previous similar situations in the country or in similar areas of neighbouring countries.

In all cases, bring together as many as possible of the key sector actors and experienced local professionals on day-1 to agree on a preliminary “best-guess” scenario using, amongst other sources, the existing FAO country profile and any livelihood baselines:

21 In case of a slow-onset crisis a scenario may be prepared on the basis of available early warning and other data within 3 days of an alert that a situation has deteriorated to a point where remedial action is needed, and serve as a first step towards organizing an assessment.

- ☑ Contact a few key informants in the capital and the areas reported affected and, working with partners as much as possible, consolidate information available on the *areas* affected and the severity of the *impact*.
- ☑ Liaise with the RC/HC, relevant national authorities and others to obtain, or help prepare, a *map* with contours showing the areas reported to be most severely affected and those less affected. This may reflect the depth of flood water, the extent of physical damage or the intensity of fighting, etc.
- ☑ Examine *baseline secondary data* available (in the country office, on the Internet and from other sources) on the normal situation in the areas apparently affected:
 - compile data on the distinct *population groups* living in the area(s), their characteristics and numbers;
 - identify agro-ecological and/or livelihood *zones* in the areas affected;
 - prepare a *time line* showing the major events that have affected the whole area, or particular sub-areas or population groups, in the last few years and how those events may have affected sector conditions either directly or indirectly through changes in contextual factors; *and*
 - review information on the effects of *previous shocks/crises* in those areas and the lessons from the responses to those events.
- ☑ In case of *displaced populations*, focus on:
 - their locations and what is known about the physical environment and resources in the localities where they are or towards which they are moving;
 - their characteristics, leadership structures, ethnic/social divisions and demography – whether they are whole families or predominantly women, children and old people, for example;
 - their numbers at present and the rate at which people are arriving; *and*
 - whatever may be known about their general condition and the resources (if any) they have brought with them.
- ☑ If it is possible to make to make rapid, initial *visits* to one or two key sites (e.g. by helicopter together with government officials), meet quickly with local officials and visit a few vital sector facilities and selected communities (e.g. urban neighbourhoods and/or displaced persons camps):
 - select an itinerary that will help to identify areas where immediate life-saving assistance may be needed while at the same time getting first impressions concerning the situation throughout the whole affected area; and

- try to compare the current situation with the pre-crisis baseline and get a rough idea of the nature and severity of the change in the situation.
- ☑ Write up a preliminary scenario using the format in annex E. Do this in an early meeting with key sector partners, if possible.

Tools and guidance

Suggested format for a preliminary planning scenario, in Annex E.

📖 *Managing WHO Humanitarian Response in the Field*, WHO 2008, sections 3.2 *Preliminary enquiries*, and 3.3 *Establishing an initial working scenario*.

TCE plans to prepare a *Rapid agricultural sector damage assessment guide (RASDAG)* in late 2010 which may provide relevant guidance.

4.3 Facilitating initial and subsequent assessments

What's needed – desired result

The best possible information and analyses of the situation in the sector are available to inform decision-making at all stages of response. Assessments provide reliable, verifiable information on:

- the impacts of the event on people and sector support systems – the present situation and what has changed from the pre-crisis situation;
- how the situation is expected (forecast) to evolve;
- the prioritized needs of affected populations for survival and the protection and recovery of livelihoods – differentiating between *time critical* and other needs and actions;
- the prioritized needs for recovery of sector support systems;
- the resources and capacities available; and
- the general context including any particular constraints (security, socio-cultural factors, environment, etc.) and inter-sectoral issues.

Time critical needs and actions are things that must be done before a specified deadline to have the desired impact. For example: seeds must be available to farmers in time for planting - seeds delivered too late will be useless; actions that must be completed before roads become impassable due to rains or foreseeable seasonal increases in fighting; conditions that, if not addressed in time, may lead to a much larger disaster (e.g. locusts, animal disease, oil spills, dam safety).

Analysis is an integral part of assessment and sections 4.4 (*Agreeing situation analyses; prioritizing problems and risks*) and 4.5 (*Agreeing response analyses and strategies*) should be read together with the present section.

Following initial and follow-on assessments, the resulting situation analyses are regularly up-dated on the basis of information from ongoing situation monitoring [see 4.4].

Guiding principles

- ✓ Data are collected, checked, compiled, analysed and reported in time to inform decisions:
 - initial assessments provide information within a week-or-so of crisis onset to inform initial response plans and appeals, and provide an initial baseline for monitoring; and
 - follow-on assessments provide more detailed information within 3 or 4 weeks to refine initial response strategies and inform planning for recovery.
- ✓ Maximum use is made of secondary data but all such data, whether on the current situation or pre-crisis, are reviewed for reliability and the precise area(s), population(s) and time period(s) to which they relate.
- ✓ Primary data collection focuses on filling gaps in information or cross-checking information that may not be reliable or up-to-date.
- ✓ Data are disaggregated by area, population group, age and sex, as much as possible, and by a locally-relevant breakdown of different types of livelihoods (e.g. large farmers, small farmers, fishing, forest-based, agricultural labour, non-agricultural employment, etc.²²).
- ✓ Local professionals who know the context are mobilized and contribute to the assessment and analysis process. The affected people participate to the extent possible.
- ✓ Assessments take a holistic approach with a livelihoods focus; the specific characteristics of all relevant sub-sectors (crops, livestock, fisheries, etc.) are considered and relevant experts – local or international as required – are included in assessment teams.
- ✓ While the primary focus will necessarily be on the humanitarian situation and survival needs of the population, appropriate experts also undertake first, rapid assessments of the situation of critical livelihood and sector-support systems to identify any time-critical actions needed to sustain those systems.
- ✓ Conclusions are based on convergence of evidence from a range of sources and analyses.

22 Be careful about using “landless” as a category as households might be landless but have significant livelihood activities such as fishing. Problems were experienced in Myanmar through ill-thought-out use of “landless” as a category.

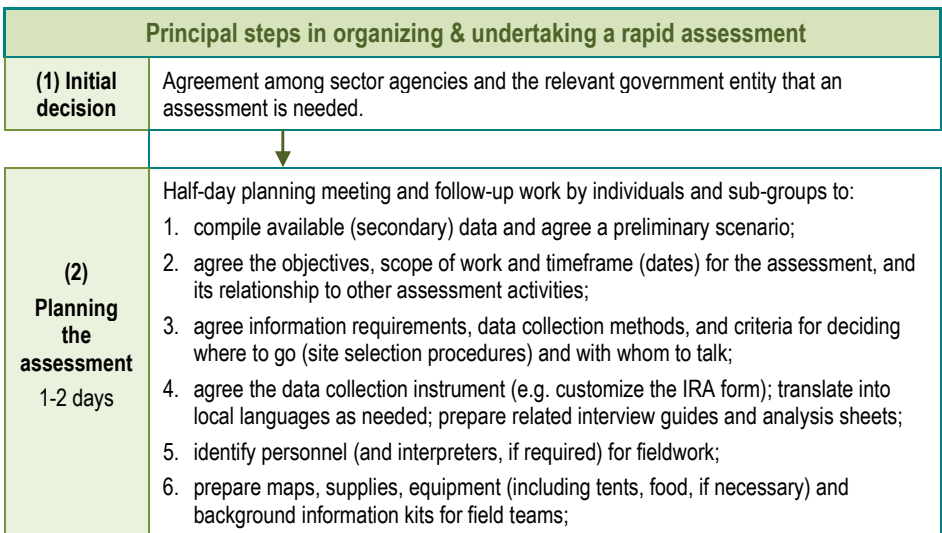
What to do; how to do it (i) rapidly at the onset of a crisis

In all cases:

- ☑ bring together as many as possible of the key sector actors and experienced local professionals on day-1 to agree on a preliminary scenario that, amongst other things, indicates the geographic areas and highlight aspects on which the initial assessment should focus [see 4.2]; and
- ☑ contact the Humanitarian Coordinator and the coordinators of the Health, WASH and other key clusters, and relevant government entities, to determine whether it is intended and possible to immediately organize a multi-cluster/sector initial assessment.²³

Where arrangements for a joint assessment had been agreed in advance:

- ☑ Immediately activate the agreed procedure to organize a joint assessment (IRA or equivalent). The tasks involved are summarized in the figure below and annex F; they are similar for any assessment although time frames and some other details may vary.



23 A joint multi-cluster initial rapid assessment may be possible if arrangements had already been agreed in advance in the context of an inter-agency contingency plan, see 4.1.

	<p>7. assemble and train fieldwork teams;</p> <p>8. arrange transport (including fuel), security and communications for teams;</p> <p>9. inform key persons (officials and others) in areas to be visited; <i>and</i></p> <p>10. arrange for the processing and analysis of data during and after the fieldwork.</p>
<p>(3) Field work 5-6 days</p>	<p>↓</p> <p>Visits by teams to purposively-selected areas/sites to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - interview and collect data from officials and other key informants in the administrative centres to be visited; <i>and</i> - interview community groups and households.
<p>(4) Analysis and reporting 3-4 days</p>	<p>↓</p> <p>Processing and analysis of data (primary and secondary)</p> <p>Identification of priority problems, needs, risks and gaps (current & expected)</p> <p>Analysis of possible response strategies; development of recommendations</p> <p>Preparing the report</p> <p>Disseminating the report</p>

Where arrangements have not been agreed in advance:

- ☑ try to get agreement among the main sector actors and, if possible with other Clusters/sectors, on:
 - a specific phased approach to, and schedule for, assessments appropriate to the context – an adapted version of the figure on pg.58 [in 4.1];
 - a common set of core sector data to be collected by all organizations in the context of their own initial assessments and, to the extent possible, the data collection and sampling methods to be used;
 - geographic sharing of responsibilities to ensure reasonable coverage of all main areas; and
 - arrangements to share data and undertake a joint overall analysis.
- ☑ ensure broad local participation to define needs for translation of data collection instruments, and ensure accuracy and consistency in translation;
- ☑ make sure that appropriate experts undertake first, rapid assessments of the situation of critical livelihood- and sector-support systems to identify any time-critical actions needed to sustain those systems. This may require visits to locations other than those targeted for assessment of the needs of the population; and
- ☑ finally, compile data from different organizations’ assessments and, where possible, facilitate a joint analysis exercise.

Use the guidance and adapt the tools prepared by the IASC NAFT, if/when available. In the meantime, it may be necessary to seek agreement on a compromise among the multi-cluster IRA, the WFP initial EFSA and other proven initial assessment approaches of other Cluster participants/partners.

It may also be necessary to start planning (and mobilizing human and other resources) for certain follow-on assessments even before the initial assessment is completed. This may include arrangements for an agricultural recovery assessment and programme formulation mission coordinated by TCE.

What to do; how to do it (ii) follow-on assessments

Detailed follow-on assessments/surveys may be needed in relation to agriculture sector recovery, livelihoods, food security and/or specific sub-sector assessments in relation to crops, livestock, fisheries, forestry and natural resources, etc.

- ☑ Review the previously agreed framework and schedule for assessments (adapted from the figure on pg.58) and determine what, if any, adjustments need to be made taking account of any already-planned assessments such as PDNA (or PCNA) and any planned FAO agricultural recovery assessment and programme formulation mission.
- ☑ Define and agree on expected outputs, processes, roles and responsibilities in relation to detailed sector-specific assessments and inter-sectoral assessments (e.g. a PDNA).
- ☑ how the Cluster will collaborate with and contribute to any such processes, what other assessments or surveys might be needed, and how and by whom they should be undertaken.

When coordinating, planning or contributing to follow-up assessments or surveys:

- ☑ define objectives and scope carefully, and draw up an analysis plan;
- ☑ mobilize relevant specialist expertise as well as cluster partners;
- ☑ thoroughly review available secondary data *before* defining primary data collection requirements;
- ☑ ensure that all locally-relevant sub-sectors – including livestock and livestock products, and fish and fishery products, in addition to crops – are adequately incorporated in food security assessments;

- ☑ Review relevant available methodologies and guidance and agree on the approaches and methods to be used;

The CC must take care to be neutral and objective in this connection but other FAO staff should ensure that the advantages of the FAO tools (e.g. the Livelihoods Assessment Toolkit) are presented and understood.

- ☑ pre-test data recording formats and interview guides *before* training field teams; and
- ☑ clearly specify sampling procedures and sample size for both population and facility surveys.

The steps are basically the same as shown in the figure on pg. 67-68 for a rapid assessment but the time frames are longer – typically 3 to 4 weeks in total – and it is important to devote time in the planning and initiation phases to gathering and reviewing already-available information.

Tools and guidance

Guidance for food-security/livelihoods/agriculture assessments


- 📖 *Initial emergency food security assessments*, EFSA Technical Guidance Sheet No. 6, WFP-VAM 2009.

[The initial EFSA of WFP aims to determine whether there is a food security and/or nutrition problem that poses an immediate risk to livelihoods requiring an immediate intervention and, if so, for whom, where and what type of intervention. The assessment, which relies on secondary data as well as focused primary data collection, must be conducted by staff with experience in assessments and food security in general (and who are capable of doing the analysis and interpretation). It includes looking forward – forecasting likely developments – in addition to describing the current situation.


The guidance note includes a 9-page sample checklist for primary data collection and a template for compiling secondary and primary data and identifying gaps and necessary cross-checks. 296 pp]

- 📖 *Livelihoods Assessment Tool Kit (LAT)*, FAO 2009, volume 3 *Initial livelihood impact assessment* and volume 4 *Detailed livelihood assessment*.

[This tool kit – 4 “volumes” in a single spiral-bound document – provides practical guidance on analysing and responding to the impact of disasters on the livelihoods of people. Vol.1 provides a methodological and conceptual overview. Vol.2 provides guidance on establishing a livelihood baseline and contingency plan. Vol.3 provides concise guidance for an initial livelihood impact appraisal (ILIA) following a disaster, including checklists, that builds on the pre-disaster baseline. Vol.4 provides guidance for a detailed (participatory) livelihood assessment (DLA). 191 pp]

 ***Guidelines for Emergency Assessments and Response Formulation in Agriculture***, draft, FAO-TCER 2010.


[These guidelines are designed primarily for FAO assessment and response formulation missions but will also be useful for others. The draft includes an outline of the process of situation analysis, response analysis and the formulation of recommendations and synopses of key assessment methods and guidance available for different sub-sectors.]

 ***Guidelines for Crop and Food Security Assessment Missions***, FAO-WFP 2009.


[Detailed guidance for CFSAM missions, including how to plan and organize a CFSAM; how to analyse the context, agricultural production and market conditions; how to analyse aggregate the food supply/demand situation and draw up a staple food balance sheet; how to analyse household food security and emergency needs; and how to formulate conclusions and recommendations. 320 pp]


 ***Emergency Food Security Assessment Handbook***, 2nd edition, WFP 2009.

[Detailed guidance on the approach developed by WFP for emergency food security assessments based on indicators of mortality, nutrition status and household food security, the latter emphasizing the food consumption score (FCS) and coping strategies index (CSI). The handbook includes: part I – conceptual framework, objectives and types of EFSA; part II – data, indicators and sources of information; part III – planning and implementing an EFSA; part IV – analysing EFSA data including situation analysis, forecast analysis, and response analysis; part V – reporting EFSA results. Annexes include sample household questionnaires, sample key informant questionnaires, sample checklists for group discussions, and notes relevant to choosing among response options. 296 pp]


 ***Rapid Agricultural Disaster Assessment Routine (RADAR) on Agriculture***, FAO 2008, Environment and Natural Resources Series #12.

