

STRATEGIC PLANNING

CCCM CLUSTER RESPONSE STRATEGY

The section covers:

- CCCM Response Strategy overview
- Steps for developing a CCCM Response Strategy
- Consultation and participation in strategy development
- For information on developing a response framework (logframe) and monitoring plan, see [Toolkit Section 6. Response Monitoring & Reporting](#)

This guidance focuses on the development of a CCCM Response Strategy but is relevant to any strategy you might develop – e.g. on capacity-building or localization. You can find examples of strategies on specific topics in the relevant sections of this Toolkit.

PRINCIPLES OF STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The **process** of developing a strategy is as important as the end document produced. A CCCM strategy must be **needs-based, adapted to the context**, and based on **consultation** with Cluster partners and other key stakeholders including affected communities. These actors should be engaged with the Cluster in analysing needs and risks and developing the strategic approach together.

A well-run strategy development process should result in a **common understanding of priorities**, a **joint vision** of what CCCM actors aim to achieve, and collective agreement of **what is needed to deliver a quality response** while mitigating and preventing protection risks. This will establish the framework for the strategy implementation period.

CCCM RESPONSE STRATEGY OVERVIEW

CONTENT

All CCCM Clusters **must have a CCCM Response Strategy in place** that guides the implementation of CCCM response. This is agreed by Cluster partners and other key stakeholders and it provides an overarching framework, a vision for the response, and guidance on prioritisation of activities.

A CCCM Response Strategy – and the process of developing it – will:

1. **Analyse the situation, risks, and needs relating to CCCM**
2. **Identify CCCM priorities**
3. **Define objectives and outline a plan of action for CCCM response**
4. **Develop monitoring mechanisms for the CCCM response**

A CCCM RESPONSE STRATEGY SHOULD:

- ✓ Engage with relevant government counterparts during the planning process to ensure government buy-in and leadership
- ✓ Be developed in consultation with CCCM partners and key stakeholders
- ✓ Align with the overall strategic objectives and priorities of the humanitarian response, including HC/HCT protection priorities to advance the centrality of protection
- ✓ Link with responses of other Clusters
- ✓ Consider relevant government policies and objectives
- ✓ Ensure active engagement, **inputs and feedback from affected communities**

- ✓ Include how cross-cutting issues such as gender, GBV, age and disability inclusion, environment, protection mainstreaming will be addressed in the response
- ✓ Aim to ensure and support quality of the CCCM response. Take into account the capacity of CCCM actors and include plans for capacity-building if necessary
- ✓ Include contingency planning for the response
- ✓ Include actions to support localization, as relevant
- ✓ Consider longer-term response goals or eventual transition plans, even during emergency situations
- ✓ Have continuity with and build on existing response and expertise
- ✓ Consider any challenges to implementation and how these might be addressed
- ✓ Include plans for how the Strategy is communicated, and advocacy on any key issues

CCCM RESPONSE STRATEGY & THE HRP

The CCCM Response Strategy should be a separate document to the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), where these are in place, although it must be aligned with them.

What is the difference? The HNO and HRP are designed to outline inter-sectoral needs and response and contain sectoral chapters which outline in brief the sectoral needs analyses and response plans. The CCCM Response Strategy is more detailed and specific to CCCM, describing in more depth the technical aspects of CCCM response. However, the CCCM Response Strategy must be aligned with the HRP's inter-sectoral priorities, Strategic Objectives, and HC/HCT protection priorities. The CCCM HNO and HRP chapters should reflect the CCCM needs, and planned activities described in the Response Strategy.

What is the process? In most situations, it is usually a good idea to develop the CCCM Response Strategy to the same timeline as the HNO/HRP. This is likely the most efficient use of your time, meaning one CCCM needs analysis process, and one response planning process is carried out, to produce complementary documents. This also enables your CCCM needs analysis to inform inter-sectoral analysis, and for inter-sectoral and other Clusters' analysis to inform CCCM planning. Depending on the requirements of the HNO in your context, a CCCM Response Strategy needs analysis could include additional data and information sources than the HNO. For example, taking into consideration qualitative as well as quantitative data.

In brief: the HRP and HNO CCCM chapters are summary documents, and the CCCM Response Strategy is the full document that will inform your objectives and activities moving forward.

