

GUIDANCE NOTE: DEVELOPING A CO-COORDINATOR TOR

This is a generic Terms of reference (TOR) template for NRC country programme staff that co-ordinate clusters or sector working groups (SWG). It should be used as guidance when developing the Co-coordinator TOR specific to the country and cluster/SWG, taking into account:

- Needs and priorities of the cluster/SWG and its partners;
- Areas of cluster work that NRC will emphasize and the added value of NGO co-ordination;
- Co-coordinator is dedicated to the cluster/SWG or combined with an internal NRC role;
- National or provincial level co-ordination;
- Other context specific issues and needs.

For overarching principles on co-ordination arrangements, concerning purpose or objectives, time frame, roles and responsibilities (division of tasks), representation, information sharing, decision-making, reporting lines, accountability, resource allocation, dispute resolution and other issues, please refer to the Guidance note on developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Lead Agency and NRC. The country specific TOR should be based on the MOU.

A. TOR Guidance Note

How can a TOR help?

- Prioritizes activities based on a shared workload with the Coordinator to mitigate some challenges with co-ordination, such as overwhelming workload, high expectations, insufficient resources and support for cluster functions and ensuring an equal partnership.
- Captures the Co-coordinator's role and responsibilities in a realistic way, taking into account the time available, which is particularly important if the role is combined with internal NRC responsibilities.
- Reflects NRC's focus and the added value of NGO co-ordination, as NRC cannot do *all* cluster/SWG activities. For example, it may be possible to provide more secretarial support in a dedicated role, while prioritizing strategic and/or technical work in a combined role.
- Helps manage expectations to the Co-coordinator as it clarifies which specific coordination activities and outputs NRC intends to support.
- Enables, together with the NRC and the Lead Agency MOU and the cluster/SWG TOR, a common understanding of the Co-coordinator role and addresses any differences in expectations. Coherence among these documents set outs a clear direction for the Co-coordinator's work.

Who develops it?

- The TOR should be developed and approved by NRC management, i.e. the Co-coordinator's line manager and Country Director (CD). Where possible, the NRC Co-coordinator should be involved/consulted in drafting of the TOR.

- It is recommended to consult the Lead Agency and Coordinator to ensure a shared understanding of roles, responsibilities and division of labour from the outset of co-coordination. This is in line with the principles of partnership and collaboration in humanitarian coordination.
- If appropriate, the Lead Agency may also be consulted or participate in the recruitment; however, NRC should always have the final word in selection and appointment of any candidate.
- Planning for recruitment is essential to enable staff deployment at commencement of the co-coordination arrangement.

Developing a TOR

- The TOR should be developed based on the principles agreed in the MOU between the Lead Agency and NRC (see Guidance note on developing an MOU).
- Terminology: The template TOR uses 'co-coordination' and 'Co-coordinator' throughout. It is recommended to maintain such terms where possible to denote an equal partnership.
- Reporting lines should be internal to NRC. Dual reporting lines are *not* recommended.
- The generic TOR/job description distinguishes between 'core' and 'optional' activities/outputs:
 - Core activities/outputs are essential to coordination and should, where possible, be included in a TOR, even if the Co-coordinator is not dedicated to the cluster/SWG.
 - Optional activities/outputs should be added or emphasized depending on the time available for coordination (i.e. dedicated or combined role), which areas of work NRC wants to support, the added value of an NGO Co-coordinator and cluster/SWG needs. 'Optional' activities/outputs are not less important but slightly less strategic, and as they are often time consuming certain priority needs to be given first to 'mandatory' coordination activities that the cluster/SWG cannot opt out of.
- As NGO Co-coordinator, NRC should add value to the cluster/SWG. Activities and outputs that demonstrate an added value of NGO co-coordination are considered 'core' and should be prioritised when developing the specific TOR.
- Ensure a common understanding between NRC and the Lead Agency of a *shared workload between Coordinator and Co-coordinator*, in particular of secretarial/administrative tasks if the Lead Agency does not provide this support function (ref. Guidance note and template MOU).
- If appropriate and agreed with the Lead Agency/Coordinator the TOR can specify activities/outputs that the Co-coordinator is responsible for (i.e. division of labour), or responsibilities can be shared with the Coordinator.
- The Coordinator and Co-coordinator should develop a joint work plan that outlines the specific tasks and timeframes in more detail than the TOR, in consultation with cluster/SWG partners.

B. TOR template

Terms of Reference NRC Cluster/Sector Working Group Co-coordinator

I. Purpose

The purpose of the Co-coordinator role is to support and strengthen the coordination and performance of the *[insert cluster/SWG name]* and add value of NGO co-coordination by complementing the expertise, experience, capacity, competencies and skills of the Coordinator and the Lead Agency (ref. Guidance note and template MOU).

