

HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMME CYCLE

OVERVIEW OF THE HPC

This section covers:

- Introduction to the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC)
- CCCM Cluster Response Strategy, role of the Cluster Lead Agency, guidance on merged clusters
- Mainstreaming cross-cutting issues & centrality of protection

WHAT IS THE HPC?

ELEMENTS OF THE HPC

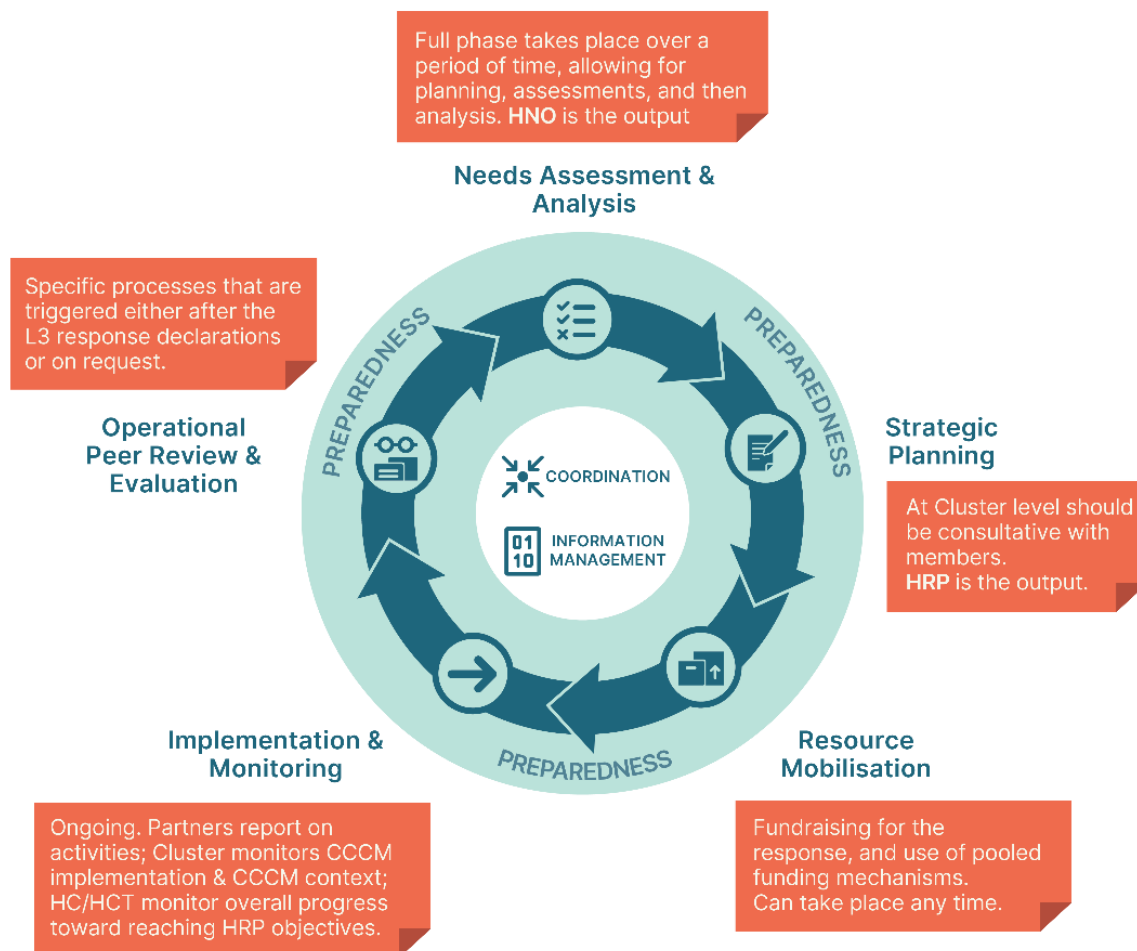
The Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) is the term given to the tools and processes that are designed to assist the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) prepare, prioritise, steer, and monitor the collective humanitarian response. It is expected that each individual organization's response should "fit together and contribute to the overall results", and that the HPC should influence programming and resource allocations of all actors.¹ The *Humanitarian Needs Overview* (HNO) and *Humanitarian Response Plan* (HRP) are part of the HPC.

There are five elements to the HPC, which take place in order. A sixth element of emergency response preparedness should be in place throughout, and the HPC is dependent on effective coordination and information management. OCHA is responsible for coordinating the overall process.

The HPC can take place over two timelines:

- **Quickly**, after sudden onset crisis / escalation of crisis see [Toolkit Section 5.2 Flash Appeals](#)
- **Annually**, to a regular cycle for annual or multi-year planning in protracted crises

¹ IASC (2015) *IASC Reference Module for the Implementation of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle*



For more information on Operational Peer Reviews and Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations (IAHE), see [IASC Reference Module for the Humanitarian Program Cycle](#).