[A GIS-based tool developed and used by FAO in Honduras after Hurricane Mitch in 1998.]

 ***ToR for an agriculture sector programme formulation mission***, Haiti January 2010. – a sample.

 ***Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards***, chapter 2 ***Assessment and Response***, LEGS 2009, Practical Action Publishing.


[Detailed practical guidance for assessment and livelihood-based response in the livestock sector developed by a multi-agency project involving FAO and other organizations interested in livestock. Includes checklists and many short case studies; 260 pp]

 ***When Disaster Strikes: a guide to assessing seed system security***, L Sperling 2008, International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Colombia.


[Step-by-step practical guidance for assessing the effects of a disaster on a seed security system and determining the most appropriate response – guidance prepared for CRS with USAID support. 80+ pp]

 ***...TCER plans to prepare a Rapid agricultural sector damage assessment guide (RASDAG) in late 2010.*** – a guide intended for a 3-5 day assessment.

Guidance for inter-sectoral assessments

-  ***Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises, IASC Needs Assessment Task Force (NATF), draft April 2010.***

[This draft presents the case, and proposes a framework, for coordinated assessments – which may be either “joint” or “harmonized” assessments – and outlines some standard operating procedures. A corresponding tool kit is to be developed.]


-  ***Initial Rapid Assessment (IRA) tool, version 2.2, Global Health-Nutrition-WASH clusters 2009.***

[The tri-cluster IRA, developed by the global Health, Nutrition and WASH clusters, with inputs from the global Shelter cluster, aims to facilitate the rapid collection, analysis and reporting of basic data relevant for identifying the current priority needs in all those sectors. It may be superseded by future guidance from the IASC NATF, see above.


The IRA package includes the IRA form (a multi-sector field data collection instrument), guidance on how to organize an IRA, and an Excel-based data entry and analysis tool. The automated analysis produces a report for each individual site and aggregate reports for multiple sites (e.g. all sites within a district) as required. The reports present the data in a standard template that leaves space for assessment teams and sector specialists to add their own comments and interpretation. Secondary data on the pre-crisis situation and general context are needed to interpret the current data. Additional information on capacities, resources, etc. is needed to choose and design response interventions.]


-  ***Guide for the Preparation of Post-Disaster Needs Assessments (PDNA) and Recovery Frameworks (RF), UNDP-UNDG-EC-World Bank, draft Feb. 2010.***

[A PDNA is a government-led exercise with integrated support from the UN, the EC, the WB and other national and international actors. It combines an evaluation of economic losses and the identification of human development impacts and produces an all-encompassing recovery framework (RF) and recovery action plan (RAP). The guidelines are in two volumes: Vol.A – Preparation and conduct of a PDNA with PDNA toolkit; Vol.B – Sectoral and thematic methodologies for assessing human impacts and recovery needs.]

-  ***Handbook for estimating the socio-economic and environmental effects of disasters, ECLAC.***

[A methodology used and promoted by the World Bank to complement a PDNA.]

-  ***Post-Conflict Needs Assessment and Framework tool, UNDG/UNDP/WB.***

-  ***Preparedness for a Multi-Cluster Assessment: guidance notes based on MCRAM experience in Pakistan, UNICEF Asia-Pacific Shared Services Centre 2010.***

[A concise description of the “multi-cluster rapid assessment mechanism” developed and applied in Pakistan since 2008 including, as annexes: steps to multi-cluster assessment preparedness; a proposed framework for assessments; notes on response planning for sudden-onset crises and sampling. 58 pp]

- 📖 *Tools for participatory assessments in Operations*, UNHCR 2006.
- 📖 *UNDAC Field Handbook*, 5th edition, UN-OCHA 2006.
- 📖 *Disaster Assessment Guidelines*, IFRC 2000.
- 📖 *Sphere Common Standard 2: Initial Assessment*, Sphere handbook 2004.

Guidance for field data collection ²⁴

- 📖 *Conducting semi-structured interviews*,
http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/tools/manuals/who_field_handbook/g6.pdf
- 📖 *Special considerations when interviewing people in a conflict situation*,
http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/tools/manuals/who_field_handbook/g7.pdf
- 📖 *Working with an interpreter*,
http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/tools/manuals/who_field_handbook/g8.pdf

24 These guidance materials are reproduced or adapted from *Emergency Food Security Assessment Handbook*, first edition, WFP 2004, but references (URLs) are provided to the versions reproduced in *Managing WHO Humanitarian Response in the Field*, WHO 2008, Annexes G6, G7 and G8, which are more easily accessible.

4.4 Agreeing situation analyses; prioritizing problems and risks ²⁵

What's needed – desired result

Agreement among Cluster participants/partners, and with national authorities to the extent possible, on a joint analysis of the situation that includes: the context and the impact of the event(s); the current and expected priority problems and risks for lives, livelihoods and sector support systems; and current and expected sector-related capacities, resources, opportunities and constraints.

Guiding principles

The situation analysis:

- ✓ is compiled by locally-knowledgeable experts on the basis of the best available assessment information [see 4.3], and regularly up-dated on the basis of situation monitoring information [see 4.6];
- ✓ describes the current situation but also identifies what has changed, the causes and the implications, and forecasts how the situation is likely to evolve and the events (contingencies) that could give rise to further changes (for better or worse);
- ✓ includes an analysis of the context and lessons from previous experience;
- ✓ identifies and takes account of any irreversible changes due to repeated or protracted crises;
- ✓ presents long-term perspectives as well as short-term needs;
- ✓ presents the evidence with clear indications of any limitations, the sources of information and their reliability; and
- ✓ is agreed (has the broadest possible consensus) among all stakeholders.

The process of identifying and prioritizing problems and actions must be transparent. The criteria for prioritization must be recorded.

Problem trees can help in identifying causal linkages and, when coupled with assessments of risks and numbers of people at risk, in prioritizing the problems to be addressed.

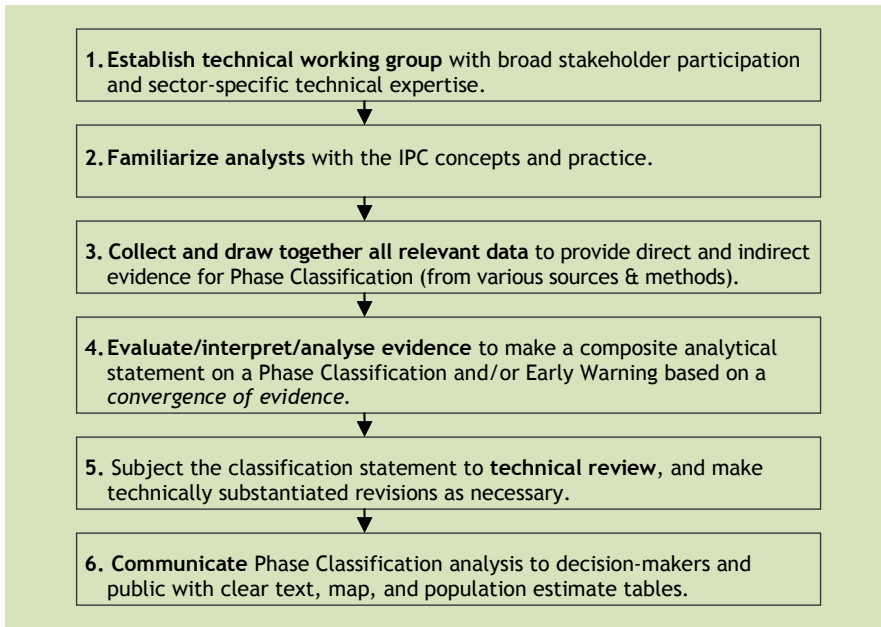
²⁵ Analysis of the situation and problems is an integral part of any assessment and this section should be read together with 4.3.

As with all other elements of the assessment and response planning process, the identification and prioritization of problems, risks and gaps, and the analysis of causes, should be a continuous, iterative process:

- a **preliminary analysis** – the preliminary scenario definition – in the first 24 hours informs response action during the first few days;
- an **initial analysis** in the context of the initial rapid assessment completed within 7 to 10 days provides the basis for more substantial initial planning decisions; and
- an **up-dated situation analysis** and planning scenario whenever necessary, notably following a periodic review exercise or a re-assessment following any substantial change in the overall situation.

The **Integrated Phase Classification (IPC)** provides a valuable way of getting a range of stakeholders to pool information and generate consensus on the severity of the current situation and the likely evolution and risks in different zones. When updated after an interval, it provides valuable insights into how the situation may have changed within and among zones. The main steps in organizing an IPC exercise are shown in figure below.

Main steps in using the IPC



However, it will be difficult to introduce and use an IPC system in the early stages of response unless such a system was already in place prior to the crisis. It may be introduced during the later stages of a protracted operation.

What to do; how to do it

Organize a short *workshop* bringing together all the main sector stakeholders including, in particular, those that have recently been involved in conducting assessments in the affected areas, to:

- ☑ review all available information and agree on a joint analysis of:
 - the [food security and nutritional] situation of different population groups, how it differs from what would be normal for the season, and how it compares with international standards, where relevant;
 - the status and effectiveness of the institutional and other support systems on which livelihoods and agricultural production depend;
 - the direct and indirect causes of the observed problems, and the extent to which they are transitory or chronic; and
 - the relevance for the sector of contextual factors including the *political, social and cultural factors* (including but not limited to gender considerations), the *security* situation (including the causes of conflict and the implications for sector action), the *resources* and *capacities* available, and what might reasonably be expected to be mobilized, and the roles and influence of any new sector actors or *stakeholders* (e.g. military forces, non-State entities).

[IPC analysis templates 1, 2 and 3 may be used to capture information for different zones and population groups.]

If an IPC system and process is being implemented, agree categorizations of severity – Phase Classifications – for each distinct zone;

- ☑ prepare one or more problem trees, highlighting those for which remedial humanitarian or early recovery actions are “time critical”, and agree on a prioritization of sector-related problems (see box below);
- ☑ make sure that analyses:
 - are evidence-based and any extrapolations and assumptions clearly indicated;
 - triangulate data from different sources and consider (evaluate) the reliability of the various data and sources;

- take account of the cultural context, gender, protection and human rights issues, the impact of HIV/AIDS, security conditions, and any limitations on access; and
 - identify differences among localities and different population groups, and age- and gender-related differences (consider the different situation and needs of men and women, girls and boys).
- ☑ examine carefully any discrepancies in information, or instances where reported findings differ from what might have been expected. What might explain these differences? What is their significance? ;
 - ☑ look out for possible sources of error or bias in reported data. Ensure that the needs of isolated areas (with disrupted communications) are not underestimated or over-looked, and that needs are not over-estimated by concentration on data from the worst-affected areas; and
 - ☑ identify any topics, areas, or population groups for which information is lacking or particularly unreliable. Why is information lacking or unreliable? What is the significance? Which are the most important information gaps? What can be done to fill them, when and by whom?

Prioritizing problems




The following factors may be considered when determining priorities:

- ✓ the severity and immediacy of the risk posed to lives and livelihoods;
- ✓ the numbers of people at risk;
- ✓ the feasibility of addressing the problem and having a measurable impact in the short term; and
- ✓ the underlying causes and links to other problems – the extent to which resolution of the problem would contribute to restoring vital sector support systems.

Points to remember

- ✓ Data are only useful once analysed and interpreted in context. Analysis and interpretation requires a combination of technical expertise and local knowledge.
- ✓ Data must be examined from different perspectives and in different combinations to see what they reveal.
- ✓ Presentation and language choices are important. Appropriate, imaginative use must be made of tables, charts, maps, timelines and the combination of data from different data sets. It is important to find ways of visually presenting changes and trends.

Tools and guidance

-  *Integrated Food Security Phase Classification*, IPC Global Partners, 2009.
-  *Emergency Food Security Assessment Handbook*, 2nd edition, WFP 2009, Part IV: Analysing EFSA data.
-  *Plan of Action Guidelines*, draft FAO-ROEA. [includes summary guidance on situation analysis including use of problem trees]

4.5 Agreeing response analyses and strategies ²⁶

What's needed – desired result

Agreement among Cluster participants/partners, and with national authorities to the extent possible, on objectives and a set of response activities and strategies that are appropriate, feasible and cost-effective.

There are clear, demonstrated links among (i) the identified priority problems, risks and gaps, and (ii) the objectives and chosen strategies.

Guiding principles

- ✓ All main sector actors are engaged in jointly defining objectives and analysing response options leading to agreement on the most appropriate, feasible responses. The process is led, or co-led, by the relevant national authority, whenever possible.
- ✓ Objectives:
 - address the priority problems and risks identified in assessments;
 - are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound);
 - are tailored to the particular stage/phase of the response;
 - take account of the context including security and access conditions, seasonal variations, resource availabilities and any expected evolution; any protection and human rights issues, the impact of HIV/AIDS, and any other constraints on people and the delivery of services.
- ✓ Response activities and strategies:
 - are *appropriate* – address the priority problems and risks effectively, coherently and efficiently in a manner suited to the local context;
 - are *feasible* – able to be implemented in the local context and with the resources expected to be available;
 - take account of *underlying causes* (e.g. IPC analysis template #3) and *cross-cutting concerns* [see annex H]; and
 - contribute to *building-back-better*, to the extent possible.

²⁶ Response analysis is an integral part of any assessment and this section should be read together with 4.3.

- ✓ Alternative options for addressing the priority problems and achieving the agreed objectives are examined and the reasons for the choice of particular strategies explained.
- ✓ As with all other elements of the assessment and response planning process, objectives and response analysis are developed and refined progressively through an iterative process:
 - a *preliminary*, response strategy *outline* is prepared within the first day-or-two, based on the preliminary scenario [see 4.2] and provides the basis for initial responses by Cluster partners and a framework for sector elements of the Flash Appeal [see 5.2] and a package of sector proposals for any CERF application [see 5.3];
 - a first, *more detailed* sector response strategy *document* is prepared on the basis of the findings of the initial assessment [see 4.3]. It informs the development of the revised flash appeal and later the common humanitarian action plan (CHAP) that is required for the first consolidated appeal, if any, typically after within 2 months of onset [see 4.8]; and
 - the objectives and strategy are *up-dated* as and when necessary on the basis of new information from subsequent sub-sector assessments and situation monitoring, following any major change in the situation, and prior to the preparation of any new CHAP (and CAP).
- ✓ A “*twin-track*” approach is adopted – meeting immediate needs while addressing underlying causes, improving productivity and resilience. There should be demonstrated linkages between (i) specific short-term objectives and activities, and (ii) longer-term strategic concerns.
- ✓ Recovery is promoted from the earliest possible moment. Strategies are chosen that build on and strengthen existing structures and local capacities, whenever possible. Potential negative effects are considered and minimized.

What to do; how to do it

Continuing on from the joint situation analysis and problem prioritization [see 4.4], arrange and as necessary facilitate a joint response analysis:

- ☑ agree on *objectives* for the sector response in the coming weeks and months. For this, it will be useful to:
 - prepare an “objectives tree” as a mirror image of the problem tree; and

- when an IPC has been completed, review the *strategic response framework* corresponding to the phase classification and risk level for each zone.
- ☑ ensure that a comprehensive, holistic, “twin-track” approach is taken to food security and livelihoods integrating short-term “relief” measures, where needed (e.g. food or cash transfers, or food vouchers), and early recovery interventions (e.g. for agriculture, employment or sector support systems);
- ☑ choose *strategies* on the basis of an explicit, recorded analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the available response options – the possible alternative ways of addressing specific problems and accomplishing particular objectives;
- ☑ analyse *options* carefully to identify the most appropriate strategies – ones that will achieve the defined objectives (including building local capacities, where possible) while minimizing any potential negative effects. Note that short-term actions taken to address an immediate systemic problem in service delivery may have significant distorting effects on the entire system in the longer term;
- ☑ draw on *experience* in previous crises in the same area or among similar populations in neighbouring countries. If actions are proposed on the basis of experiences further a-field, ensure a thorough analysis of the differences as well as the similarities between the two contexts. What worked (or failed) in one context will not necessarily work (or fail) in another;
- ☑ prepare a very concise strategy document – see box below; and
- ☑ agree, if possible, on allocations of tasks and sub-sector and/or geographic responsibilities among cluster participants/partners for planning, mobilizing resource for and implementing specific activities.