For more information on developing an HNO and HRP, see [Toolkit Section 5. Humanitarian Programme Cycle](#).

TIME PERIOD

How long should the strategy cover? While a one-year CCCM Response Strategy is the most common if it is developed to the same timeline as the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), some Clusters may wish to develop multi-year strategies, which can then be updated regularly. Where you can, try to build on existing materials and previous strategies for consistency of response approach and to avoid 'reinventing the wheel'.

What about a new emergency? In a **new emergency** response, you will usually need to quickly develop a CCCM Response Strategy or a CCCM Emergency Response Plan, sometimes alongside developing the CCCM component of an emergency funding appeal. In this situation, the Strategy might only cover the first months of a response, with a needs analysis likely based on the quickly available data and information, rather than on comprehensive assessments. The Strategy template and this guidance should still be used, but a light process and short document are likely to be most appropriate, which you can then update as the response evolves and new data becomes available.

MERGED CLUSTERS

Merged clusters, e.g. a Shelter/NFI-CCCM Cluster, are strongly discouraged. If this is a scenario that is being discussed during a cluster activation stage, please reach out to the Global Cluster Lead Agencies for further guidance.

In the case where there is already a merged Cluster, separate HNO and HRP chapters should be drafted for each sector. For a cluster strategy, either two separate strategies can be developed, or one strategy document written covering both sectors which has separate sub-objectives and activities in the response framework/logframe. The decision for how to develop the response strategy should depend on the extent of activities, preferences of Cluster partners, and capacity of the cluster.

ROLE OF THE CLUSTER LEAD AGENCY (CLA)

Senior management of the CLA and any Co-Coordinating Partner organization should be kept well-briefed by the Cluster Coordinator or Co-Coordinator on the process of strategy development. Buy-in of the CLA to the response strategy is necessary, particularly where the CLA is expected to act as provider of last resort. It also ensures that senior management can represent and support the CCCM Cluster and the strategy as needed in higher-level forums, for example in the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT).

The CLA should ensure the participation of a technical expert in the process of developing the strategy – usually people who are already actively engaged in the agency’s regular participation in the Cluster and as a SAG member.

CONSIDERING PARTNER CAPACITY & QUALITY OF RESPONSE

A response strategy must be feasible to actually deliver – taking into account partners’ logistical capacities, geographic coverage, and technical capacities to ensure that a **quality** response is delivered. It might be useful to include capacity-building or training plans within the Cluster Response Strategy, and/or to plan to develop technical guidelines or country-specific standards along with Cluster partners, to support all partners to be able to deliver a quality response. See [Toolkit Section 8 – Technical Guidance & Standards](#) for reference as needed. The CCCM Cluster’s [Capacity-Building Working Group](#) can also be a support.

CCCM RESPONSE STRATEGY & CENTRALITY OF PROTECTION

In line with the [IASC Protection Policy](#), the strategy should demonstrate what action CCCM actors and the CCCM Cluster will take to address, mitigate, and prevent critical protection risks or threats and how implementation will be monitored. Critical protection risks or threats might be identified as priorities by the HCT in their protection strategy, in the HRP’s centrality of protection Strategic Objectives, and through the Cluster’s own analysis. This entails identifying who is at risk, where, and from what or whom, considering the specific vulnerabilities that underpin these risks for all affected population groups, relevant to CCCM activities. The Protection Cluster should be producing regular [protection analysis updates](#) providing a useful evidence base for key protection risks identified, groups most affected and where, and human rights affected.

In addition, as part of the response planning process, a **Protection Risk Assessment** (PRA) should be done by the CCCM Cluster. The PRA should be straightforward and operational. Prepared by the Cluster coordination team, in consultation and with inputs from Cluster members, it should be shared with Cluster members and used to inform strategic planning processes. See [Toolkit Section 9.1 Protection mainstreaming](#) for more explanation and a template that you can adapt and use.

The CCCM Response Strategy should demonstrate how the CCCM response will address these risks – clearly articulating roles and responsibilities of CCCM partners and the Cluster in contributing to protection outcomes, which should also be incorporated into the HRP. The affected population should be actively involved throughout the process.

