**1.2 Humanitarian Coordination and the Cluster Approach**

**Day 1:  0930 - 1030 (60 minutes)**

**Facilitator:**

**Session Purpose:**

* This session describes the role and purpose of coordination as a means to improve the quality, effectiveness and accountability of humanitarian actions. The Transformative Agenda and Cluster Approach are introduced to help frame the following sessions.

**Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Explain the role and purpose of coordination and how this relates to quality, effectiveness and accountability to affected people.
2. List the key concepts and policy changes that underline the Transformative Agenda and the Cluster Approach
3. Discuss the current trends in the sector and implications for humanitarian coordination.

**Outline of the Session**:

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| **Topic** | **Time** | **Guidance notes for facilitator** |
| What is coordination and why do we do it? | 10' | * Facilitators present participants with a few reflection questions to help introduce the purpose of coordination and link this to quality, effectiveness and accountability * Working in small groups, participants are asked to define 3-6 reasons for coordination and post on the wall * Facilitators will summarize, and then present on slide. |
| Transformative Agenda Quiz | 20' | * Participants go through a multiple choice quiz to draw out some key concepts from the Cluster Approach and Transformative Agenda * Hand out 1.2 can be shared previously or handed out at the beginning of the session so participants can refer to it. * Facilitator can share copies of the quiz with participants or project the questions as slides and present each question and answers. * The quiz is important to identify misconceptions and clarify main outcomes of the Transformative Agenda |
| Transformative Agenda outcomes and the Cluster Approach | 15' | * As a debrief for the quiz, the facilitator can present some visual slides to remind participants of the main outcomes from the TA   + Greater accountability to affected people   + Clearer roles and responsibilities of aid actors   + Reinforced cluster approach   + ERC, HC, HCTs and CLA   + Categorization of crises (L3)   + Financial tools CERF, CHF   + The Humanitarian Programme Cycle and related products/outputs (HNO, HRP) |
| The Cluster Approach | 5' | * Facilitators introduce the cluster approach |
| The future of coordination (optional) | 5' | * Facilitators present some of the trends around coordination and what this may mean for the current system. |
| Session Summary | 5' | * Facilitators summarize the session content, with an emphasis on shared accountabilities |

**Session Materials:**

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| **General** | **HO=Handouts (1 per person) and**  **R =Resources (copy per instructions)** | **Electronic References** |
| * PowerPoint presentation * Flip charts * Markers | | * 1.2 HO Key Messages on the Transformative Agenda | * CCRM New July 2015 |

**Facilitator Notes**:

Why is Coordination Important? (10 minutes)

* Begin the session by asking participants a reflection/discussion question: "Why is coordination important?”
* This is important as it helps participants to reflect on and understand the aims and purposes of coordination, and how the humanitarian coordination functions have evolved to become more efficient, effective, and accountable.
* Ask participants to work at their tables to **identify 2-3 reasons** humanitarian actors coordinate, and present ONE of them back to plenary. Answers will likely identify several of the following:
  + Increase efficiency or reduce duplication
  + Increase quality and consistency of a response
  + Reduce gaps and maximize coverage
  + Mobilize resources
  + Define common approaches and standards
  + Increased clarity on roles and responsibilities
* The facilitator can then validate the answers by presenting slides that summarize the reasons behind coordination, leading to the next part of the session around Humanitarian Reform and the Transformative Agenda and the Cluster Approach.

**NOTE:**

* **As an alternative, participants can be asked to identify examples of good and poor coordination from their own experience (not necessarily cluster).**
* The facilitator should stress that coordination is process aimed to improve the quality, coverage, efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian actions.
* Coordination is a means to an end - it aims to ensure vulnerable and affected people are able to access assistance that meets their immediate and long term needs and priorities, and respects their rights.

Transformative Agenda Multiple Choice Quiz:

* For this exercise, participants are shown 10 questions with key outcomes of the TA and asked to choose from a list of answers, some obviously wrong.
* Participants could be prepared in advance by distributing the hand-out on the Transformative Agenda before the course starts. If not, it can be handed out at the beginning of the session.
* The quiz can also be handed out or simply presented on slides.