[Insert country and cluster/SWG specific purpose according to NRC's entry criteria and focus for co-ordination, e.g. strengthen and promote NGO participation and partnership, and strengthen links between provincial and national clusters and support to field level coordination]

The Co-coordinator shall promote accountability to affected populations and adherence to quality standards and best practices. The role is guided by principles of partnership, collaboration, predictability and transparency.

II. Role and Responsibilities

The Co-coordinator reports to *[insert NRC manager position]*. In the absence of the Coordinator, the Co-coordinator can take over, *ad interim*, most responsibilities in the *[insert cluster/SWG name]*.

The Co-coordinator is responsible for performing the following *[insert cluster/SWG name]* activities and outputs alongside and in collaboration with the Coordinator and Lead Agency, and in coordination with sub-groups. The Co-coordinator represents the *[insert cluster/SWG name]* jointly with the Coordinator and ensures an NGO voice in humanitarian coordination.

Meetings, information exchange and representation:

- *These are core activities/outputs because they emphasize shared workload and responsibilities with the Coordinator and the added value of NGO co-ordination through diversity in facilitation, representation and information exchange.*
 - *If the Lead Agency does not provide secretarial support, secretarial and administrative tasks should be shared between the Coordinator and the Co-coordinator.*
 - *The Lead Agency should provide information management support (ref. Guidance note and template MOU).*
- Co-facilitate *[insert cluster/SWG name]* meetings, ensuring agreement and follow up of key decisions and action points.
 - Facilitate timely information exchange and ensure that partners and provincial clusters/SWGs are updated on needs, gap analysis, strategic priorities, planning and funding processes etc.

- Ensure translation of key documents into local language.
- Carry out secretarial and administrative tasks (prepare meetings and minutes, update contact lists, collate reports/project documents etc.) as needed.
- Ensure coordination and information exchange and represent *[insert cluster/SWG name]* interests and priorities in inter-sector meetings and with other clusters/SWGs, UN, HCT, HC, donors, government counterparts and external stakeholders. Strengthen links with recovery/development partners as appropriate.

Strategic and emergency planning and reporting:

- *These are core activities/outputs because they emphasize sharing workload and responsibilities with the Coordinator.*
- *The added value of NGO co-ordination lies in being a strategic partner, ensuring diversification of cluster/SWG management and strengthening NGO participation.*
 - Facilitate and contribute to needs assessment and gap analysis, using common tools and ensuring mainstreaming of gender, age and diversity and other crosscutting issues.
 - Develop, review and coordinate implementation of, *[insert cluster/SWG name]* strategic, emergency preparedness and response, and contingency plans, in cooperation with partners, sub-groups and provincial clusters/SWGs, while promoting NGO participation.
 - Ensure that plans respond to field concerns and priority needs and contribute to objectives, with complementarity between national and provincial plans.
 - Ensure that *[insert cluster/SWG name]* analysis and priorities are adequately reflected in humanitarian country strategic plans and joint appeals (e.g. CAP/CHAP).
 - Develop joint internal work plans with the Coordinator and ensure effective implementation in consultation with partners and sub-groups.
 - Ensure adequate and common monitoring and reporting systems are in place to review progress and results of *[insert cluster/SWG name]* plans and activities.
 - Contribute to inter-sector coordination and planning.
 - *Inter-sector contingency planning should be an optional activity, done if possible.*
 - Compile and review reports on cluster/SWG partner projects (e.g. CAP and pooled funding).
 - *This should be an optional activity for the Co-coordinator if there is support staff for monitoring and reporting. If not, this workload should be shared with the Coordinator.*

Humanitarian financing and pooled funding:

- *These are core activities/outputs, except 'direct support to partners', which is optional because it requires more time.*
- *The added value of NGO co-ordination lies in increasing diversity in participation, bringing in additional experience with local partnerships and capacity development for NGO partners.*
 - Ensure strengthened *[insert cluster/SWG name]* understanding of, and participation in, joint planning, appeal and pooled funding processes (e.g. CAP/CHAP, CHF/ERF), including by provincial clusters/SWGs.