What to include in a response strategy document

The document must present the priority areas, the objectives and response strategies, and the rationale. The rationale must explain, concisely, the reasons – the justification – for the priorities and the chosen strategies. This will be very brief in the preliminary strategy outline, more detailed for subsequent documents. The strategy document as a whole should:

- provide a concise analysis of the situation including the prioritized list of the main problems and their underlying causes, and explain the choice of priorities;
- present the objectives for the planning period for each main area of intervention and the strategies proposed to achieve the objectives, showing how the objectives and strategies derive from the assessment findings and situation analysis; and
- highlight the operational constraints and inter-sectoral cross-cutting concerns that have been identified as being particularly important for food security/agriculture in the current situation and explain how they have been taken into account.

To the extent possible, it should also include clear statements of:

- the agreed general principles and programme standards for the sector;
- who will do what where; and
- the principal gaps (uncovered priority needs/activities) – see 4.7.

[Adapted from *Health Cluster Guide*, 2009]

Tools and guidance

Detailed guidelines for *response options analysis* are under preparation in early 2010 by both FAO-TCER and WFP-OMX. In the meantime, the following may be useful:

📖 *Needs Analysis Framework (NAF)*, IASC 2005.


📖 *Integrated Food Security Phase Classification*, Technical Manual version 1.1, IPC Global Partners, 2009.

📖 *Guidelines for Crop and Food Security Assessment Missions*, FAO-WFP 2009, chapter 15 Analysing response options.


📖 *Emergency Food Security Assessment Handbook*, 2nd edition, WFP 2009, Part IV, chapter 5: Conducting a response analysis.

[Section 5.4, *Response Options*, presents generic response options and includes a decision tree and guidance for SWOT analysis of options.]


📖 *Initial emergency food security assessments*, EFSA Technical Guidance Sheet No. 6, WFP-VAM 2009, section 10: How to identify response options and quantify food needs in an Initial EFSA.

 *Plan of Action Guidelines*, draft FAO-ROEA.

[This draft includes summary guidance on response analysis including the use of objectives trees.]

 *WASH Cluster Coordination Handbook*, Global WASH Cluster 2009, section 5.1 Response planning process, and section 5.2 Steps in response planning.

 *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace - Or War*, M B Anderson, 1999.

 *Options for Food Aid in Conflict - lessons from field experience*, M B Anderson, The Collaborative for Development Action 2000.

4.6 Facilitating joint (or coordinated) situation monitoring:

What's needed – desired result

Up-to-date information on the situation is available on a continuous basis to inform decisions on response, monitor the effects of interventions, enable adjustments to be made when necessary, and support resource mobilization efforts.

Guiding principles

- ✓ A small number of key indicators are monitored on a continuous basis through joint or coordinated arrangements for monitoring and reporting.
- ✓ Monitoring during the crisis builds on an existing sectoral reporting system, where possible, but is adapted to the context and needs of the crisis. It covers:
 - the overall situation in the sector and all relevant sub-sectors;
 - the social (including gender and age) and economic determinants of sector-related outcomes at household level;
 - the performance of sector support systems including compliance with agreed standards; and
 - the impact of humanitarian and early recovery activities.
- ✓ Monitoring data distinguish among different zones and types of household.
- ✓ An appropriate national sector information system is re-established in a sustainable manner as quickly as possible.

Information is generally best gathered through a combination of:

- regular reports from decentralized official structures and field relief teams – either *all* of them or a carefully-defined selection that serve as *sentinel sites*;
- ad hoc or periodic sample surveys; and
- regular reporting from community-level committees (“community-based surveillance”) wherever feasible.

One organization – FAO or another cluster partner – should take responsibility for coordinating the monitoring system (and, where appropriate, leading efforts to support the [re]establishment of a national monitoring and reporting system).

What to do; how to do it

Work with the relevant government entities, as appropriate, to:

- ☑ agree on a (i) set of key (gender-sensitive) indicators of the situation and response performance in the sector that is adapted to the local situation and capacities and (ii) how, from where and at what frequency the data should be reported;
- ☑ agree on a strategy to progressively enhance the coverage and content of reporting from field units, relief teams and other sector actors, and strengthen or re-establish a national sector reporting system;
- ☑ agree on the organization (FAO or other) to take the lead in supporting the national reporting system, and how other cluster partners will contribute in a coordinated effort;
- ☑ regularly compile and analyse information from all sources on the situation, the determinants of food security, and the performance of sector support services, and thus identify any emerging problems, critical gaps or areas needing action;
- ☑ give special attention to the impact of assistance on the environment and the natural resource base, including livestock and fishery resources wherever relevant;
- ☑ ensure that the essential elements listed in the box below are in place and monitor the performance of the system; and
- ☑ ensure that monitoring findings are published promptly and delivered regularly to decision-makers in all the main stakeholder entities – relevant government departments, the national relief coordination body, international agencies, the main national NGOs, donors, news-media, etc. (Reports may be distributed in conjunction with the regular sector *bulletin*, see section 3.7.)



Essential elements of an effective monitoring system

- ✓ Starts early with a few key (gender-sensitive) indicators and is expanded to include more once the system is functioning and capacity allows.
- ✓ All main sector actors in all areas are involved including, when feasible, local authorities and community organizations.
- ✓ Reporting formats are simple, designed to facilitate completion and subsequent data extraction, use precise language and are translated.

- ✓ Guidelines and training are provided for all field units/teams/personnel that are expected to report. The guidelines clearly explain the purpose and importance of the reports and provide practical instructions to promote consistently good reporting by all units and teams.
- ✓ Arrangements for the transmission of reports are clearly defined and capacity is available to receive and rapidly screen, compile and analyse them with a focus on identifying changes, trends, and divergences from the established standards.
- ✓ A central monitoring team has adequate staff and an appropriate workspace with computers, telephones and other equipment (e.g. radios), as needed.
- ✓ Clear procedures ensure the rapid clearance of reports. (Bureaucratic delays in producing and issuing information can greatly reduce its validity and usefulness.)
- ✓ Feed back is provided to all reporting units.

Tools and guidance

Food security monitoring

-  *Handbook for defining and setting up a Food Security Information and Early Warning System (FSIEWS)*, FAO 2001.
-  *Food security Monitoring Systems - Stakeholder consultation report*, WFP June 2009.

4.7 Identifying and filling gaps; avoiding duplication

What's needed – desired result

Any significant gaps in the provision of essential assistance or services to affected population groups are quickly identified and prompt action is taken to fill them. Overlaps and duplication of activities are avoided.

Gaps may be *geographic* - certain areas are not covered for particular types of activity or service, or *programmatic* – certain activities or services do not meet agreed standards.

Guiding principles

- ✓ Assessments, situation monitoring and periodic sector reviews all examine the coverage and standards of delivery of assistance activities and services in the sector, and the effectiveness of targeting, and highlight any gaps or overlaps/duplications.
- ✓ Cluster participants/partners regularly review information on gaps and overlaps, agree on the priority gaps and, to the extent possible, adjust their ongoing and planned activities to fill those gaps and reduce overlaps.
- ✓ Any pooled resources available to the Cluster are used to fill the most critical gaps.
- ✓ The CLA informs the Humanitarian Coordinator of any significant gaps and works with the HC, national authorities and donors to mobilize the resources to fill those gaps, especially those that pose direct threats to lives and livelihoods (the *provider of last resort* responsibility).

Accurate gap analysis is unlikely to be possible in the initial response due to limited scope and depth of assessment data and poor and confusing information about the presence and implementation plans of sector actors. However, data and the understanding of both the situation and ongoing activities should improve rapidly enabling gaps and duplications to be identified.

What to do; how to do it

The CC should:

- ☑ keep the coverage, targeting and standards of assistance activities and services under constant review to identify any significant gaps or overlaps/duplications;
- ☑ guide Cluster participants/partners especially newly-arriving organizations in their choice of areas to work and activities to prioritize;
- ☑ alert cluster members individually and collectively when action is needed to cover gaps and maintain standards, or reduce duplications;
- ☑ encourage Cluster participants/partners to share targeting criteria and beneficiary lists; and
- ☑ keep the CLA and other stakeholders informed of any significant gaps.

To identify gaps...

- Overlay assessment and Who-Where-What-When information.
- Colour-code geographic areas to highlight areas of greatest need.
- Match relevant needs to the 'focus' of implementing agencies in each locality, e.g. agencies mandated to work with particular groups, or with particular expertise or capacities.
- Present the findings in visual form to help interpretation, e.g. maps.
- In locations that appear to be 'covered', ensure the implementing agencies have the necessary financial, human, and material resources to meet the scale of anticipated needs.

[Reproduced from WASH Cluster Coordination Handbook, 2009]

4.8 Preparing the sector component of a Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP)

What's needed – desired result

The sector component of a Common Humanitarian Action Plan is agreed among Cluster participants/partners, and sector concerns are appropriately integrated in the section on overall context and humanitarian consequences.

What is a “CHAP”?

The common humanitarian action plan (CHAP) is an overall strategic plan for humanitarian response covering all relevant sectors. It constitutes the core of a consolidated appeal [see 5.4], but can also serve as a reference for organisations that decide not to participate in such an appeal. A CHAP includes:

- an analysis of the context and humanitarian consequences (humanitarian needs and risks taking account of the capacities and vulnerabilities of different affected population groups);
- scenarios – best, worst, and most likely scenarios;
- strategic priorities including clear statements of longer-term objectives and goals; and
- prioritised plans for each sector.

Guiding principles

- ✓ The CHAP is developed by the Humanitarian Country Team under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator. Non-IASC members, such as national NGOs, can be included. Other key stakeholders in humanitarian action should be consulted, in particular the host government and donors.
- ✓ The CC contributes (through the ICCG) to the development of overall, inter-sectoral elements,²⁷ and leads Cluster participants/partners in preparing the sector component of the CHAP.

27 The inter-sectoral elements include: (i) overall context and humanitarian consequences; (ii) strategic priorities for the humanitarian operation as a whole, and (iii) general criteria for selecting and prioritizing projects.

What to do; how to do it

In contributing to the inter-sectoral elements

- ☑ Ensure that:
 - all current and potential sector issues are adequately taken into account;
 - inter-relationships among sectors are clearly recognized; and
 - the situation and vulnerabilities of all distinct population sub-groups are taken into account (depending on the context, sub-groups might be based on ethnicity, disability, gender, age, HIV/AIDS, etc.).

Drawing up a sector strategy

- ☑ Agree a 2-page strategy summary for the sector. The summary from a food security/agriculture sector NAF report may be used or information from an alternative, evidence-based, inter-agency needs and response analysis [see 4.4, 4.5].
- ☑ Include projects to support critical sector-support system elements and coordination, when needed, as well as projects for the delivery of supplies and services for both relief and early recovery purposes. All projects should take account of cross-cutting issues (age, gender, HIV, protection, considerations, etc.)

Selecting and prioritizing projects for inclusion in the CHAP²⁸

- ☑ Arrange a special meeting to select and prioritize projects for inclusion in the CHAP and consolidated appeal. If the Cluster is large, form a *technical working group* for this purpose including representatives of each main group of stakeholders, e.g. government, large INGOs, large NNGOs, small INGOs, small NNGOs, other national institutions, donors. Elect a chair and co-chair at least one of which from an NGO or the Red Cross/Crescent.
- ☑ Review the criteria established by the Humanitarian Country Team for the selection and prioritization of projects in general and agree on the specific criteria to be used for food-security/agriculture sector projects.
- ☑ Ask organizations participating in the Cluster to prepare 1-page project sheets following the CAP technical guidelines and submit them to the chair

28 Edited from Guidance for CAP Project Selection and Prioritization, IASC June 2004.

and co-chair. Emphasize that the projects should address agreed priority needs and support the implementation of the agreed food security/ agriculture sector strategy.

- ☑ Review the proposals in a discussion facilitated by the designated chair and co-chair. Send back to the originating organizations any proposals that do not meet the agreed criteria.
- ☑ Submit the selected proposals to the Humanitarian Coordinator/OCHA.

The chair and co-chair should then participate in a peer (inter-cluster) review to ensure overall consistency in the proposals for different sectors. The HC makes the final decision and is accountable to the Emergency Relief Coordinator for ensuring that projects included in the appeal are in line with the agreed overall humanitarian needs and strategic priorities.

Note that any support needed to assure the effective functioning of the cluster, and the ability of the cluster lead agency and coordinator to fulfil their responsibilities, must be included in the package. Budget lines may be needed for, for example, information management, communications, and evaluations.

What should be included in a cluster strategy for a CAP/CHAP

A CHAP – and section 3 of a consolidated appeal – should normally include:

- ✓ the priority sector needs and risks;
- ✓ a corresponding sector strategy with no more than five *objectives* for the sector and no more than five key sector (food security/agriculture) *indicators* for measuring progress towards those objectives;
- ✓ a list of the organisations that will contribute to this sector strategy, and a outline or chart showing the complementarity among the proposed activities;
- ✓ a brief explanation of how the Cluster/sector group will monitor implementation and the achievement of objectives; and
- ✓ the implications if the sector strategy is not implemented.

The strategy must be evidence-based and clearly linked to one or more of the agreed overall strategic humanitarian priorities, and include the main organizations working in the sector.

Individual projects must be reviewed and agreed upon by the Cluster/sector group and support the defined sector response strategy (see next box below).

[Adapted from *Technical Guidelines for Consolidated Appeals*, IASC 2006]

Sample criteria for project selection/prioritisation

- ✓ Strategy: the project addresses priority areas in the agreed sector (food security/agriculture) crisis response strategy and will help to achieve specific agreed objectives using agreed activity-level strategies.
- ✓ Organisational capacity: the appealing organisation has the technical expertise and operational capacity in the country, and the mandate to implement the project, or can mobilize the capacity as required.
- ✓ Population: the project targets one or more of the priority, vulnerable population groups identified by the IASC/Humanitarian Country Team.
- ✓ Geographic area: the project will be implemented in a region that is considered to be a priority for humanitarian food security/agriculture action.
- ✓ Timing: the project can make a measurable impact in the time-frame of the appeal (usually one year).
- ✓ Other context-specific criteria: e.g. projects that promote gender equality, include a focus on HIV/AIDS (where this is a major concern) and/or help to build local capacity.

[Adapted from *Guidance on CAP Project Selection and Prioritisation*, IASC June 2004]

Tools and guidance

 www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/content/subsidi/swg_cap/cap.asp

4.9 Promoting early recovery; facilitating “transition”

What’s needed – desired result

Recovery is promoted and facilitated from the earliest possible moment. The response provides for a progressive transition from humanitarian assistance to recovery and long-term development, as the situation permits.