To assist in integrating centrality of protection into the CCCM Response Strategy, Cluster Coordinators can seek the support of the national Protection Cluster and other protection advisors to the HC/HCT and refer to the Global Protection Cluster’s [Checklist on incorporating Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle](#).

STEPS TO DEVELOP A CCCM RESPONSE STRATEGY

PARTNER PARTICIPATION & ENDORSEMENT In addition to holding consultations (see below), the following can help encourage CCCM partner ownership and buy-in:

- Agree the timeline and workplan with the Cluster’s Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) and Cluster members, to **encourage good participation of partners** throughout the process.
- Draw on CCCM partner expertise to add contextual understanding to the needs analysis and to develop activities.
- Ensure to make space for inputs from local/national CCCM actors
- Include time for CCCM partners to review and input to documents
- The Cluster SAG must review and endorse final documents.

If your Cluster doesn’t have a SAG, consider if you need to form one to support the strategy development process. If the Cluster membership is too small to have a separate SAG, then Cluster members should perform the responsibilities of a SAG for review and endorsement. See [Toolkit Section 1.4 Cluster Governance & Structure](#) for more information on SAG establishment.

EXAMPLE STEPS

Example steps to develop a CCCM Response Strategy and an HNO / HRP:

Strategy development actions	HNO / HRP – specific actions
Preparation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan ahead: HRP and HNO processes can be busy for Cluster teams so be sure to start early • Brief CCCM partners and key stakeholders on the process and reason for the strategy development • Review, even if briefly, existing documents and guidance, so you have a starting point • Agree and document a workplan and timeline 	
1. Analyse the humanitarian situation and needs relating to CCCM	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan your needs analysis: identify what indicators will be used to analyse CCCM needs, data and other information required, and data sources (whether existing or planned assessments) • If sufficient data will not be available from existing CCCM or multi-sector assessments, consider conducting a CCCM needs assessment • If there are gaps in data and not enough time to conduct new assessments, rapid stakeholder surveys on needs and capacities can help provide a quick situational understanding 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cluster input to multi-sector needs assessment (e.g. MSNA)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a preliminary analysis of CCCM situation and needs (data sources might include needs assessments, secondary data review, stakeholder surveys on needs & capacity, community feedback reports, etc.) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation! (E.g. needs analysis / validation workshop) with CCCM partners and key stakeholders: review data and preliminary analysis findings, add qualitative analysis from expert knowledge, and prioritise CCCM needs 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate feedback from consultations into CCCM needs analysis • Calculate target population (for an HNO: conduct quantitative sectoral analysis and calculate people-in-need) 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft HNO CCCM chapter • SAG review & endorse HNO

2. Identify CCCM priorities	
3. Define objectives and outline a plan of action for CCCM response	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation! (e.g. response planning workshop) with CCCM partners and key stakeholders: prioritise CCCM response, agree overall CCCM objectives, agree scope of planned activities • Ensure alignment with overall humanitarian priorities and other cluster/sector responses • Draft the Response Framework (planned objectives, activities, and indicators) • Calculate population to be targeted by CCCM activities 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculate financial requirement (cost)
4. Develop monitoring mechanism for CCCM response	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree indicators to monitor CCCM response • Develop a monitoring plan (how the CCCM response will be monitored, what data is used, how and when partners report, how the Cluster uses this data) 	
Finalize documents for publication	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft CCCM Response Strategy document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft CCCM HRP chapter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate for CCCM partners' input 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAG review and endorsement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAG review and endorsement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate to key stakeholders including CCCM partners, government counterparts, donors, other clusters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit for inclusion in HRP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider how the Strategy is communicated and how to address issues requiring advocacy 	

CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION

Participation of CCCM partners and active engagement of affected communities in the whole process of development of a strategy is vital to **build consensus for the implementation of response**.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Key stakeholders for strategy development might include:

- CCCM partners
- Government / local authorities
- Cluster Lead Agency and Co-Coordinating Partner organizations
- Affected communities
- Other clusters/sectors and inter-sectoral actors
- Donors
- Technical specialists, depending on the response (e.g. Gender Advisor, specialist age or disability organizations, HLP specialist, IM actors)
- Development / durable solutions actors You might also wish to engage other stakeholders e.g academia, private sector, diaspora groups.

