

COORDINATION

COORDINATION TEAM STAFFING

This section covers:

- Overview of coordination team positions, and provides example and generic ToRs
- Up-holding neutrality of the coordination team, and double-hatting

COORDINATION TEAM POSITIONS

The staffing structure of the CCCM Cluster depends on the magnitude of the crises, but at a minimum, any activated cluster must include a national Cluster Coordinator and IM Officer, provided by the Cluster Lead Agency (CLA) within the CLA's commitments¹. When applicable, the Co-Coordinating Partner should also make at least one Cluster Co-Coordinator and, as necessary and possible, other staff available.

Other positions that have been included in CCCM Cluster coordination teams include Sub-National Coordinator, Sub-National Co-Chair/Co-Coordinator, Sub-National IM Officer, area focal point, Technical Specialist, Capacity-Building Officer, Assessment Specialist, and more.

Staff can be provided to Cluster coordination teams by:

- Cluster Lead Agency
- Cluster Co-Coordinating Partner
- Cluster members who wish to support coordination capacity (e.g. for technical support such as leading Technical Working Groups, assessment / information management, sub-national coordination)
- Standby rosters, on request

The following must be in place:

- ✓ All staff positions should have a **ToR**
 - IOM and UNHCR as CLAs have standard ToRs for national Coordinator and IM Officer positions
 - For other positions you may need to draft ToRs with the contributing organization
- ✓ **Organogram & contacts** list for the coordination team should be disseminated to Cluster members and available online
- ✓ For multi-organization teams, good communication, clear lines of accountability and reporting, and defined roles and responsibilities and limits of responsibilities should be agreed

TOOLS

See Related Resources for global **generic ToRs & example ToRs** to adapt. For Cluster Co-Coordinator ToRs, use the [NGO Co-Coordination Manuals](#) template.

Responsibilities of the main functions are²:

- *Coordinator: A person appointed by the CLA to coordinate the day-to-day work of the cluster, including ensuring the fulfilment of the cluster's six core functions and accountability to affected people. The responsibilities of the coordinator are detailed in ToRs. S/he reports to the CLA's Country Representative/Director (or delegate) and is accountable to cluster members and affected people. While*

¹ IOM Emergency Manual & UNHCR Emergency Handbook, both available online (see References below)

² GCCG (2023) *Country-Level Cluster Terms and Definitions*

the CLA may provide additional staffing, this dedicated position – along with the IM officer – is one of two minimum staff requirements of the CLA and is fundamental to the effective functioning of the cluster.

- *Information Management Officer: A person appointed by the CLA to establish, operate and maintain information systems for strategic and operational decision-making, including cluster member reporting, data analysis, gap identification, severity mapping, cluster member mapping and other cluster information products. The IM officer reports to the cluster coordinator. While the CLA may provide additional staffing, this dedicated position – along with the cluster coordinator – is one of two minimum staff requirements of the CLA and is fundamental to effective functioning of the cluster.*
- *Co-coordinator: A person appointed by the CCP to support the day-to-day work of the cluster in collaboration with the cluster coordinator. The co-coordinator reports to the Cluster Co-Coordinating Partner's Country Representative/Director (or delegate). The responsibilities of the co-coordinator, which is normally a dedicated function, are detailed in ToRs. The relationship (and reporting lines) between the cluster coordinator and co-coordinator varies among CLAs and Cluster Co-Coordinating Partners; it is recognized as good practice that the division of responsibilities and ways of working between the coordinator and co-coordinator are defined in a joint workplan and are governed by the Principles of Partnership. It also is recognized as good practice that the co-coordinator is officer-in-charge on response coordination matters when the coordinator is absent; administrative and other CLA-specific matters are handled by staff from the CLA.*
- *Subnational Coordinator or Focal Point: A person identified by the CLA or by Cluster Co-Coordinating Partner in consultation with the CLA to coordinate the work of and/or provide information management support to a cluster in a specific subnational location. S/he reports to the hiring organization and on cluster issues, to the national-level cluster coordinator. A subnational coordinator or focal point can be a full-time dedicated position or a part-time role carried out by staff based in the area.*

UPHOLDING NEUTRALITY OF THE COORDINATION TEAM

The essence of cluster coordination is anchored around providing neutral and impartial coordination, and being able to operate independently from, but with strong support of, the CLA and Cluster Co-Coordinating Partner.

Regardless of which organization employs coordination team staff and whether it is at global, regional, national or subnational levels, all members of the team have an over-riding responsibility to the Cluster members and must act as a neutral body working for the best interest of the CCCM Cluster as a whole. Cluster staff must not prioritise the interests of the CLA or Cluster Co-Coordinating Partner or prioritize the interests of UN agencies over NGOs or vice versa. If you have worked in an operational role for your organization before taking on Cluster responsibilities, it might feel difficult at first to switch to feeling a primary responsibility to the Cluster rather than to your organization!