Guiding principles

- ✓ Strategic planning for longer-term rehabilitation and recovery is undertaken at the early stage of emergency interventions to ensure that, to the extent possible, actions at all stages of the emergency response promote long-term sustainability of livelihoods and natural resources.
- ✓ “Build back better”, whenever possible: conditions and structures that had earlier kept people trapped in poverty should not be recreated.
- ✓ Local capacities, including natural resource management and conservation capabilities, are protected and strengthened, as necessary, in all sub-sectors.
- ✓ The resumption of livestock and fish production is given appropriate priority in areas where they are important parts of the diet and livelihoods of the affected communities.
- ✓ The millennium development goals (MDGs) may be used as targets to focus recovery activities following a protracted crisis.

What to do; how to do it

- ☑ Think long-term: be aware that ill-considered decisions and investments made in the initial phases of a crisis may have detrimental long-term consequences extending well into the recovery and reconstruction phases.
- ☑ Protect and reinforce local capacities from the outset as suggested in 3.4.
- ☑ While still assuring direct action to protect lives and livelihoods as needed, give progressively increasing attention to recovery taking account of overall socio-economic conditions, the institutional capacity of government and non-state actors, the nature of the crisis, and differences among geographical areas.
- ☑ Collaborate in Post Disaster Needs Assessments (PDNAs) – usually led by the government with the support of UNDP, the EC and WB – and other inter-agency, recovery-oriented, post-crisis assessments.

- ☑ Use the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) to mobilize resources for some initial early recovery activities, when agreed with the HC and humanitarian country team, but also explore possibilities for funding more substantial recovery-related activities through bilateral or multilateral agreements such as multi-donor trust funds (MDTF) and include priority activities in the UN Country Assistance Framework.
- ☑ Accelerate capacity building within national agencies to enable them, and national enterprises, to take the lead in rebuilding facilities and services and thereby enhance national ownership of the process and results.
- ☑ Identify well-functioning local agencies and enterprises that can serve as models or support for malfunctioning sector facilities or services.
- ☑ Once the situation and assistance operations have stabilized, plan with the relevant national authorities for a nationally-led coordination mechanism to gradually take over the coordination of ongoing, longer-term assistance within the sector.

The importance of technical support

“The provision of many poorly built boats in Indonesia after the 2004 tsunami clearly indicates that training and technical support should be incorporated into early disaster response activities. Similarly, the support to fish farmers in flood-affected areas in Bangladesh (1998) and Viet Nam (2000) in the form of fingerlings, shrimp post-larvae and brood-stock shows that low-quality inputs and insufficient technical assistance result in limited impact of interventions. Training in water quality management, aquatic animal disease prevention measures and protection of ponds against pollution, which was given to some of the affected farmers, significantly increased the impact of the assistance.”

“...many tsunami-affected countries lack regulations governing the construction of small fishing vessels and do not have the capacity to inspect boats and enforce those regulations that do exist. In Sri Lanka, FAO has assisted the Government in developing new regulations for fiberglass boats and, in Indonesia, similar regulations have been developed for wooden boats. These are important steps towards making small fishing vessels safer.

[From *Disaster response and risk management in the Fisheries Sector*, FAO 2007]

Tools and guidance

- 📖 *Beyond Relief: food security in protracted crises*, FAO & Practical Action Publishing 2008.
- 📖 *Guidance note on Early Recovery*, Cluster Working Group on ER, 2008.
- 📖 *Livestock emergency guidelines and standards*, LEGS project & Practical Action Publishing 2009.

4.10 Preparing contingency plans

What's needed – desired result

Sectors actors are ready to respond to any new, foreseeable crisis that might erupt during the coming weeks and months.

The contingency planning referred to here is “in-crisis” contingency planning to deal with possible future events (“contingencies”) that could further complicate the current emergency situation.

Guiding principles

- ✓ Events that could further impact on the population or ongoing humanitarian assistance operations during the coming months are anticipated.
- ✓ Contingency plans are prepared to respond to foreseeable new threats and ensure, as much as possible, the continuity of services and humanitarian assistance to the target populations. Contingency plans should be included as annexes to the sector response strategy [see 4.5].
- ✓ Cluster participants/partners plan together but also contribute to and support contingency planning by relevant national authorities.

Events (contingencies) that might need to be anticipated include, for example:

- secondary disasters: recurrence of the primary hazard or secondary phenomena such as an epidemic or a forthcoming cyclone season;
- deterioration of the security situation, notably the possibility that renewed conflict could affect certain areas or programmes, cause new population displacements, or disrupt supply corridors; and
- breakdown of in-country supply chains due to overburdened provincial services.

Seasonal variations such as rainy and lean seasons and their usual effects on programme implementation, markets and physical access must also be taken into account, but this should be integrated in the basic sector response strategy. Contingency planning should cover other, more exceptional events.

What to do; how to do it

In collaboration with the relevant government entities and other stakeholders:

- ☑ identify and prioritize possible contingencies that, during the coming months, could impact on:
 - the sector (food production, supplies, nutritional status, etc.); and
 - the ongoing humanitarian and early recovery assistance operations in the sector.
- ☑ decide within the Cluster, in coordination with government entities and other main food security/agriculture actors, how such events will be managed – how the new sector needs will be responded to and how operational support and services will be maintained if/when such events occur;
- ☑ estimate the additional resources – human, material, financial – that could be needed to respond to the new situation, determine how they would be mobilized and where to pre-position stocks;
- ☑ ensure the constant, ongoing monitoring of contingency stocks, and their replenishment whenever needed;
- ☑ write up a joint Cluster/sector contingency plan that describes the anticipated scenario(s), specifies arrangements for immediate joint assessment and planning, outlines the response strategy, actions and resources that would probably be needed, and assigns specific roles and responsibilities for action if/when such events occur and for immediate preparedness measures;
- ☑ disseminate the plan to all stakeholders and ensure that all Cluster participants/partners take necessary measures internally to be ready to fulfil their role/responsibilities if/when such events occur. If needed, prepare specific projects to enhance preparedness and seek to mobilize the necessary resources from donors; and
- ☑ regularly review (i) the list of possible contingencies and scenarios, and (ii) the contingency plan. Update them when necessary.

Tools and guidance

- 📖 *Inter-agency Contingency Planning guidelines*, IASC Working Group, 2008.
- 📖 IASC Cluster-Sector Leadership Training (2007) Tip Sheet - *Contingency Planning* -
<http://onerresponse.info/Coordination/ClusterApproach/publicdocuments/Tip%20Sheet%202007%20Contingency%20Planning.ppt>

Chapter 5

ADVOCACY AND MOBILIZING RESOURCES

5.1 Advocating and communicating for the sector

What's needed – desired result

All stakeholders including the government at the highest level, the HCT, and potential donors are aware of the situation, risks, needs and opportunities in the sector. The affected populations are also aware of the risks and the measures they should take to reduce their vulnerability and accelerate recovery.

Guiding principles

- ✓ Each advocacy message/argument serves a specific purpose, is based on clear evidence, and is adapted to the context (including local culture).
- ✓ Advocacy is conducted through both public statements (e.g. collective Cluster statements) and private dialogue (e.g. CC discussions with government representatives and donors).

Advocacy is making a persuasive argument for a specific outcome [UNICEF]. It is the active promotion of a cause or principle [WHO].

Arguments based on “rights” can be effective in creating political will where it is lacking, especially when framed within existing cultural constructs.

Role of OCHA in Advocacy and Resource Mobilization

- Working with partners to identify key *common advocacy concerns*.
- Supporting the HC in developing and *implementing inter-agency advocacy strategies*.
- *Advocating for donors* to fund Cluster partners in carrying out priority activities.
- Advising individual Clusters and the HCT on *funding mechanisms*.

What to do; how to do it

- ☑ Identify advocacy expertise and capacities within the Cluster. Establish a standing working group to develop appropriate advocacy strategies and communications.
- ☑ Get professional support, if needed, from agencies that have particular experience.

- ☑ Identify the main issues for which advocacy and communications are required for the Cluster/sector as a whole and for specific messages. Develop advocacy strategies that will get the messages to relevant decision-makers.
- ☑ Highlight sector needs in all relevant inter-sectoral fora and processes (including HCT meetings, donor meetings, etc.).
- ☑ Ensure that other sectors understand the specific issues facing agriculture in the particular local context, the possibilities for synergy and any risks of undermining agricultural recovery.
- ☑ Ensure the production and wide dissemination of sector bulletins, and briefing of the news-media on specific issues [see 3.7].
- ☑ Ensure that advocacy materials are easy to understand for people who are not agricultural specialists and take account of the local cultural context. Explain concepts clearly and be careful and consistent in the use of terms.²⁹
- ☑ Participate actively in the planning and execution of multi-sector advocacy and communications strategies.

Tools and guidance

 *WASH Cluster Coordination Handbook*, Global WASH Cluster 2009, section 7.5.

²⁹ Using the word “agriculture” to encompass all sub-sectors (including fisheries, forestry, etc.) and yet using the same word “agriculture” to refer only crops, often leads to confusion in non-specialists!

5.2 Preparing sector inputs to a “Flash” Appeal

What’s needed – desired result

The sector inputs to a flash appeal are convincing and submitted in time for inclusion in the appeal. Sector concerns are appropriately reflected in the definition of the overall inter-sectoral priorities and strategy.

What is a “Flash” Appeal?

The flash appeal is a tool for structuring a coordinated humanitarian response for the first three to six months of an emergency and mobilizing the necessary resources from donors. The Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) triggers a flash appeal in consultation with all stakeholders and defines the time frame for preparation.

Normally, the HC and humanitarian country team should complete a draft within 5 to 7 days of the onset of a crisis. The appeal is then issued by OCHA-Geneva about 48 hours later. Usually, there is a scheduled revision about a month later based on additional information and including more early recovery projects. (The flash appeal may be developed into a consolidated appeal if an inter-agency response is needed beyond six months.)

Guiding principles

- ✓ The CLA/CC is responsible for submitting to the HC an initial response plan for the sector that is prepared in collaboration with food security/agriculture partners and in consultation with relevant national authorities.
- ✓ The response plan includes an initial sector response strategy, a statement on roles and responsibilities, and outlines of specific proposed projects – all based on available information, early estimates and best guesses.
- ✓ The initial response plan focuses on urgent life-saving needs plus whatever early recovery projects can be identified, planned and implemented within the first few months.

The Flash Appeal may include projects from UN agencies, international organizations, and NGOs. It may include project partnerships with the national Red Cross or Red Crescent Society. Government ministries cannot appeal for funds directly in a flash appeal, but can be partners in UN or NGO projects.

Appeals and projects, including budgetary requirements, can be updated online through the OCHA financial tracking system (FTS) at any time.

What to do; how to do it

The CLA/CC should:

- ☑ bring together all significant sector actors and facilitate a process of:
 - analysing available assessment information and agreeing an initial response strategy [see 4.5];
 - vetting projects proposed by individual organizations; and
 - building consensus on the projects to be included in the appeal ensuring that they are all relevant, high-priority, coordinated and feasible;
- ☑ consult with the relevant national authorities and keep local donor representatives informed;
- ☑ write up the plan in the required appeal document format; and
- ☑ liaise with other clusters to ensure that proposed activities are complementary and appropriately address priority inter-sectoral issues.

Normally, the sector draft should be submitted to the HC within 3 or 4 days of the decision to launch a flash appeal; the actual deadline will be specified by the HC in each case.

Tools and guidance

📖 *IASC - Revised Flash Appeal Guidance*, draft Dec. 2008.

http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/pageloader.aspx?page=subsidi-swg_cap-default

5.3 Preparing sector elements of CERF applications

What's needed – desired result

Sector proposals for CERF funding are convincing and submitted in time for inclusion in the HC's recommendation for funding.

What is the "CERF"?

The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) is a stand-by fund established by the United Nations to enable more timely, reliable and equitable humanitarian assistance to victims of natural disasters and other types of emergency. It is intended to complement – not substitute for – flash and consolidated appeals. There are two funding windows:

- *Rapid response* – CERF may provide seed funds to jump-start critical operations.
- *Under-funded emergencies* – CERF can fund life-saving projects in an ongoing emergency situation that is under-funded (priority projects that are not yet covered by other donors).


Guiding principles

- ✓ The Fund is intended to support emergency response in general but NGOs are not eligible to access CERF funds directly. Only UN agencies can submit requests for CERF funding.
- ✓ The CLA (or a relevant UN agency if the CLA is not a UN agency) compiles and submits a proposal incorporating the project funding requirements of other, non-UN cluster partners. The CLA/UN agency is then responsible for ensuring that CERF funds allocated to NGO projects are passed through to the NGOs concerned.

What to do; how to do it

- ☑ Produce a CERF request in parallel with the flash appeal [see 5.2]. The appeal serves as the contextual analysis for the CERF application.
- ☑ Select from the flash appeal the highest-priority projects that have not yet received any clear indications of donors support: get the organizations concerned to prepare concise project summaries in the CERF format.
- ☑ Submit the sector package to the HC for inclusion in the overall CERF request with convincing arguments why any proposed agriculture projects are an immediate priority (to avoid missing a planting season, for example).

Tools and guidance

 CERF application format

 IASC - CERF Live-Saving Criteria and Sectoral Activities Guidelines
<http://ochaonline.un.org/Default.aspx?alias=ochaonline.un.org/cerf>

“Life-saving” activities in the agriculture, food and nutrition sectors that may be considered for CERF funding

Reproduced from *CERF Life-saving Criteria and Sectoral Activities*, OCHA August 2007. For any up-date, check:
<http://ochaonline.un.org/FundingFinance/CERF/tabid/1109/Default.aspx>

Activities	Conditions
<p>Agriculture <i>Criteria: Agricultural activities that have a direct and immediate impact on protecting and restoring food availability and the livelihoods of families affected by an emergency.</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of seeds, fertilizers and tools in emergency contexts to restore food security and production capacity. 	<p>Time-critical interventions to restore livelihoods and food availability.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Survival of productive animals (emergency vaccination, initial re-stocking, de-stocking, water and supplementary feeding for animals) 	<p>Only on case by case and when animal husbandry is a primary source of livelihood particularly for pastoralists communities and women and when livestock are essential for nutrition, income, transport, ploughing, and fuel.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial inputs for trans-boundary crop pest plague control (i.e. locust, etc). 	<p>Time-critical interventions to avert disaster and restore livelihoods after damage assessments.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flood and drought related response (i.e. emergency embankments, spot repair of agricultural infrastructure, emergency inputs) 	<p>Time-critical interventions to protect or ensure food security.</p>
<p>Food Aid <i>Criteria: Provision of minimum food requirements to people affected by emergencies.</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General food distribution and targeted distribution for most vulnerable groups (complement gaps). 	<p>For under-funded emergencies the CERF would only contribute to food pipeline breaks in serious deterioration emergencies and based on analysis of funding/financial status.</p>

Nutrition	
- Infant Feeding in Emergencies	In refugee/IDP situations ensure secluded areas for breast feeding; supplementary feeding when required; targeted distributions of formula and education on preparation and use of formula.
- Management of severe and moderate acute malnutrition	Requires community involvement and establishment of feeding centers.
- Micronutrient supplementation - Vitamins supplementation	

5.4 Preparing, monitoring and reviewing a Consolidated Appeal

What's needed – desired result

The sector elements of a consolidated appeal are convincing and submitted in time for inclusion in the appeal. Sector concerns are appropriately reflected in the definition of the overall inter-sectoral priorities and strategy. Mid-year reviews (MYRs) are effective in measuring progress and reorienting strategies if/when needed.

What is a “Consolidated Appeal”?