Why include non-CCCM actors? Inviting other Cluster/Sector Coordinators, technical specialists, and IM actors will help:

- Encourage linkages between different sectoral response plans
- Utilize expertise of other technical specialists
- Capture a range of information and data in needs analysis consultations

Why engage donors when they can just read the final document? It is strategic to engage with donors throughout the year, especially given that donor funding cycles (when partners must submit project proposals, and when funding decisions are made) are set by donor governments, and don't usually coincide with the release of the HRP. For strategy development, it can be strategic to engage donors in the process for advocacy and political reasons, as well as financial reasons: helping to ensure donors have a good understanding and buy-in to the CCCM response planning, which may in turn support partners in their engagement with donors.

AAP: ENGAGING AFFECTED COMMUNITIES IN STRATEGIC PLANNING

How can we meaningfully engage affected communities in a national strategy process? When a response aims to support hundreds of thousands of people, it can be daunting to try to include community voices in planning processes.

The basic requirement – and a good starting point – is to ensure to use existing sources e.g. from assessments or community feedback mechanisms to *actually* inform how activities are designed:

- ✓ Review findings from any specific assessments on accountability to affected populations (AAP)
- ✓ Engage with inter-sectoral initiatives on community engagement to use their expertise
- ✓ Compile and review feedback received through Community Feedback Mechanisms – particularly feedback that focuses on appropriateness of activities and quality of response
- ✓ Ensure the CCCM needs analysis is based on data collected from affected communities, and that assessments give respondents the opportunity to identify their own priorities – and actually use these to inform response planning
- ✓ Consider using participatory methodologies for assessments, as well as representative household surveys
- ✓ Ensure needs assessments sample for age, gender, and specific vulnerable groups – and that analysis is done by these groups
- ✓ Include AAP indicators in CCCM assessments (see [AAP indicators developed for MSNAs](#) by REACH and the IASC AAP PSEA Task Team)
- ✓ Take into account communities' future intentions in the design of CCCM interventions

As well using these secondary sources, engagement with community representation structures and community committees should inform at least a part of CCCM planning.

For example, where CCCM actors are responding in a few large camps with community representation structures to use these for consultations, or by working with CCCM partners to facilitate community input to design of a specific activity. Other tools used by CCCM actors, such as Safety Audits or community impact projects, can also inform strategy development if available. The scenario that should be aimed for, is to directly seek community inputs to strategic planning processes:

SOMALIA – COMMUNITY INPUTS & CONSULTATION FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

Each year as part of the process of developing annual CCCM strategic planning for the CCCM Cluster Response Strategy and HNO/HRP, the Somalia CCCM Cluster conducts **two consultation processes**: the '**local knowledge tool**' and **satisfaction surveys**.

The 'local knowledge tool' aim is to enable displaced communities' views and inputs to be directly taken into consideration in CCCM strategic planning processes. Information is collected by CCCM partners from communities living in IDP sites through Focus Group Discussions. The tool is designed by the Cluster and CCCM partners, conducted using Kobo Collect in the local language. Participants provide feedback on which CCCM activities have been well received, ideas on which activities they would like to see CCCM actors enhance or improve, and feedback on cross-cutting issues. The data is then analysed by the CCCM Cluster and used by the Cluster and CCCM partners.

Satisfaction surveys are also conducted each year, to inform strategic planning processes. Two surveys are done: with households and with partners. They are monitoring tools for the implementation of CCCM activities, aiming to understand at organizational level what initiatives are working or not working, and what

adjustments can be made, with a focus on community engagement, coordination, and accountability. They complement the Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring (see [Toolkit Section 1.10 Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring](#)) also done each year.

The **household satisfaction survey** is conducted with individuals living in IDP sites, initially by CCCM partners and later by third-party monitoring. The **partner satisfaction survey** is done at sub-national level, inviting inputs from stakeholders that coordinate with CCCM Cluster coordination at state level, and service providers who coordinate with CCCM partners at site level. It focuses on coordination, information-sharing, and any improvements needed in understanding of CCCM.

A **strategy review workshop** is held by the Cluster each year, where findings from the local knowledge tool and satisfaction surveys are discussed, and strategic direction is agreed. Outputs are incorporated into the CCCM Response Strategy and HNO/HRP.