Structures that promote neutrality of a Cluster coordination team include:

- ✓ Ensuring staff are dedicated to coordination with no operational responsibilities, avoiding double-hatting especially at national level wherever possible
- ✓ The Cluster Coordinator and Co-Coordinator report directly to their organization's head of country office (e.g. to the Country Representation / Chief of Mission), not to an operational manager
- ✓ The CLA and Cluster Co-Coordinating Partner organisation should each be represented in CCCM Cluster meetings and the SAG by an operational staff member not by the coordination team. Coordination staff should not be expected to represent their organizations externally
- ✓ The coordination team sitting together in an appropriate and well-equipped office space,

Practical day-to-day actions a coordination team can take include:

- ✓ Always using CCCM Cluster templates, logos, and branding not organizational branding (or promote use of cluster partner logos in the in appropriate products)
- ✓ All products (IM, communication, advocacy products, etc.) should reflect the inputs and interests of the CCCM Cluster as a whole and not focus on or privilege the CLA or Cluster Co-Coordinating Partner above other Cluster members
- ✓ Listing all Cluster members on products where appropriate
- ✓ Not wearing visibility items from the CLA / Cluster Co-Coordinating Partner (except for security reasons)
- ✓ Hosting meetings in neutral locations that are convenient and accessible for all Cluster members

DOUBLE-HATTING

'Double-hatting' is where a person performs a cluster role alongside an organizational operational role. **The global CCCM Cluster recommends that Cluster coordination staff at national level should be dedicated full-time to the Cluster.** However, at sub-national or area- level having full-time coordination staff might not be necessary or feasible. For example, a CCCM programme manager might double-hat as a CCCM Cluster area focal point, with 50% of their time dedicated to coordination and 50% to the implementation of their organization's programmes. **Double hatting should not compromise the neutrality of the person when they represent the cluster.**

What are potential problems with double hatting?

- Lack of clear differentiation between Cluster and organizational functions and responsibilities might lead to competing conflict of interest between the organization the staff is recruited by and the cluster
- Perception that the CLA or Cluster Co-Coordinating Partner interests are being prioritized over CCCM partner interests, resulting in distrust and reduced engagement of CCCM partners
- Lack of dedicated time or focus on coordination activities

If a position has to be 'double-hatted', how can it be most effective?

- ✓ Specific coordination responsibilities should be included in the staff member's ToR and performance appraisal, agreed by the head of country office and their direct line manager, including time to be allocated to their coordination tasks and how lines of reporting and accountability function
- ✓ Ensure double-hatted coordination staff have a good understanding of the Cluster approach, and how they can aim for impartiality in their Cluster role
- ✓ Ensure line managers have a good understanding of the Cluster approach and the importance of Cluster representation being perceived as neutral, so they are able to support and create space for the staff member's coordination responsibilities
- ✓ Be very clear when the staff member is speaking representing the Cluster on behalf of CCCM partners, and when they are speaking representing their organization
- ✓ Another person should represent the CLA/Cluster Co-Coordinating Partner at meetings, where possible
- ✓ If funding allocations are being discussed, another person **must** represent the CLA/Cluster Co-Coordinating Partner to avoid conflict of interest

When a Cluster has **shared leadership with government authorities** at national or sub-national level and a government staff member double-hats, some (although, perhaps not all) of the above considerations will also apply. The implications and practicalities of double-hatting should be discussed between the CLA and government body during the establishment of shared leadership, to ensure a mutual understanding of the expectations of staff performing coordination roles.

Related Resources

Title	Type	Language	Date
IASC Generic ToR for Cluster Coordinators	Template	English	2013
GCCCM Generic Coordinator ToR	Template	English	2014
GCCCM Generic IM Officer ToR	Template	English	2014
Cluster Co-Coordinator ToRs, NRC Co-Coordination Manual	Example	English	2013
Co-Coordinator ToR example – Yemen	Example	English	2021
Co-Coordinator ToR example – Ethiopia	Example	English	2021
Co-Coordinator ToR example – Burkina Faso	Example	French	2021
Sub-National ToR – State Focal Point - Somalia	Example	English	2021
Sub-National ToR – State Co-Chair – Iraq	Example	English	2020
RCA Sous-Cluster TdR	Example	French	2021
Secondment ToR REACH - Iraq	Example	English	2022

References & further reading

- IASC (2015), [IASC Reference Module on Cluster Coordination at the Country Level](#)
- Global Health Cluster (2020) [Health Cluster Guide – A Practical Handbook](#)
- IASC (2010) [Generic Terms of Reference for Cluster Coordinators at the Country Level](#)
- ALNAP, (Clarke PK, Campbell L.) [Exploring coordination in humanitarian clusters](#), 2015
- [IOM Emergency Manual](#), Camp Coordination and Camp Management
- [UNHCR Emergency Handbook](#), Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster (IASC)