The consolidated appeal is more than a fund-raising document. It is also intended to be a tool to plan, coordinate, implement and monitor humanitarian activities in response to a major or complex emergency or natural disaster. A consolidated appeal is prepared when the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and IASC decide, in consultation with the Humanitarian Coordinator and the IASC Country Team that a consolidated approach to resource mobilization is needed.

A consolidated appeal is developed among agencies in the field, led by the HC. The process typically takes about a month.

Guiding principles

For a *consolidated appeal*, the CLA, CC and food security/agriculture cluster partners:

- ✓ contribute to the development (by the HC and OCHA) of the overall, inter-sectoral priorities and response strategy;
- ✓ prepare the food security/agriculture section of the common humanitarian action plan (CHAP) [see 4.8] and propose a coherent set of projects corresponding to the agreed priorities and strategy; and
- ✓ monitor contributions against the food security/agriculture component of the appeal and conduct a mid-year review.

A *mid-year review* (MYR):

- ✓ *measures* progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP) and report findings to stakeholders;

- ✓ *determines* whether or not the agreed strategy is having the desired impact, and if necessary *change* the strategy to adapt to new conditions;
- ✓ *updates* the portfolio of projects;
- ✓ *reprioritizes* humanitarian response activities and projects; and
- ✓ *analyses* funding and, on that basis, *advocates* for donor support.

What to do; how to do it (i) Preparing a consolidated appeal

- ☑ Convene a Cluster planning meeting – or form a planning group – to prepare specific proposals. The meeting/group should be co-chaired by a UN agency and an NGO.
- ☑ Prepare the sector section of the CHAP as described in 4.8.
- ☑ Agree clear criteria for the selection of projects for inclusion in the appeal. Ensure that these criteria include technically-sound support to early, sustainable recovery and a transition from aid dependency to self-reliance.
- ☑ Get organizations participating in the appeal to prepare one-page *project sheets* according to CAP Technical Guidelines and submit them to the Chair and Co-Chair of the planning meeting/group. (The projects should address agreed priorities and contribute to achieving specific objectives in the food security/agriculture crisis response strategy.)
- ☑ Agree on the projects to be included in the appeal based on the previously-agreed criteria.
- ☑ Liaise with other clusters to ensure that activities are complementary and appropriately address the priority inter-sectoral problems.

What to do; how to do it (ii) Tracking contributions against an appeal

- ☑ Use the *Financial Tracking Service* (FTS) database to track (monitor) contributions against the food security/agriculture component of the appeal.

FTS is a global, on-line, real-time database of humanitarian funding needs and contributions. It provides a series of analytical tables showing humanitarian aid flows to specific crises and allows users to produce custom tables on demand.

What to do; how to do it (iii) Conducting a mid-year review (MYR)

- ☑ Review the relevant CHAP section in the light of up-to-date information from assessments and monitoring, and propose adjustment if needed.
- ☑ Review all projects proposed in the CAP and validate that each is still relevant (has not become not redundant), feasible, and economically budgeted. Project proposals that do not meet these requirements should be deleted, or revised by the proposing organisation.
- ☑ Prioritize remaining unfunded or under-funded projects using at least a two-tier system (top priority and medium priority projects).
- ☑ Ensure that all relevant proposals and projects are taken into account (including those of NGOs that are relevant although not shown in the original appeal document).³⁰

Individual agencies should give their headquarters an early look at their new or revised projects during the MYR process, to avoid any misunderstandings and the need for last-minute changes.

Tools and guidance

Preparing a consolidated appeal

- 📖 IASC - *UN CAP Appeal Guidance* - English version - <http://ochaonline.un.org/FundingFinance/ConsolidatedAppealsProcess/tabid/1106/Default.aspx>.
French version - <http://ochaonline.un.org/cap2005/DocView.asp?DocID=1396>
- 📖 IASC WG - *Guidance for CAP Project Selection and Prioritization*, June 2004.

Tracking contributions

- 📖 UN - UN Agency Field Office and the Financial Tracking Service (FTS) [http://ocha.unog.ch/fts/exception-docs/AboutFTS/guidesheets/FTS & UN agency Field Office guide.pdf](http://ocha.unog.ch/fts/exception-docs/AboutFTS/guidesheets/FTS_%20UN_agency_Field_Office_guide.pdf)

Conducting a mid-year review

- 📖 OCHA - Humanitarian Appeal - Guidelines for Mid-Year Review 2008 - <http://ochaonline.un.org/humanitarianappeal/webpage.asp?MenuID=9198&Page=1481>

30 Projects already funded but not yet counted in the CAP should be taken into account as part of the MYR (as long as they are consistent with the CHAP), in order to accurately measure funding against need.

5.5 Working with donors

What's needed – desired result

Current and potential donors are aware of the situation and needs in the sector. They understand the benefits of supporting the sector and the risks if support is inadequate.

Guiding principles

- ✓ Donors are regularly informed of the situation and needs in the sector including the importance of promoting the early recovery of agriculture and other livelihood activities and related support systems.
 - ✓ The CLA and CC meet regularly with donors (individually and collectively) to explain the situation and needs for the sector/cluster as a whole.
-

What to do; how to do it

FAO/the CLA and CC, on behalf of the cluster and sector as a whole, should:

- ☑ take initiative to contact local donor representatives, any foundations and potential private-sector donors represented in the country to explain sector priorities and resource needs. Map their particular interests and keep them informed of needs and developments on a regular basis;
- ☑ ensure that donors understand the importance of, and possibilities for, promoting early recovery in agriculture and other livelihood activities – the need for a “twin-track” approach to promote self-reliance and minimise the period of dependence on food or other forms of relief distribution;
- ☑ prepare briefs to support resource mobilization for the sector/cluster as a whole focusing on the priority gaps;
- ☑ encourage potential donors to participate in Cluster coordination meetings and briefings;
- ☑ invite donors to join assessment missions (as observers) and project site visits. Support joint donor fact-finding missions;
- ☑ prepare concise, “donor-friendly” briefing materials and presentations, including easy-to-understand graphics. Prepare and provide detailed

technical material and presentations only when requested by a particular donor;

- ☑ link potential donors with specific Cluster partners, when appropriate;
- ☑ establish system to record contacts with donors (proposals given, indications of interest received, etc.); and
- ☑ alert the HC and CLA headquarters to any critical gaps that need urgent action.

Ideally, joint planning and the coordinated implementation of agreed activities would be followed by **joint reporting back to donors** – the preparation of a joint narrative report to be submitted to all donors together with the separate financial reports of each organization to each donor. FAO/the CLA and CC should propose this to cluster partners and donors and, where agreed, take the lead in preparing an overall narrative report based on the strategy and expected results presented in a flash or consolidated appeal.

Accessing funds from other (non-traditional) sources

In certain circumstances, funds for humanitarian and/or early recovery activities may be sought from:

- Common Humanitarian Funds (established for specific countries);
- Multiple Donors Trust Fund; and
- Community Peace and Stability Fund.

For recovery activities, funding may be sought through the mechanism of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). Funds may also be sought from foundations and the private sector.

Sharing resources

When “pooled” resources are available for sector action:

- ☑ agree within the cluster – in a cluster meeting – on criteria for the selection of project activities in priority areas and the allocation of resources to individual agencies;
- ☑ invite agencies to submit proposals (e.g. using the CERF application format) in accordance with the agreed criteria;

- ☑ form a project appraisal group including representatives from each main group of stakeholders (e.g. government, large INGOs, large NNGOs, small INGOs, small NNGOs, other national institutions and donors) to review proposals and select projects to be funded³¹; and
- ☑ ensure that the procedures for transferring funds (e.g. from CERF) to the concerned implementing organizations are clear and understood by all concerned.

Tools and guidance

- 📖 Center in International Cooperation New York University, in collaboration with The Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute - *Common Funds for Humanitarian Action in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo: Monitoring and Evaluation Study*, Draft 1, November 2006.
- 📖 Development Initiatives, *Review of Trust Fund Mechanisms for Transition Financing*, Phase 2 Report, 28 April 2006.
- 📖 UNDP - Memorandum of Understanding regarding *Operational Aspects of the Peacebuilding Funds*.
- 📖 UNDP - Multi-donors Trust Fund (MDTF).

31 The same appraisal group may also screen and select proposals for inclusion in a Flash Appeal or a CAP, and applications for CERF funds.

Chapter 6

MONITORING AND ENHANCING PERFORMANCE

6.1 Monitoring cluster performance

What's needed – desired result

Cluster performance is assured and enhanced through regular monitoring.

Guiding principles

- ✓ Cluster participants/partners collectively monitor the implementation of the overall sector response strategy and ensure evaluation of the overall Cluster/sector response. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) should be an integral part of the response strategy.
- ✓ When the cluster approach is fully implemented and participating sector actors work together in partnership, the Cluster may also organize joint M&E of individual projects.
- ✓ Monitoring is initiated from the early stages of response and focuses on a few key indicators. It may be refined and extended later. The start is not delayed while waiting for a sophisticated monitoring system to be developed. Care is taken to not collect more data than will actually be used.
- ✓ M&E is gender- and culture-sensitive and takes account of other locally-relevant cross-cutting concerns.
- ✓ M&E is participatory, as much as possible. The more participatory M&E activities, the more likely they will represent the real situation and the opinions of sector stakeholders including local communities.

What to do; how to do it

- ☑ Agree criteria to measure Cluster performance.
- ☑ Organize MYRs on the required schedule [see 5.4] and intermediate reviews if agreed by cluster partners to be useful:³²
 - encourage all Cluster participants/partners to participate; and
 - examine not only the progress of specific kinds of activity but also whether the cluster is meeting its objectives in terms of partnerships,

32 The mid-year reviews (MYR) of the consolidated appeal are important exercises but intermediate reviews every 2 or 3 months may also be useful in some cases.

standards and gap filling, and whether it is sufficiently responsive to changing needs.

- ☑ Consider organizing a real-time evaluation (RTE) in the early stages of response or, better, participate in an inter-sectoral RTE coordinated by the HCR and OCHA.
- ☑ Ensure that all M&E activities are gender-sensitive and take account of other locally-relevant cross-cutting concerns.

Some questions to be addressed during monitoring and reviews

- Which activities are underway and what progress has been made?
- At what rate are resources being used and how does usage compare with progress in implementation (outputs)? How do costs incurred compare with the budget? [*efficiency*]
- Are the desired results being achieved (e.g. quarterly update)? [*effectiveness*]
- To what extent are these results furthering the purposes of the food security/agriculture strategy (e.g. half-yearly analysis)?
- What changes have occurred in the overall context? Do the original assumptions hold true?
- Have response activities been sufficiently refined and adapted in the light of new information? [*responsiveness*]
- How has the cluster itself functioned? What has been the quality of the relationship among partners?
- How effective has been the work with other clusters?

[From *Manual Project Cycle Management*, June 2005, European Commission, ECHO]

Tools and guidance

- 📖 IASC - Guidelines CAP Mid-Year Review.
- 📖 The Sphere Project. Humanitarian Charter and Principles of Humanitarian Response, revised edition 2004. Geneva, 2004.
<http://www.sphereproject.org/index.htm>

6.2 Learning lessons and sharing good practice

What's needed – desired result

Cluster participants/partners – and government to the extent possible – exchange experiences and jointly learn lessons for future activities.

Guiding principles

- ✓ Joint evaluations or lessons-learning exercises are organized – usually separately – at appropriate moments when it is feasible to generate information that is accurate, reliable and useful:
 - they may be organized at national level or within particular operational zones;
 - they must identify critical food security/agriculture and operational issues and fine-tune the strategies to address them; areas of weakness must be identified so that steps can be taken to rectify them; and
 - the findings should lead to policy, operational and technical recommendations.
- ✓ A real-time evaluation (RTE) may be appropriate during the early stages of a major humanitarian operation. The purpose will be to help ensure the best possible outcomes for the affected population by identifying – and suggestions solutions to – any problems in the coordination, planning and management of the response, and ensuring accountability.
- ✓ For any major crisis, a final lessons-learning exercise is undertaken not later than one month after the end of humanitarian operations. This is included in the work plan and budget of the Cluster/sector coordination group and the exercise cover both programme and operational aspects.
- ✓ The purpose of each evaluation or lessons exercise is clearly defined, the terms of reference (ToR) are drawn up with care – see box below – and an adequate budget is established.
- ✓ All the main food security/agriculture actors are involved in planning the exercise and agree the ToR. (A key success factor in sector programme evaluation is the involvement of all sector partners, including the government, in the planning of the evaluation to ensure their ownership of

the results. A sector programme evaluation is more complex than a single-intervention evaluation!)

- ✓ An evaluation manager is designated for each evaluation or lessons exercise. S/he is able to devote sufficient time to managing the process.
- ✓ Evaluation teams include a mix of relevant skills and experience, and are gender-balanced.
- ✓ Reports, findings and recommendations are promptly disseminated to all concerned and brought to the attention of the managers who need to know and take action.
- ✓ An action plan is developed to follow up on recommendations. The plan clearly specifies responsibilities for follow-up actions; its implementation is monitored.

What to do; how to do it

Work with relevant national authorities and other important sector actors, as appropriate, to:

- ☑ identify the appropriate timing for a joint evaluation or lessons-learning exercise, and get support for the proposal from the main stakeholders;
- ☑ organize a consultative process to: (i) identify both the issues (the broad areas that need to be explored) and the specific questions that need to be answered; and (ii) agree on ToR and a plan; and
- ☑ ensure the designation of an evaluation manager and support him/her as needed.

Drawing up terms of reference for an evaluation or lessons exercise

Whatever the nature of the exercise, well-thought-out ToR are important. They should be directly relevant to the decisions to be taken by intended users. The time and effort invested in preparing good ToR have big payoffs in terms of resulting quality, relevance and usefulness.

- ✓ The ToR should spell out the objectives (purposes) of the exercise, the methodology to be used, the steps to be gone through, and the roles and responsibilities of all concerned parties.
- ✓ Limit questions to the most important issues and ones that can realistically be answered in the prevailing circumstances; prioritize them.
- ⊗ Do not overload the ToR! Overloading is a frequent problem when many people add their own questions, especially in joint agency evaluations. The need to focus requires a prioritisation of

the diverse needs of the various possible users or stakeholders.

- ⊗ Be cautious about combining lesson-learning and accountability purposes in a single evaluation – the issues and the intended users are different and it may result in ambiguity in emphasis and approach.

ToR are as important for internal evaluation teams as they are for external teams, although external teams may require more detail on background context and on intended audiences and uses. ToR may need to be translated for in-country use. For a *sector-wide* evaluation, the ToR must be agreed among all stakeholders. The methodologies and tools to be used may need to be adapted/developed and piloted during an initial design phase.

Role of an evaluation manager

The evaluation manager is part of the evaluation team, albeit with a special role and perspective. S/he must, amongst other things:

- ✓ *Ensure financial and logistical preparation:* careful budgeting and thorough logistics preparations are essential – don't under-estimate the cost, time and resources required, especially the field work component of an evaluation
- ✓ *Devote adequate time to the process,* be systematic (in planning and supervising), sensitive (to the needs of the team and others involved), and solutions-oriented (anticipate and respond promptly to the problems that will inevitably arise)
- ✓ *Ensure that sufficient time is given* to building the appropriate level of interaction and ongoing reporting back between the evaluation team, the evaluation manager, operational personnel and other stakeholders
- ✓ *Ensure follow-up* – that the report/findings and recommendations are promptly disseminated to all concerned and brought to the attention of the managers who need to know and take action.