THE ANNUAL HPC

The HPC for annual or multi-year planning in protracted crises is the ongoing cycle each year that produces the HNO and HRP. The calendar for the HPC is set at country level by the HC with the HCT, although there are suggested overall timeframes that many countries follow. A global appeal is launched in December each year, with a Global HNO and Global HRP, compiling needs and requirements from country-level plans.

MID-YEAR REVIEWS

In some responses, a mid-year review is conducted – usually if the context has significantly changed since the HRP was developed. The aim is to make sure that response activities and indicators are still relevant, or if they need adjustment. It is a much lighter process than a full HNO/HRP development, although follows the same logic: a review of the need analysis to determine any change in humanitarian need and to take into account new analysis, and adjustment to the strategic response plan.

CCCM CLUSTERS & THE HPC

ROLE OF THE CLUSTER LEAD AGENCY

Senior management of the Cluster Lead Agency (CLA) and the Cluster Co-Coordinating Partner should be kept well-briefed by the Cluster Coordinator or Co-Coordinator on the Cluster's work within the HPC. This is

particularly important for the needs assessment and analysis phase (all the work leading up to the HNO), and on the strategic planning phase (developing the strategy and its costing, as well as the HRP draft).

Buy-in of the CLA to all stages of Cluster HNO and HRP development is necessary, particularly where the CLA acts as provider of last resort. It also ensures that senior management from the CLA and the Co-Coordinating agency 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 strategy – usually the person who is already actively engaged in regular participation in the Cluster and as a SAG member.

CCCM CLUSTER RESPONSE STRATEGY

In addition to contributing to the HRP, a CCCM Cluster must have a CCCM Cluster Response Strategy in place. This is a separate document to the HNO and HRP, although it must be aligned with them. See [Toolkit Section 4.1 CCCM Cluster Response Strategy](#).

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 and Strategic Objectives, and 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.

MERGED CLUSTERS

Merged Clusters are not recommended for CCCM coordination. However, where they do exist, they should have separate sectoral chapters in the HNO and HRP. So, a merged Shelter/CCCM Cluster will need to do the analysis and planning to produce a Shelter chapter and a CCCM chapter. Depending on the structure of your Cluster, you might choose to do the consultation with partners separately or jointly.

MAINSTREAMING CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

REQUIREMENTS

Each Cluster, and the overall response, is expected to consider cross-cutting issues when developing the response plan. HCTs sometimes set specific cross-cutting issues as priorities for a response, so you might be expected to put particular focus on one or more issues in the eventual CCCM chapter narrative. The HRP template includes specific sections now on some cross-cutting issues that you might be requested to input to the drafting of, as well as including them in the CCCM chapter.

You should consider these cross-cutting issues at all stages of the HPC:

- **Needs assessment and analysis & HNO drafting** – is the right data being collected to be able to understand these issues and needs of specific populations? E.g. gender, age and disabilities data, inclusion of questions on access to information and complaints mechanisms?
- **Strategic planning & HRP drafting** – how are these issues going to be focused on or addressed in the CCCM response?
- **Implementation and monitoring** – will the Cluster monitor either the context or activities that specifically relate to cross-cutting issues?

Cross-cutting issues you need to consider include the following.

- Protection mainstreaming
- Age, gender, and diversity – including disability
- GBV and child protection
- Accountability to affected people
- Environment
- And, localization: are local and national actors being fully included in assessment, analysis, and strategy development, and appropriately supported during implementation?

See Related Resources for Tipsheets on gender, disability inclusion, localization, and GBV risk mitigation in HNO and HRP processes. See [Toolkit Section 9. Cross-Cutting Issues](#) for more information on each issue.

MAKING MAINSTREAMING WORK

‘Mainstreaming’ can sometimes be seen as a ‘checkbox’ exercise, particularly when writing an HNO and HRP. However, the concepts are vitally important to ensure equitable access to services and inclusion of all individuals, and to identify and address risks and barriers specific groups or individuals face.

Use this emphasis on cross-cutting issues to think with CCCM actors about programming impact and how to broaden inclusion of who benefits from CCCM work – and how this will be put into practice.

For example:

- *Using the HNO analysis to identify groups that can't easily access CCCM services, and working with Cluster members to adapt service access methods and improve outreach strategies*
- *Running a session during strategy consultation workshops on cross-cutting issues Cluster members want to focus on and including these as a Cluster workplan priority for the year. E.g. improving disability and age inclusion in CCCM activities or improvement of accountability processes.*

CENTRALITY OF PROTECTION

In line with the [IASC Protection Policy](#), a CCCM HRP 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 HC/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, taking into account the specific vulnerabilities that underline 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 in which geographical areas, and key human rights affected.

The CCCM Response Strategy & CCCM HRP 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. Affected communities 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 AAP in the HPC* - see Related Resources.

When developing a CCCM HRP strategy / CCCM response strategy, the CCCM Cluster should conduct a Protection Risk Analysis. See [Toolkit Section 9.1 Protection Mainstreaming](#).

RELATED RESOURCES

References and further reading

- See <https://kmp.hpc.tools/about/> for summarized guidance, and the latest HNO and HRP guidance and templates
- IASC (2015), [Reference Module for the Implementation of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle](#)