Coordination performance monitoring

Scope

Monitoring coordination performance at the national and sub-national level in both sudden onset and protracted crises is necessary to ensure that clusters are efficient and effective coordination mechanisms, fulfilling the core cluster functions, meeting the needs of constituent members, and supporting delivery to affected people. It is also necessary for accountability purposes to demonstrate the added value and justify the cost of coordination.

Two elements to monitor coordination performance are elaborated in this introductory note: (1) **the Cluster activation checklist** and (2) **the Coordination performance report**. Both have been developed based on the IASC guidance to level 3 emergencies, the commitments to the principles of accountability to affected populations and the six core functions of country clusters.

The Cluster activation checklist and the Coordination performance report enable the identification of areas for support, improvement, follow up actions and document good practice. The cluster lead agency can also use the processes in support of its accountability to the Humanitarian Coordinator and national authorities.

Tool name	When applied	Why it is applied
Cluster activation checklist	At 2 weeks, 1 month and 2 months after declaration of an L3 emergency or in other contexts after the activation of clusters.	Used as performance checklist on cluster activation and implementation to manage the commitments of the cluster. The report may also be used as accountability mechanism as appropriate for the cluster lead agency/ies, national authorities, the HC and HCT.
Coordination performance report	At 3 months after the onset of an emergency and/or cluster activation, and then every six months thereafter. For existing protracted crises, used immediately and then updated every six months. Can also be applied to sectors that are operating with non-cluster coordination mechanisms.	Self-assessment for a cluster/ sector in order to improve its performance of its coordination functions; also used as an accountability mechanism as appropriate for the cluster lead agency/ies, national authorities, the HC and HCT.

Cluster activation checklist

The Cluster activation checklist is a simple tool designed to monitor progress of cluster activation and implementation after the declaration of a level 3 emergency, in line with commitments and the level 3 emergency response timeline agreed under the Transformative Agenda. The checklist can also be used in all other contexts where clusters are activated.

The checklist is completed by the cluster coordinator and it looks at the status of the process, cluster staffing, establishment of core functions, and deliverables. It can be used as both an ongoing performance checklist as well as a management and reporting tool. Updated checklists should be produced by each cluster at periods of **two weeks**, **one month** and **two months** after the declaration of a level 3 emergency or in other contexts after the activation of clusters.

Coordination performance report

The Coordination performance report is used in all humanitarian responses with activated clusters and when there is more time available for a more in-depth assessment of the *quality* of the cluster's coordination functions and production of key deliverables. If clusters are activated, it is completed **three months** after the onset of an emergency and **every six months** thereafter. In protracted crises, it is used immediately and then updated every six months. The Cluster Performance Report is also applicable to sectors that are operating with similar, non-cluster, coordination mechanisms.

The report is based on feedback collected through a consultative process, with inputs from the cluster coordinator, cluster partners (including cross-cutting issues representatives/focal points) provided through questionnaires (see below). In addition, the cluster needs to demonstrate its deliverables and make these available. Open analysis and discussion with cluster partners of the questionnaire results strengthens transparency and partnership within the cluster. Together, partners and the cluster coordinator decide on the required follow up.

The report focuses on the IASC six cluster core functions, as outlined in the IASC Coordination Reference Module, with an additional component on accountability to affected people. This is an opportunity for self-reflection by the cluster, identifying areas that are working well and those that require increased attention, raising awareness on support needed from the cluster lead agency, partners, and/or global clusters.

Use by sub-national clusters

When there are sub-national clusters, each of the hubs should be treated as a separate entity and reported against by the partners locally present in that cluster and the sub-national cluster coordinator. This is a separate exercise to that performed by the national cluster as it brings additional detail and insight.

Questionnaires for the Cluster performance report

Three different questionnaires have been developed in order to facilitate the completion of the Cluster Performance Report; two for the cluster coordinator and one for the partners. The first questionnaire is a general description of the cluster structure and participating partners to be filled out by cluster coordinators (Annex 3). Then there are two generic **self-assessment questionnaires,** one for cluster coordinators and one for partners to seek feedback on the performance of clusters at national and subnational levels. These two questionnaire are for the coordinators and for cluster partners to capture the individual agency perceptions and ask for information relating to performance around the six core functions and accountability to affected populations. The questionnaire will take around 20 minutes to complete.

The questionnaires are qualitative and generic self-assessment tools that are posted on-line to allow for anonymity of responses among cluster partners. The questionnaires can be used for different clusters, at national and sub-national level and in different settings.

The questionnaire responses will be automatically compiled for use by clusters coordinators to discuss findings with partners during a cluster meeting and to decide jointly on appropriate actions to be taken for improvement if needed, and document good practices as appropriate. The outcome of this meeting should be shared with the cluster lead agencies, national authorities, the Humanitarian Coordinator and global clusters, as appropriate.

Further information on the questionnaires is given in the accompanying explanatory note.

Complementarity of pre-existing performance tools

It is recognized that some clusters have already developed performance tools based on peer review. The tools proposed do not negate that earlier investment. While there are marked advantages in having commonality of tools and approaches, each cluster could, in theory, apply different tools to complete the Coordination Performance Report, as long as they are able to demonstrate that the results given are based on the three elements:

1. There has to be demonstration of the verifiable deliverables, making available what has been done;
2. The opinions of the cluster coordinator and cluster partners/cross-cutting issues representatives should be separately documented;
3. A cluster meeting should take place to discuss the findings of the two elements above, and the cluster coordinator and partners/cross-cutting issues representatives should reach consensus on the performance status, provide explanation for success and constraints, with follow up action mapped out, and requests for further assistance as needed.

Cluster Core Functions

The IASC agreed six cluster core functions at the country-level include[1]:

1. Supporting service delivery
- Provide a platform to ensure that service delivery is driven by the agreed strategic priorities
- Develop mechanisms to eliminate duplication of service delivery

2. Informing strategic decision-making of the HC/HCT for the humanitarian response
- Needs assessment and gap analysis (across sectors and within the sector)
- Analysis to identify and address (emerging) gaps, obstacles, duplication, and cross-cutting issues
- Prioritization, grounded in response analysis

3. Planning and strategy development
- Develop sectoral plans, objectives and indicators that directly support realization of the HC/HCT strategic priorities
- Application and adherence to existing standards and guidelines
- Clarify funding requirements, prioritization, and cluster contributions for the HC's overall humanitarian funding considerations (e.g. Flash Appeal, CAP, Emergency Response Fund/Common Humanitarian Fund, Central Emergency Response Fund)

4. Advocacy
- Identify advocacy concerns to contribute to HC and HCT messaging and action
- Undertaking advocacy activities on behalf of cluster participants and the affected population

5. Monitoring and reporting the implementation of the cluster strategy and results; recommending corrective action where necessary.

6. Contingency planning/preparedness activities in situations where there is a high risk of recurring or significant new disaster and where sufficient capacity exists within the cluster.

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[1] For additional information, please see the Coordination Reference Module (see clusters.humanitarianresponse.org).