Tools and guidance

- 📖 ALNAP 2006 - *Evaluating humanitarian action using the OECD-DAC criteria*, T Beck: see http://www.alnap.org/publications/eha_dac/index.htm
- 📖 IASC - *Proposal of a Pilot Initiative to test Inter-Agency Real-Time Evaluation*.
- 📖 Report of the real-time evaluation of response to the Nargis cyclone disaster in Myanmar, expected late 2008.

ANNEXES

Key IASC documents on the cluster approach

Other clusters' guidance documents

Widely used/referred to guidelines and tools for assessment and planning

Key guidance documents for the sector/relevant sub-sectors

ANNEX A

Glossary

Adapted from the Health and WASH Cluster guides and FAO/WFP Joint CFSAM Guidelines.

Agro-ecological zone	A land resource mapping unit, defined in terms of climate, land and soils, and/or land cover, and having a specific range of potentials and constraints for land use. [FAO, <i>Agro-ecological Zoning Guidelines</i>]
Analysis	The detailed, methodical examination of constituent elements, structure and inter-relationships. [Adapted from Oxford English Dictionary]
Assessment	A structured process of collecting and analyzing data to measure the impact of the crisis, and provide an understanding of the situation and any related threats, in order to determine whether a response is required and, if so, the nature of that response. An assessment is a time-bound exercise that produces a report and recommendations to inform decision-making at a particular point in time.
Cluster	A group of agencies, organizations and/or institutions working together towards common objectives – to address needs in a particular sector.
Cluster approach	The <i>cluster approach</i> is a way of organizing coordination and cooperation among humanitarian actors to facilitate more predictable leadership, improved planning and prioritization, stronger partnerships, and enhanced response capacity and accountability.
Cluster lead agency	An agency/organization that formally commits to take on a leadership role within the international humanitarian community in a particular sector/area of activity, to ensure adequate response and high standards of predictability, accountability & partnership.
Chronic food insecurity	A long-term or persistent inability to meet minimum food requirements.
Coordination	A process (set of activities) that brings different elements into a harmonious or efficient relationship. [from Oxford English Dictionary] In the context of humanitarian response, the aim is to have all participating organizations working together in partnership to harmonize efforts and use available resources efficiently within the framework of agreed objectives, priorities and strategies, for the benefit of the affected population(s).

Coping strategies	Activities that people resort to temporarily in order to obtain food, income and/or services when their normal means of livelihood have been disrupted.
Effectiveness	A measure of the extent to which an intervention's intended outcomes (its specific objectives) have been achieved.
Efficiency	A measure of the relationship between outputs (the products produced or services provided by an intervention) and inputs (the resources it uses).
Evaluation	<p>A systematic and impartial examination (of humanitarian action) intended to draw lessons to improve policy and practice and enhance accountability. [ALNAP]</p> <p>Evaluation answers the questions: Have we achieved what we set out to achieve? If not, why not, and what might we need to change? [Tear Fund]</p>
Food access	A households' ability to regularly acquire adequate amounts of food through a combination of their own stock and home production, purchases, barter, gifts, borrowing or food aid.
Food availability	The amount of food that is physically present in a country or area through all forms of domestic production, stocks, commercial imports and food aid.
Food consumption	The food that households and individuals actually consume. It is a function of food access and the intra-household use of that food, and is influenced by social norms within the community.
Food insecurity	<p>A situation in which people lack secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life.</p> <p>People (households) who do not have assured safe access to sufficient food throughout the year are said to be "food-insecure".</p> <p>Food insecurity may be caused by the unavailability of food, insufficient purchasing power, inappropriate distribution, or inadequate use of food at the household level. Food insecurity may be chronic, seasonal or transitory.</p>
Food security	<p>Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food for a healthy and active life (World Food Summit Plan of Action, paragraph 1, 1996).</p> <p><i>Household food security</i> is the application of this concept at the household level. People (households) who have assured access to sufficient food throughout the year are said to be "food-secure".</p>

Food utilization	Food utilization refers to: (a) households' use of the food to which they have access, and (b) individuals' ability to absorb nutrients – the conversion efficiency of food by the body.
Humanitarian Country Team	Chaired by the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator, the humanitarian country team normally includes the UN and other international organizations that are members of the IASC and present in the country together with a similar number of NGOs (national and international) chosen or elected to be representative of the NGO community as a whole. [It is the equivalent at country level of the IASC at the global level.]
Impact	The effect on the affected population (e.g. reduction in measles incidence) [Guidelines for CAP Mid-year Review]
Information management	The process of receiving and storing data in a way in which they can be quickly retrieved whenever needed, and systematically compiling and analysing those data to generate information for early warning, programme planning, management, evaluation, and advocacy purposes.
Livelihoods	Livelihoods comprise the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living linked to survival and (future) well-being. <i>Livelihood strategies</i> are the practical means or activities through which people access food and other necessities, or income to buy them.
Livelihood group	A <i>Livelihood group</i> is a group of people who share the same basic means of livelihood and life style – the same main subsistence and income activities, and social and cultural practices – and who face the same risks of food and nutrition insecurity.
Livelihood zone	A <i>Livelihood zone</i> is an area that is reasonably homogeneous and distinct from neighbouring areas in terms of main food production and income activities, cultural practices and hazards affecting food security.
Objective	The desired state that it is intended to achieve – the desired outcome. Objectives are defined at different levels: overall objectives (or “goals”) of a programme and specific objectives (or “purposes”) of individual projects that contribute to achieving the higher goals.
Output	The actions completed to date by a project (e.g. 10,000 children vaccinated) [Guidelines for CAP Mid-year Review]
Malnutrition	A pathological state resulting from too little (or too much) consumption of essential nutrients.

Monitoring	<p>Two forms of monitoring are distinguished relevant to humanitarian operations:</p> <p>(i) Monitoring (surveillance) of the situation – regularly gathering and analysing data on food security/agriculture conditions, risks, access to services, etc. to detect and measure changes.</p> <p>(ii) Monitoring the implementation and programmes and projects – regularly gathering and analysing data on project inputs and outputs to answer the questions: Have we done the things we said we were going to do? If not, why not, and what needs to change? [Tear Fund]</p>
Partners	Individuals and organizations that collaborate to achieve mutually agreed upon objectives.
Partnership	The concept of “partnership” implies shared goals, common responsibility for outcomes, distinct accountabilities and reciprocal obligations.
Sample survey	A structured and statistically analysable and comparable method for collecting information on a specific issue. It provides a snap shot of the situation and respondents’ perspectives at the time when the data were collected.
Sector	<p>A distinct part of an economy, society or sphere of activity. [Oxford English Dictionary]</p> <p>In the context of humanitarian response, key sectors include: agriculture; food; health; nutrition; protection; shelter; water, etc.</p>
Stakeholder	An agency, organization, group or individual that has direct or indirect interest in a particular activity, or its evaluation.
Stakeholder analysis	Stakeholder analysis is an analysis of the interests and relative influence of the various stakeholders involved.
Strategy	The approach that will be used to achieve one or more defined objectives.
Strategic plan	A strategic plan is a concise document that outlines the actions to be taken to achieve a defined objective, or set of objectives, specifying time frames and responsibilities for implementation. It may also include agreed guiding principles and standards to inform response planning and actions.
Transitory food insecurity	A short-term or temporary inability to meet minimum food requirements, indicating a capacity to recover.
Vulnerability	Vulnerability (for food security purposes) refers to the susceptibility of a household/community to factors that place them at risk of becoming food insecure or malnourished. It is a combination of the degree of households’ exposure to risk and of their ability to cope with shocks.

ANNEX B

Generic Terms of Reference for Sector/Cluster Leads at the Country Level

Reproduced from IASC Guidance Note on using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response, November 2006, Annex I.

The Cluster Approach operates at two levels. At the global level, the aim is to strengthen system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies by designating global Cluster Leads and ensuring that there is predictable leadership and accountability in all the main sectors or areas of activity. At the country level, the aim is to ensure a more coherent and effective response by mobilizing groups of agencies, organizations and NGOs to respond in a strategic manner across all key sectors or areas of activity, each sector having a clearly designated lead, as agreed by the Humanitarian Coordinator and the Humanitarian Country Team. (To enhance predictability where possible this should be in line with the lead agency arrangements at the global level.)

The Humanitarian Coordinator – with the support of OCHA – retains responsibility for ensuring the adequacy, coherence and effectiveness of the overall humanitarian response and is accountable to the Emergency Relief Coordinator.

Sector/cluster leads at the country level are accountable to the Humanitarian Coordinator for facilitating a process at the sectoral level aimed at ensuring the following:

Inclusion of key humanitarian partners

- Ensure inclusion of key humanitarian partners for the sector, respecting their respective mandates and programme priorities.

Establishment and maintenance of appropriate humanitarian coordination mechanisms

- Ensure appropriate coordination with all humanitarian partners (including national and international NGOs, the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, IOM and other international organizations), through establishment/maintenance of appropriate sectoral coordination mechanisms, including working groups at the national and, if necessary, local level.
- Secure commitments from humanitarian partners in responding to needs and filling gaps, ensuring an appropriate distribution of responsibilities within the

sectoral group, with clearly defined focal points for specific issues where necessary.

- Ensure the complementarity of different humanitarian actors' actions.
- Promote emergency response actions while at the same time considering the need for early recovery planning as well as prevention and risk reduction concerns.
- Ensure effective links with other sectoral groups.
- Ensure that sectoral coordination mechanisms are adapted over time to reflect the capacities of local actors and the engagement of development partners.
- Represent the interests of the sectoral group in discussions with the Humanitarian Coordinator and other stakeholders on prioritization, resource mobilization and advocacy.

Coordination with national/local authorities, State institutions, local civil society and other relevant actors

- Ensure that humanitarian responses build on local capacities.
- Ensure appropriate links with national and local authorities, State institutions, local civil society and other relevant actors (e.g. peacekeeping forces) and ensure appropriate coordination and information exchange with them.

Participatory and community-based approaches

- Ensure utilization of participatory and community based approaches in sectoral needs assessment, analysis, planning, monitoring and response.

Attention to priority cross-cutting issues

- Ensure integration of agreed priority cross-cutting issues in sectoral needs assessment, analysis, planning, monitoring and response (e.g. age, diversity, environment, gender, HIV/AIDS and human rights); contribute to the development of appropriate strategies to address these issues; ensure gender-sensitive programming and promote gender equality; ensure that the needs, contributions and capacities of women and girls as well as men and boys are addressed.

Needs assessment and analysis

- Ensure effective and coherent sectoral needs assessment and analysis, involving all relevant partners.

Emergency preparedness

- Ensure adequate contingency planning and preparedness for new emergencies.

Planning and strategy development

Ensure predictable action within the sectoral group for the following:

- identification of gaps;
- developing/updating agreed response strategies and action plans for the sector and ensuring that these are adequately reflected in overall country strategies, such as the Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP);
- drawing lessons learned from past activities and revising strategies accordingly; and
- developing an exit, or transition, strategy for the sectoral group.

Application of standards

- Ensure that sectoral group participants are aware of relevant policy guidelines, technical standards and relevant commitments that the Government has undertaken under international human rights law.
- Ensure that responses are in line with existing policy guidance, technical standards, and relevant Government human rights legal obligations.

Monitoring and reporting

- Ensure adequate monitoring mechanisms are in place to review impact of the sectoral working group and progress against implementation plans.
- Ensure adequate reporting and effective information sharing (with OCHA support), with due regard for age and sex disaggregation.

Advocacy and resource mobilization

- Identify core advocacy concerns, including resource requirements, and contribute key messages to broader advocacy initiatives of the HC and other actors.
- Advocate for donors to fund humanitarian actors to carry out priority activities in the sector concerned, while at the same time encouraging sectoral group participants to mobilize resources for their activities through their usual channels.

Training and capacity building

- Promote/support training of staff and capacity building of humanitarian partners.
- Support efforts to strengthen the capacity of the national authorities and civil society.

Provision of assistance or services as a last resort

- As agreed by the IASC Principals, sector leads are responsible for acting as the provider of last resort (subject to access, security and availability of funding) to meet agreed priority needs and will be supported by the HC and the ERC in their resource mobilization efforts in this regard.
- This concept is to be applied in an appropriate and realistic manner for cross-cutting issues such as protection, early recovery and camp coordination.

Humanitarian actors who participate in the development of common humanitarian action plans are expected to be proactive partners in assessing needs, developing strategies and plans for the sector, and implementing agreed priority activities. Provisions should also be made in sectoral groups for those humanitarian actors who may wish to participate as observers, mainly for information-sharing purposes.

ANNEX C

Responsibilities CLA Representatives at Country Level

Joint letter from Cluster Lead Agencies to their Directors/Representatives at Country Level

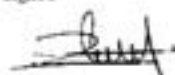
Dear Colleagues,

At the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Working Group meeting in July 2009, representatives of all Global Cluster Lead Agencies discussed the implementation of the cluster approach. It was agreed that in order to strengthen coordination and accountability within the system, all Global Cluster Lead Agencies should write to their respective Country Representatives/Directors, reminding them of the crucial role they play in ensuring that their agencies fulfil their commitments as cluster leads. Specifically, it was confirmed that:

1. Representatives/Directors of Cluster Lead Agencies at the country level have a dual responsibility to represent the interests of both their own agency and the cluster(s) they lead in Humanitarian Country Team meetings (or equivalent) and in other relevant fora. Ideally, this dual responsibility should be reflected in their job descriptions and performance appraisals.
2. While Cluster Coordinators are responsible for the day-to-day running of clusters in the field, it is the Country Representatives/Directors of Cluster Lead Agencies who are ultimately accountable to the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (subject to agency-specific agreements defining such accountability) for carrying out their Cluster Lead Agency responsibilities (as specified in the November 2006 IASC 'Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response' and Annex 1, 'Generic Terms of Reference for Sector/Cluster Leads at the Country Level').
3. Cluster Coordinators should act as neutral representatives of the cluster as a whole, rather than as representatives of their particular agency. One way to ensure this separation of roles is to appoint (i) a dedicated Cluster Coordinator with no agency-specific responsibilities and (ii) a separate cluster focal point for the agency who can represent the agency and participate in the work of the cluster on an equal footing with other cluster partners. These arrangements are a matter for each agency to decide on a case-by-case basis depending on the resources available, the security situation and other factors.
4. Where dedicated Cluster Coordinators are appointed, their responsibility to act as a neutral representative of the cluster as a whole rather than as a representative of their own particular agency should be reflected in their job descriptions and performance appraisals. In cases where the Cluster Lead Agency is not able to appoint a dedicated Cluster Coordinator, the individual who is given responsibility for cluster coordination at the country level will have a dual responsibility to represent both the interests of the cluster and their own agency programmes in relevant fora. This dual responsibility should be reflected in their job descriptions and performance appraisals.

In order to promote clarity when discussing the roles and responsibilities of different actors within the cluster approach, the Global Cluster Lead Agencies also agreed on the definitions which are attached as an annex to this letter.

Signed



Laurent Thomas
Director
Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



Under Secretary General
Disaster Response
and Early Recovery Division

International Federation of
Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



ANNEX

Regarding terminology, the following definitions were agreed by the IASC Working Group:

- Global Cluster Lead Agency:** This is an agency/organization at global level that has been designated by the IASC as cluster lead agency for a particular sector.
- Cluster Lead Agency (country level):** This is an agency or organization that has been designated by the Resident and/or Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) as cluster lead agency for a particular sector at the country level, following consultations with the Humanitarian Country Team. (A cluster lead agency at the country level need not necessarily be the same agency/organization as the Global Cluster Lead Agency for that sector.)
- Global Cluster Coordinator:** This is a person who has been designated as global cluster coordinator by the Global Cluster Lead Agency. This person is responsible for the day-to-day coordination and facilitation of the work of global cluster
- Cluster Coordinator (country level):** This is a person who has been designated as cluster coordinator by the cluster lead agency at the country level. This person is responsible for the day-to-day coordination and facilitation of the work of the cluster.