- Develop strategic priorities and project prioritization criteria, and co-facilitate (project) peer review teams, in a transparent and participatory manner.
- Provide direct support to partners, in particular national NGOs, to enhance project development and implementation and strengthen utilization of funding opportunities.
 - *This is an optional activity/output, due to the time required.*

Support to provincial clusters/SWGs and sub-groups:

- *These are core activities/outputs with added value of NGO co-coordination, demonstrated by diversification of field presence, geographical coverage and partner organisations, and improved linkages between national and provincial coordination mechanisms.*
- *These are suggested activities; it should be established at country level which links would benefit national and provincial clusters/SWG and activities needed to strengthen such links (see Guidance note on linking clusters at national and provincial level).*
 - Identify needs and opportunities for support to provincial clusters/SWGs.
 - Conduct field visits to strengthen links between national and provincial levels of the *[insert cluster/SWG name]*.
 - Ensure that common systems and data collection and management tools are in place for monitoring, reporting and information exchange on field level concerns, needs and response.
 - Provide coordination support, guidance and capacity development, including on needs assessment and analysis, strategic and emergency response planning and funding processes to provincial cluster/SWG and partners.
 - *This is an optional activity/output due to time required.*

Technical guidance and support:

- *Ensuring technical support, guidance and capacity development are core activities/outputs and demonstrate an added value of NGO co-coordination, in particular if the Co-coordinator has technical expertise. Such activities may be emphasised in sub-groups.*
- *Providing technical support, guidance and capacity development is optional because of the time required. If the Coordinator and/or Co-coordinator are not able to provide support directly, they should ensure that partners have access to this, for example through external trainings.*
 - Ensure technical support, guidance and capacity development is provided to partners and provincial clusters/SWGs.
 - Ensure mainstreaming of crosscutting issues (protection, gender, environment etc.) in *[insert cluster/SWG name]* strategy and plans.
 - *[For Protection cluster/SWG only]* Support protection mainstreaming across clusters/SWGs through tools, training and practical guidance.
 - Provide technical support, guidance and capacity development: Develop tools, standards and guidelines, and design, facilitate and/or deliver trainings and workshops, including on needs assessment, gap analysis and response planning.
 - *This is an optional activity/output due to time required.*

Outreach to international and local NGO partners:

- *These are core activities/outputs as they focus on the core of the added NGO value, i.e. strengthening and broadening NGO participation and ensuring greater inclusivity of issues, thus further enhancing the legitimacy and (advocacy) credibility of clusters.*
- *It is a 'red line' for NRC to have the possibility to reach out to NGO partners.*
 - Promote strong NGO participation in *[insert cluster/SWG name]* coordination and liaise with international and national NGO partners to identify issues of concerns, and consolidate inputs and support for joint positions.
 - Conduct outreach to individual NGOs and NGO forums outside the cluster/SWG to increase participation in coordination and identify issues of concern.

Information analysis, policy and advocacy:

- *These are core activities/outputs for Protection cluster/SWG, as advocacy is a key component of protection coordination. For other clusters/SWGs, these are optional activities.*
- *Added value of NGO co-coordination of strengthening advocacy by improving access to field level information and enhancing legitimacy and credibility of the cluster to speak on issues of concern.*
 - Support information collection and analysis, draft reports and briefs on issues of concern for sharing with partners, HCT, donors, government counterparts and other external actors.
 - Identify field level concerns for (national level) advocacy, consolidate joint policy positions among partners and coordinate and/or support advocacy initiatives.

Resource mobilization:

- *This is an optional activity, as it requires additional time to do proactive donor outreach in addition to, or outside of, pooled funding processes.*
 - Liaise with donors to mobilise resources for joint response and keep them updated on *[insert cluster/SWG name]* needs and priorities (i.e. outside of pooled funding mechanisms).

NRC responsibilities:

- *These are core activities in order to ensure information exchange, consistency in messaging and mutual benefits of co-coordination for NRC.*
 - Attend NRC (management) meetings and regularly update NRC country programme on *[insert cluster/SWG name]* activities and developments.
 - Advise NRC staff on *[insert cluster/SWG name]* strategy, priorities and project development.
 - Meet with NRC programmes and staff to gather information relevant to the *[insert cluster/SWG name]* and understand NRC advocacy concerns.
 - Represent NRC in *[insert cluster/SWG name]* peer review teams as needed.
 - *Other staff should represent NRC to allow the Co-coordinator to neutrally represent the cluster/SWG only.*

III. Professional background and competencies

- Minimum of 3-5 years experience from humanitarian work, including needs analysis and strategy development, programme/project planning and implementation (project management), cluster/sector coordination and advocacy. Field experience from complex emergencies essential.
- Sound understanding of the international humanitarian system, including humanitarian coordination, funding and leadership mechanisms.
- Coordination and leadership skills: Information sharing; facilitation of meetings and workshops; analysis and strategic planning and drafting; teamwork/working with people; communication; negotiation (conflict resolution); representation and advocacy.
- Capacity development and training skills *[Should be added if TOR includes this, ref. core/optional activities and outputs]*
- Technical knowledge and skills *[Insert as required; emphasis on technical knowledge and skills depends on NRC's focus and the Co-coordinator's responsibilities in the specific TOR]*