These efforts to meaningfully include community input to strategic planning processes sit alongside the Somalia CCCM Cluster's efforts on progressing localization initiatives, which include an objective to expand the integration of local knowledge in the CCCM strategy approach. See [Toolkit Section 9.7 Localization](#).

PLANNING CONSULTATIONS

Consultation with CCCM partners and other key stakeholders is a vital part of strategic planning. You might choose to bring CCCM partners and stakeholders together in workshops or hold smaller group or sub-national consultations. The consultation process should be a part of the strategy development timeline/workplan agreed with the Cluster SAG.

Considerations for how you plan consultation processes include:

- Number of CCCM partners
- Scale of CCCM activities
- Geographic locations and any sub-national coordination structures of the response
- Languages used
- What governmental or local authority leadership and participation can be expected
- If consultations can be held in person or online

For example, you might want to hold consultations at sub-national level as well as national level, hold a series of smaller group consultations rather than workshops, or bring partners and stakeholders together one time to combine needs analysis and response planning.

Consultation with government counterparts is particularly important. Depending on the scale of the response you may wish to do this at national or sub-national level. Government consultations can take different forms, e.g.: co-leading strategy development, workshop participation, or in bilateral meetings.

See [Toolkit Section 1.7 How to be an effective Cluster Coordinator](#) for a tipsheet on running successful meetings, also relevant to facilitating workshops.

TIPS FOR CONSIDERING LOCALIZATION IN STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Actions that could be taken to ensure local/national humanitarian actors are deliberately and specifically engaged in strategy development could include:

- ✓ Holding consultation processes in local/national languages
- ✓ Holding consultations and workshops in accessible locations and/or funding travel
- ✓ Facilitating workshops specifically for local/national humanitarian actors, to encourage participation
- ✓ Translating not just the final CCCM Response Strategy but also supporting documents (e.g. communication on the workplan) into local/national languages
- ✓ Providing information to local/national actors on the role of the Cluster and partners in CCCM Response Strategy development, what benefits it has to CCCM partners, and relationship to HNO and HRP processes

- ✓ Encouraging participation in all parts of the process, e.g. participation in needs analysis workshops and contribution to survey design, not just sharing of data
- ✓ Inviting local/national actors to share best practices to inform CCCM response planning
- ✓ Building a localization approach into the response plan, and include supportive activities if needed that are identified with local/national actors e.g. capacity-building or mentoring
- ✓ Capturing localization data in monitoring tools (e.g. capacity-building efforts, analysis of funding flows, which local/national actors are delivering response and where)

DEVELOPING A RESPONSE FRAMEWORK/LOGFRAME AND MONITORING PLAN

See [Section 6. Response Monitoring & Reporting](#) for detail on how to develop a response framework / logframe and a cluster monitoring plan and set up partner reporting.

A template for a response framework / logframe can be found in the CCCM Response Strategy Template in Related Resources below.

Related Resources

Title	Type	Language	Date
CCCM Response Strategy Template	Template	English	2023
CCCM Response Strategy, Ethiopia-Tigray – Emergency Phase	Example	English	2021
CCCM Response Strategy, Somalia – Full Strategy	Example	English	2023
CCCM Response Strategy, Mozambique-Beira – Early recovery & CCCM Exit	Example	English	2019
CCCM Response Strategy, RCA	Example	French	2021
Local Knowledge Survey Tool – Somalia	Example	English	2021

References & further reading

- [IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms](#), July 2021
- [IASC Operational Guidance For Cluster Adaptation \(Draft\)](#), 2011
- [Inter-Agency Toolkit on Localisation in Humanitarian Coordination](#), 2022
- Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream, [Guidance notes on coordination](#), May 2020
- Education Cluster, [Guide to Developing Education Cluster Strategies](#), 2018
- Education Cluster, [Strategy Template Instructions](#), 2017
- Education Cluster, [Summary Guide to Developing Education Cluster Strategies](#), 2018
- Education Cluster, [AAP Checklist from Global Education Cluster Strategy Package](#), 2017
- [Global Nutrition Cluster Handbook](#), 2013
- Health Cluster Guide, [A Practical Handbook](#), 2020