ANNEX D

Terms of Reference for Sector/Cluster Coordinators at the Country Level

The following are the draft generic ToR for Cluster Coordinators dated 22 April 2010. A final version is expected during June 2010.

Background

In countries facing major new or on-going complex and/or natural humanitarian emergencies, the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) or Resident Coordinator (RC) where there is no HC, in consultation with the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT)³³, is responsible for designating Cluster Lead Agencies for all key humanitarian response sectors and for consulting with the Emergency Relief Coordinator to ensure that there is IASC agreement to the proposed arrangements³⁴.

At the country level the Country Director/Representative of the agency/organization designated as Cluster Lead Agency is ultimately accountable to the HC for ensuring that cluster leadership activities are carried out effectively.³⁵ To this end, Cluster Lead Agencies at the country level are responsible for appointing individuals with the appropriate seniority, skills and competencies required to promote strategic and action-orientated cluster coordination. It may be preferable to appoint a dedicated, full-time Cluster Coordinator with no other programme responsibilities, at least during the height of the emergency. It is the responsibility of the Cluster Lead Agency at the country level to ensure that Cluster Coordinators have the means and support needed to fulfil these Terms of Reference (TORs).

In cases where a decision is made to designate Cluster Co-Lead Agencies at the country level, it is the responsibility of the HC (who may be supported by an OCHA Field Office) and the Cluster Co-Lead Agencies to ensure that the division of labour between them is clearly spelt out and communicated to relevant stakeholders. This can be done by drawing up a Memorandum of Understanding clearly reflecting the agreed Cluster Co-Lead coordination arrangements.

33 IASC Guidance for Humanitarian Country Teams, November 2009.

34 IASC Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response, November 2006, and IASC Operational Guidance on Designating Sector/Cluster Leads in Ongoing Emergencies, and in Major New Emergencies, May 2007.

35 Annex 1 to the IASC Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response, November 2006.

Terms of Reference

The Cluster Coordinator responsibilities outlined below have been developed from the *Generic Terms of Reference for Sector/Cluster Leads at the Country Level*³⁶ and from existing TORs for the Cluster Coordinators of specific clusters. It can be assumed throughout that where the Cluster Coordinator is supported by a coordination team, relevant sections of the TORs refer to the team members. In general, the Cluster Coordinator enables cluster partners to be more effective in responding to the needs of the affected population by working together in accordance with the Principles of Partnership³⁷ than they could be individually. The Cluster Coordinator provides leadership and works on behalf of the cluster as a whole, facilitating all cluster activities and developing and maintaining a strategic vision and operational framework. He/she also ensures coordination with other clusters in relation to inter-cluster activities and cross-cutting issues.

The Cluster Coordinator reports directly to the Country Director/Representative of the Cluster Lead Agency who is a member of the HCT and is accountable to the HC for ensuring that the tasks below are carried out effectively³⁸. Where there is an inter-cluster coordination forum, the Cluster Coordinator will represent the cluster there. The Cluster Coordinator also has a duty to all partners within the cluster, to act as a representative of the cluster as a whole rather than solely as a representative of his/her particular agency³⁹.

The Cluster Coordinator is responsible for facilitating a process at the sectoral level aimed at ensuring the following:

Establishment and maintenance of effective coordination mechanisms

- Ensure appropriate coordination with national authorities to the extent the political situation allows. This will involve liaising and working with relevant government counterparts to support or complement existing coordination mechanisms. The Cluster Coordinator will either represent the cluster at sectoral meetings led by national authorities or co-chair cluster meetings with national authorities as appropriate.
- Identify and establish contact with all other relevant sector stakeholders including national and international organizations, and representatives of affected populations.

36 Ibid.

37 *The Principles of Partnership are equality, transparency, result-oriented approach, responsibility and complementarity, as endorsed by the Global Humanitarian Platform, July 2007 [see 1.13].*

38 *Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response, November 2006, page 8.*

39 *IASC Joint letter from Cluster Lead Agencies to their Directors/Representatives at Country Level, 20th October 2009.*

Invite these stakeholders to participate as partners in the work of the cluster as appropriate.

- Convene and facilitate meetings of the cluster (and/or joint meetings with another cluster), increasing or reducing their frequency as needed but being careful to avoid meeting overload. Ensure that cluster meetings are well-managed and action and results-oriented, with decisions clearly communicated to relevant cluster partners and stakeholders. Ensure that meetings are managed in line with the Principles of Partnership.
- Facilitate agreement on an efficient division of labour and the assignment of responsibilities amongst cluster partners which takes account of their comparative advantages and complementarities. Designate focal points or working groups for specific issues where necessary⁴⁰.
- Help establish and maintain appropriate inter-cluster coordination mechanisms, adapting them over time to reflect the stage of the emergency and the changing capacities and roles of local actors. Represent the cluster in inter-cluster coordination fora as appropriate.
- Work with the Country Director/Representative of the Cluster Lead Agency to ensure that arrangements are made to allow for a proper hand-over of Cluster Coordinator responsibilities at the end of a Coordinator's assignment, to ensure there is continuity and that institutional memory is maintained for the cluster as a whole.

Preparedness and capacity-building (including in the pre-emergency and post-emergency phase)

- Lead early warning, contingency planning, and emergency preparedness efforts for the cluster; ensure adequate cluster participation in inter-cluster early warning, contingency planning and emergency preparedness activities.
- Together with cluster partners, undertake capacity mapping and gap identification exercises to develop a capacity-building strategy for the sector.
- Identify training needs of cluster partners and communicate them to the Country Director/Representative of the Cluster Lead Agency.

Needs assessment, analysis, prioritization and planning

- Ensure that the cluster covers all the identified and evolving sector needs of the affected population, and not only those that relate to the specific mandate of the Cluster Lead Agency.

40 In the case of the protection cluster, Focal Point Agencies are responsible for specific technical areas and at the country level the Protection Cluster may put in place similar arrangements, where appropriate.

- Facilitate cluster needs assessments and analysis and participate in joint inter-cluster needs assessment exercises as appropriate.
- Facilitate strategy development for the cluster with linkages between disaster risk reduction, relief, recovery and development. To the extent possible, ensure the strategy complements government policies and plans.
- Ensure that the strategic operational framework of the cluster is updated regularly according to evolving needs and that it establishes indicators by which performance of the cluster can be measured.
- Ensure that cluster strategies are adequately reflected in overall country strategies such as the Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP) as well as in Flash and Consolidated Appeals.
- In terms of inter-cluster coordination, identify issues of mutual interest and identify information which (i) should be proactively shared with other clusters, and (ii) should be acquired from other clusters to ensure a more effective overall response. Identify potential areas of duplication between clusters so that they can be avoided, and identify potential gaps which may fall between clusters so that they can be addressed through the clear assignment of responsibilities.
- Inform the Country Director/Representative of the Cluster Lead Agency of any critical gaps in the response that cannot be covered by any cluster partners and that require the Cluster Lead Agency to intervene as Provider of Last Resort; advocate for the Cluster Lead Agency to take the necessary action in its capacity as Provider of Last Resort⁴¹.
- Advocate for the utilization of rights, participatory and community-based approaches in the planning and implementation of projects. Promote measures which increase accountability to affected populations and the identification of durable solutions.

Transition planning

- Depending on the specific country situation, lead on the design of appropriate transition strategies for the cluster to ensure continuity between the humanitarian response, recovery and development phases⁴² and disaster risk reduction initiatives. Ideally this will involve working closely with national counterparts to ensure a resumption of national ownership of cluster activities. It will also involve consideration of how coordination mechanisms and cluster membership should change as the humanitarian emergency subsides.

41 IASC *Operational Guidance on the concept of 'Provider of Last Resort'*, June 2008. This does not apply to IFRC.

42 More detailed guidance on the transition of humanitarian architecture is currently being developed.

Integration of cross-cutting issues

- Raise awareness of and promote the integration of agreed priority cross-cutting issues (e.g. age, environment, gender, HIV/AIDS and human rights) in cluster/inter-cluster needs assessments, analysis, planning, implementation and monitoring. Work with cross-cutting issue focal points (if they have been designated) or, if necessary, call upon global cross-cutting issue focal points to support the effective mainstreaming of these issues within the response.

Application of standards, guidelines and good practice

- Facilitate discussion and agreement on the use of common standards and tools among cluster partners. Promote awareness of and adherence to relevant policy guidelines, codes of conduct and examples of good practice by all cluster partners, taking into consideration the possible need for local adaptation both in terms of language and content.
- Ensure to the extent possible that cluster partners use common standards and tools for information collection and data management, including in needs assessments and monitoring.
- Ensure that cluster partners are aware of relevant commitments that the Government has made under international human rights and humanitarian law and promote a response which is in line with these commitments.

Information management, monitoring, evaluation and reporting

- Facilitate adequate reporting and information sharing, both within the cluster and with other clusters through inter-cluster coordination mechanisms.
- This will involve contact list management and collecting 3 or 4W information (Who/What/When/Where) from partners and ensuring it is shared with the inter-agency coordination body so that it can be processed and redistributed at the cluster level and to other stakeholders.
- Ensure that updated and relevant cluster-specific information is included in general inter-cluster reporting including common web platforms, Situation Reports and other reporting mechanisms.
- Facilitate cluster agreement on what monitoring activities will be undertaken to review the impact of the sector's humanitarian response and ensure they are implemented. Make adjustments to the overall strategy and programming as appropriate. Regularly review the functioning of the cluster and encourage an atmosphere conducive to raising and addressing concerns.
- Help facilitate real time evaluations.

Advocacy

- Together with cluster partners, identify core advocacy concerns for the sector and contribute key messages to the broader advocacy initiatives of the HC, the Cluster Lead Agency and other relevant actors.

Resource Mobilisation

- Act as a representative and facilitator for the cluster as a whole and provide leadership and strategic direction in the assessment and prioritisation of project proposals and common funding criteria for inclusion in Consolidated Appeals, Flash Appeals, CERF requests and other inter-agency funding appeals; ensure that agreed cluster strategies and priorities are adequately reflected in appeal documents;
- In line with any agreed guidance for inter-agency funding appeals, establish mechanisms for accountable and transparent financial resource allocation within the cluster. Where possible work at the inter-cluster level to promote coherence amongst clusters.

ANNEX E

Possible format for a Preliminary (“best-guess”) Scenario⁴³

Context	
Nature/cause of the crisis	
Geographic area(s) affected	
Main livelihood (and ethnic) groups; their locations and particular vulnerabilities	
Total population (breakdowns by area and population group, if available)	
Pre-crisis general food security and nutritional status (with seasonal and inter-population-group variations)	
Pre-crisis food/agriculture sector context (characteristics, strengths, weaknesses)	
Extent and probable duration of any population displacements	
Likely effects on food stocks, production and markets	
Likely impacts on:	
food stocks, livestock	
crops, fish production, forest resources	
crop/ livestock/ fisheries input systems and services (water, seed, feed systems, etc.)	
market systems and prices (for food and agricultural products)	
Probable compensatory reactions by the government, traders and others	
Probable net effects and risks for food production and supplies in the next few days, weeks, months	

43 Adapted from EFSA Handbook, first edition, WFP 2004, and Managing WHO humanitarian response in the field, WHO 2008.

Livelihoods and households' food access	
Likely impacts on:	
livelihoods, employment and income (different population groups)	
households' access to food (different population groups)	
Probable compensatory reactions:	
coping strategies of households (different population groups)	
role of community safety nets and solidarity	
role and effectiveness of existing government and other/NGO programmes	
Probable net effects (unmet needs) and risks	
Food utilization and nutrition	
Likely impacts on capacities to process and prepare food	
Likely short-term effects on nutritional status	
Extent to which existing services will be able to cope	
Probable net effects (unmet needs) and risks	

Actions required	
Immediate time-critical actions required to: (i) save/sustain lives (ii) protect livelihoods & essential systems (iii) enable early recovery	
Follow-up actions likely to be needed	

Priority aspects to be followed up in the initial assessment	
Geographic areas for which information is lacking	
Key aspects on which more data are needed to inform response decisions	

ANNEX F

Organizing Cluster/sector participation in a multi-sector IRA

- Get as many as possible of the main sector actors to attend a planning meeting together with key actors from the other sectors, on day 1 if possible, to:
 - agree the purpose/objectives and time frame for the assessment;
 - define responsibilities and timeframes for all preparatory actions;
 - adapt the standard IRA data collection format to the local context, if necessary,⁴⁴ and define how any additional data will be input and analysed (contact the cluster support unit in TCER for guidance and support, if needed); and
 - get advice on gender and other cross-cutting issues that may be critical in the local context.
- Rapidly review relevant sector *secondary data* available at national level including the FAO country profile – see IRA guidance note 2.3 especially table 2.
- Then, jointly with the other clusters:
 - assemble multi-disciplinary *field assessment teams*. Ensure they are balanced in terms of expertise and gender, and between national and international personnel - see IRA guidance note 2.4;
 - *select the areas* to be visited. Use stratified sampling to select not only areas that are believed to be particularly badly affected but also ones covering a range of different conditions and population groups that may be differently affected and face different food security/agriculture problems and risks – see IRA guidance note 2.5;
 - define the criteria and procedures to be applied by assessment teams in *selecting individual sites* to be visited within the selected areas;
 - specify the (few, key) items of data on *other sectors* that food security/agriculture members of assessment teams should collect in the absence of team members for the other sectors, and vice-versa;

44 Adaptation may be necessary if significant urban populations are involved or there are a variety of population groups (e.g. refugees, IDPs and residents). Modifications should focus on clarification, removing items that are clearly inappropriate or highly-sensitive, or adding content. The core structure of the form should be preserved.

- provide *guidance notes* (including case definitions) and organize rapid *training* – and security briefing, where needed – for all field assessment teams;
- provide field teams with available *secondary data* on the areas they will visit *before* they start field visits, so their interviews and primary data collection can be appropriately focused;
- plan *logistics* carefully and ensure that all teams have necessary permits (where needed), transport (including fuel, etc.), communications (radios and/or access to telephones), GPS (and are trained in its use), and access to accommodation (camping equipment, if necessary), water and food;
- make arrangements to receive and rapidly *collate and analyse* incoming data and reports from assessment teams, relief teams and other sources. These arrangements *must* be made in advance, as part of the planning for the assessment. Too often, analysis of data from “rapid” assessments has taken several weeks!; and
- prepare a realistic budget for the whole assessment process – including field travel and the analysis of the data – and secure funds.
- ☑ Ensure constant monitoring of and support to the field assessment teams during field work.
- ☑ Ensure arrangements for the safe receipt of reports from field teams and the prompt entry of the data into the IRA analysis tool (and arrangements for any additions to the standard IRA form to be input separately).
- ☑ Arrange for the assessment team leaders/teams to review the automated reports for each site and to insert their own comments and interpretations, and for data from any questions added to the standard IRA form to be analysed and inserted separately.
- ☑ Specify the administrative levels at which aggregate reports are required, and arrange for a multi-disciplinary group of sector-specialists and experienced generalists to:
 - review the automated aggregate reports and insert their comments and interpretations; and
 - produce the overall report and recommendations.
- ☑ Arrange rapid clearance of the overall report by all clusters (and relevant government entities where necessary) and disseminate it immediately to all food security/agriculture actors, donors and other stakeholders using email, a website, and hard copies.

ANNEX G

IPC Reference Table and Guiding Principles

Phase Classification		Key Reference Outcomes <i>Current or imminent outcomes on lives and livelihoods. Based on convergence of direct and indirect evidence rather than absolute thresholds. Not all indicators must be present for classification.</i>	Strategic Response Framework <i>Objective:</i> (1) mitigate immediate outcomes, (2) support livelihoods, and (3) address underlying causes
I A	Generally Food Secure	<p>Crude Mortality Rate < 0.5 / 10,000 / day</p> <p>Acute Malnutrition < 3 % (wh < 2 z-score)</p> <p>Starving < 20% (hage < 2 z-score)</p> <p>Food Access / Availability usually adequate (> 2,100 kcal ppp day), stable</p> <p>Dietary Diversity consistent quality and quantity of diversity</p> <p>Water Access / Avail. usually adequate (> 15 litres ppp day), stable</p> <p>Hazards moderate to low probability and vulnerability</p> <p>Civil Security prevailing and structural peace</p> <p>Livelihood Assets generally sustainable utilization (of 6 capitals)</p>	<p>Strategic assistance to pockets of food insecure groups</p> <p>Investment in food and economic production systems</p> <p>Enable development of livelihood systems based on principles of sustainability, justice, and equity</p> <p>Prevent emergence of structural hindrances to food security</p> <p>Advocacy</p>
II	Generally Food Secure	<p>Crude Mortality Rate < 0.5 / 10,000 / day USMR < 1 / 10,000 / day</p> <p>Acute Malnutrition > 2% but < 10 % (wh < 2 z-score), usual range, stable</p> <p>Starving > 20% (hage < 2 z-score)</p> <p>Food Access / Availability borderline adequate (2,100 kcal ppp day), unstable</p> <p>Dietary Diversity chronic dietary diversity deficit</p> <p>Water Access / Avail. borderline adequate (15 litres ppp day), unstable</p> <p>Hazards recurrent, with high livelihood vulnerability</p> <p>Civil Security Unstable, disruptive tension</p> <p>Coping "insurance strategies"</p> <p>Livelihood Assets stressed and unsustainable utilization (of 6 capitals)</p> <p>Structural Pronounced underlying hindrances to food security</p>	<p>Design & implement strategies to increase stability, resilience and resilience of livelihood systems, thus reducing risk</p> <p>Provision of "safety nets" to high risk groups</p> <p>Interventions for optimal and sustainable use of livelihood assets</p> <p>Create contingency plan</p> <p>Redress structural hindrances to food security</p> <p>Close monitoring of relevant outcome and process indicators</p> <p>Advocacy</p>
2	Moderately / Borderline Food Insecure	<p>Crude Mortality Rate 0.5-1 / 10,000 / day USMR 1-2 / 10,000 / day</p> <p>Acute Malnutrition 10-15 % (wh < 2 z-score), > than usual, increasing</p> <p>Disease epidemic, increasing</p> <p>Food Access / Availability lack of entitlement, 2,100 kcal ppp day via asset stripping</p> <p>Dietary Diversity acute dietary diversity deficit</p> <p>Water Access / Avail. 7.5-15 litres ppp day, accessed via asset stripping</p> <p>Displacement / Displacement emerging, diffuse</p> <p>Civil Security limited spread, low intensity conflict</p> <p>Coping "crisis strategies"; CSI > than reference, increasing</p> <p>Livelihood Assets accelerated and critical depletion or loss of access</p>	<p>Support livelihoods and protect vulnerable groups</p> <p>Strategic and complementary interventions to immediately food access / availability AND support livelihoods</p> <p>Selected provision of complementary sectoral support (e.g., water, shelter, sanitation, health, etc.)</p> <p>Strategic interventions at community to national levels to create, stabilize, rehabilitate, or protect priority livelihood assets</p> <p>Create or implement contingency plan</p> <p>Close monitoring of relevant outcome and process indicators</p> <p>Use "crisis as opportunity" to redress underlying structural causes</p> <p>Advocacy</p>
3	Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis	<p>Crude Mortality Rate 1-2 / 10,000 / day; > 2x reference rate, increasing; USMR > 2 / 10,000 / day</p> <p>Acute Malnutrition > 15 % (wh < 2 z-score), > than usual, increasing</p> <p>Disease Pandemic</p> <p>Food Access / Availability severe entitlement gap; unable to meet 2,100 kcal ppp day</p> <p>Dietary Diversity Regularly 3 or fewer main food groups consumed</p> <p>Water Access / Avail. < 7.5 litres ppp day (human usage only)</p> <p>Displacement / Displacement concentrated, increasing</p> <p>Civil Security widespread, high intensity conflict</p> <p>Coping "distress strategies"; CSI significantly > than reference</p> <p>Livelihood Assets near complete & irreversible depletion or loss of access</p>	<p>Urgent protection of vulnerable groups</p> <p>Urgently food access through complementary interventions</p> <p>Selected provision of complementary sectoral support (e.g., water, shelter, sanitation, health, etc.)</p> <p>Protection against complete livelihood asset loss and / or advocacy for access</p> <p>Close monitoring of relevant outcome and process indicators</p> <p>Use "crisis as opportunity" to redress underlying structural causes</p> <p>Advocacy</p>
4	Unrecoverable Emergencies	<p>Crude Mortality Rate > 2 / 10,000 / day; > 2x reference rate, increasing; USMR > 2 / 10,000 / day</p> <p>Acute Malnutrition > 15 % (wh < 2 z-score), > than usual, increasing</p> <p>Disease Pandemic</p> <p>Food Access / Availability severe entitlement gap; unable to meet 2,100 kcal ppp day</p> <p>Dietary Diversity Regularly 3 or fewer main food groups consumed</p> <p>Water Access / Avail. < 7.5 litres ppp day (human usage only)</p> <p>Displacement / Displacement concentrated, increasing</p> <p>Civil Security widespread, high intensity conflict</p> <p>Coping "distress strategies"; CSI significantly > than reference</p> <p>Livelihood Assets near complete & irreversible depletion or loss of access</p>	<p>Urgent protection of vulnerable groups</p> <p>Urgently food access through complementary interventions</p> <p>Selected provision of complementary sectoral support (e.g., water, shelter, sanitation, health, etc.)</p> <p>Protection against complete livelihood asset loss and / or advocacy for access</p> <p>Close monitoring of relevant outcome and process indicators</p> <p>Use "crisis as opportunity" to redress underlying structural causes</p> <p>Advocacy</p>

5	Famine / Humanitarian Catastrophe	Crude Mortality Rate > 2/ 10,000 / day (example: 8,000 / 1,000,000 / 30 days)	Critically urgent protection of human lives and vulnerable groups Comprehensive assistance with basic needs (e.g. food, water, shelter, sanitation, health, etc.) Immediate policy / legal revisions where necessary Negotiations with varied political-economic interests Use "crisis as opportunity" to address underlying structural causes Advocacy
		Acute Malnutrition > 30 % (w/ < 2 z-score) Disease Pandemic Food Access / Availability extreme entitlement gap; much below 2,100 kcal / day Water Access / Avail < 4 litres / day (human usage only) Displacement large scale, concentrated Civil Security widespread, high intensity conflict Livelihood Assets effectively complete loss, collapse	

Risk of Worsening Phase	Probability / Likelihood	Severity	Reference Process Indicators	Implications for Action
Watch	As yet unclear	Not applicable	Occurrence of, or predicted Hazard event stressing livelihoods, with low or uncertain Vulnerability Process Indicators: small negative changes	Close monitoring and analysis Review current Phase interventions
Moderate Risk	Elevated probability / likelihood	Specified by predicted Phase, and indicated by color of diagonal lines on map	Occurrence of, or predicted Hazard event stressing livelihoods, with moderate Vulnerability Process Indicators: large negative changes	Close monitoring and analysis Contingency planning Step-up current Phase interventions
High Risk	High probability: "more likely than not"		Occurrence of, or strongly predicted major Hazard event stressing livelihoods, with high Vulnerability and low Capacity Process Indicators: large and compounding negative changes	Preventative interventions with increased urgency for High Risk populations Advocacy

Guiding principles for IPC implementation with a Common interagency Approach

- The implementation of the IPC should be a consensual process facilitated by a broad interagency working group, including government and key constituencies.
- All efforts should be made to engage and build government capacity and promote ownership and strengthen the institutional process.
- Collaborating IPC agencies should strive to maintain internationally agreed-upon standards for IPC analysis, even during the development stage, so as not to lose the potential for regional and global comparison of results.
- The timing of analysis should be linked to events/critical seasons that affect food security situations. The entry point might be a multi-agency planning event.
- There should be commitment by members of inter-agency working group to multi-year process.
- The implementation of IPC processes should be demand driven by government where possible.
- The IPC can be started regardless of data availability. The initial situation analysis will be useful and improved as the process proceeds and will highlight key information gaps to be filled.
- Any data used should contain confidence rankings.
- The IPC process should comprise a mechanism for building an institutional commitment from government.
- To promote transparency, the results of IPC analysis should be made available to the public in a timely manner.
- IPC analysis should be done with technical neutrality by having broad membership in the interagency group and through a transparent process of consensus building and ensuring that group members participate according to their technical capacity.
- IPC results should be subject to an external peer review process to check quality and maintain standards.
- The IPC should be developed as an iterative learning process, in which collaborating agencies commit to document practice and lessons learned.
- The leadership of IPC processes in countries should be decided by the interagency group in-country based on both comparative advantages and responsibilities (e.g. Government leadership).
- The IPC should be used to engage/advocate with donors to make decisions according to need.

ANNEX H

Checklist for cross-cutting issues

All activities must be planned taking account of human rights, gender and environmental concerns and risks and constraints related to HIV/AIDS. The following checklist is based on key questions in the CHAP guidelines.

Human rights and protection:

- Do proposed strategies and implementation modalities assure equality of access to assistance and services for ALL population groups and adequate protection for beneficiaries and humanitarian/food security/agriculture workers?
- Might they reinforce existing patterns of discrimination or increase risks?
- Could activities or implementation modalities be modified to better assure respect for human rights and protection, especially for groups determined to be at particular risk (e.g. female-headed-households, women and men with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, adolescent boys)?
- Is there effective collaboration between the food security/agriculture and protection clusters in ensuring protection, treatment and psycho-social support for the above-listed groups at particular risk, unaccompanied children, and victims of sexual and gender-based violence?

Gender:

- Do proposed strategies and implementation modalities promote gender equality and minimize risks of sexual and gender-based violence?
- Might they increase existing inequalities?
- Could activities or implementation modalities be modified to better promote gender equality?

HIV/AIDS:

- Do proposed strategies take account of the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and minimize the risks of transmission in a culturally appropriate manner?
- Could activities or implementation modalities be modified to better provide for people suffering from HIV/AIDS and reduce risks of transmission?
- Are preventive strategies that were in place prior to the crisis being maintained?






Environment:

- Do proposed strategies and implementation modalities assure protection of the environment and natural resource base?
- Might they create additional unnecessary waste?
- Could activities or implementation modalities be modified to better protect the environment?

Psychosocial concerns:

- Do proposed strategies and implementation modalities take into account social considerations (safe aid for all in dignity, considering cultural practices and existing community resources)?

Additional guidance

-  *Cross-cutting issues - key things to know*, Cluster/Sector Leadership Training materials 2007.
-  *Health Cluster Guide*, 2009 Annex F, which summarizes the main issues in relation to these concerns.
-  *IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action*, IASC Geneva, 2006 - http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/content/documents/subsidi/tf_gender/IASC%2520Gender%2520Handbook%2520%2528Feb%25202007%2529.pdf
-  *IASC Guidelines for Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings: Focusing on Prevention and Response to Sexual Violence in Emergencies*.
-  *IASC Guidelines for HIV/AIDS interventions in emergency settings*.

ANNEX I

Materials on the accompanying CD-ROM

Key IASC documents on the cluster approach

- *Terms of Reference for Sector/Cluster Leads at the Country Level*, November 2006.
- *IASC Guidance Note on using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response*, November 2006 (in English, French, Arabic, Spanish).
- SOP: Designating leads in new emergencies, May 2007 (in English, French).
- SOP: Designating leads in ongoing emergencies, May 2007 (in English, French).
- SOP: Provider of last resort.
- *Operational Guidance for Cluster Lead Agencies on Working with National Authorities*, draft, IASC January 2009.
- *Operational Guidance on Responsibilities of sector/cluster leads & OCHA in Information Management*, draft, OCHA 2009.
- *Guidance for Inter-Cluster Coordination Groups at the Country Level*, zero draft, 2010.
- *Handbook for RCs and HCs on Emergency Preparedness and Response*, final draft, UN-OCHA 2009.
- KEY THINGS TO KNOW about integrating cross-cutting issues, October 2007.
- Contingency Planning Guidelines for Humanitarian Assistance, IASC 2007.

Other global clusters' guidance documents

- *Health Cluster Guide*, provisional version, Global Health Cluster June 2009.
- *Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster Coordination Handbook*, field review version, Global WASH CLuster January 2009.
- *Guidance Note on Early Recovery*, Cluster working group on early recovery (with UNDG-ECHA working group on transition), 2008.
- *Emergency Nutrition Toolkit*, Global Nutrition Cluster, 2008.
- *Emergency Shelter Cluster Handbook*, Global Emergency Shelter Cluster.

Widely used/referred to guidelines and tools for assessment and planning

- *Initial Rapid Assessment (IRA) tool*, version 2.2, Global Health-Nutrition-WASH clusters 2009.
- *Integrated Food Security Phase Classification*, IPC Global Partners, 2009.
- *UNDAC Field Handbook*, 5th edition, UN-OCHA 2006.
- *Livelihoods Assessment Tool Kit (LAT)*, FAO 2009.
- *Field Manual for Emergency Assessments and Response Formulation*, draft, FAO-TCE 2009.
- *Emergency Food Security Assessment Handbook*, 2nd edition, WFP 2009.
- *Guidelines for Crop and Food Security Assessment Missions*, FAO-WFP 2009.
- *Post-Disaster Needs Assessments (PDNA)*, UN-EU-World Bank.
- *Post-Conflict Needs Assessments*, UNDP.
- *Rapid Agricultural Disaster Assessment Routine (RADAR) on Agriculture*, FAO 2008, Environment and Natural Resources Series #12.

[A GIS-based model for forecasting disaster impact, used in Honduras following Hurricane Mitch in 1998]

Key guidance documents for relevant sectors/sub-sectors

Food security

[Food availability as well as food access and utilization (and stability)].

Crop production

- *Guiding Principles for Seed Provision in Response to High Food Prices*, FAO 2008(?).
[Includes seed quality standards and guidance on quality, packaging, labelling, etc. as well as general guiding principles relevant for seed relief relevant in *all* contexts: 6 pages]
- *When Disaster Strikes: a guide to assessing seed system security*, Louise Sperling, International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) Uganda and Catholic Relief Services, 2008.

[Provides clear, step-by-step guidance on assessing a crisis situation and determining whether a seed intervention could be appropriate and feasible and, if so, what form it should take. The starting point is an assessment of the nature of, and the impact of events on, the farming system. The approach is adaptable to the agriculture sector as a whole: 70 pages]

- *Towards Effective and Sustainable Seed Relief Activities*, FAO 2003.

Livestock

- *Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS)*, inter-agency LEGS Project, Practical Action Publishing 2009.

Fisheries

- *Disaster response and risk management in the Fisheries Sector*, FAO 2007 (Fisheries technical paper 479), especially Part II.

Nutrition

Protecting and Promoting Good Nutrition in Crisis and Recovery, FAO 2005.



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