The facilitator can ask by a show of hands how many participants identified the correct answer, and briefly explain the main concepts behind the question.

1. What is the Transformative Agenda?
2. A new movie about cars that transform into giant robots that want to take over the world
3. A guide on how to transform your personal life to become more successful
4. A joint effort by the UN, NGOs and other stakeholders to improve effectiveness and accountability of humanitarian action
5. The new five-year Strategic Plan for the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Actions (OCHA)
6. What are the three pillars that support the Transformative Agenda?
7. Leadership, Coordination and Accountability
8. Social, Environmental and Economic
9. Doric, Ionic and Corinthian
10. None of the above - the Transformative Agenda is not a building
11. What is the ERC?
12. Emergency Regulations Commission - an international body responsible for setting standards and regulations regarding humanitarian assistance
13. UN Emergency Relief Coordinator - the person designated by the UN Secretary- General to coordinate the international response to emergencies
14. European Research Council - body responsible for research on humanitarian crisis
15. Ethiopian Red Cross - one of the permanent members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee
16. What is the HCT?
17. A type of blood test to measure hematocrit levels
18. Health Care Team - team responsible for the health and safety of aid workers in a crisis
19. Humanitarian Country Team - responsible for overall coordination of aid efforts at the county level
20. Hazard-Crisis Typology - a way to classify hazards and crises based on severity
21. What are clusters?
22. A type of chocolate with different types of fruits or nuts inside
23. A group of stars in the same galaxy
24. A type of bomb that is prohibited under international conventions
25. A coordination mechanism that groups aid providers around specific programming areas to ensure better efficiency, consistency and effectiveness in responses
26. Who is responsible for the nutrition cluster at the global level?
27. The UN Secretary-General Antonio Gutierrez
28. No one - clusters are a voluntary ad-hoc coordination mechanism
29. The World Health Organisation (WHO) as nutrition is a health issue
30. UNICEF has responsibility as Cluster Lead Agency for Nutrition
31. When are clusters activated?
32. When national capacities are not sufficient to respond to needs in a crisis and there are coordination gaps
33. When the size and complexity of the crisis and number of actors requires specific coordination mechanism
34. When existing coordination mechanisms cannot adequately address needs
35. None of the above - clusters are activated by a super-computer programme managed by OCHA
36. What is the role of the Nutrition Cluster at the country level?
37. To provide temporary coordination of all nutrition-related needs in an emergency
38. To ensure nutrition interventions are carried out effectively and meet technical and quality standards
39. To ensure resources and capacities of partners is matched to needs
40. All of the above - and much more!
41. Who can be part of the Nutrition Cluster?
42. Nutrition and health care professionals interested in nutrition issues
43. Only UNICEF and other UN agencies, and sometimes the government
44. Any organisation that agrees to the cluster minimum requirements and the principles of partnership
45. No one - the cluster is a physical space for nutrition focal points to meet
46. What is AAP?
47. A platform to share software and mobile phone applications related to nutrition in emergencies (NiE)
48. Accountability to Affected People - one of the key elements of the Transformative Agenda and the cluster approach
49. Annual Action Plan - a plan clusters produce each year outlining key nutrition activities
50. American Academy of Paediatrics - one of the main bodies responsible for defining nutritional standards for children and pregnant and lactating mothers.

Facilitator’s notes:

* The facilitator can use the quiz to get a sense of how much participants know the main points around the Transformative Agenda and cluster approach,
* Many may have some basic understanding of this, and the hand-outs provides additional material for them
* Go through the questions, and briefly explain the correct answer with some background to it.
* The questions are aligned to the Key Messages around the TA and cluster approach:
* Additional background material and slides are provided below if needed, but keep in mind that this will take more time, which could be used to better explain the importance of AAP and roles of cluster in later sessions.

Transformative Agenda

* Launched in 2010. Builds on the long history within the sector to improve performance and address failures of the "system" such as Ruanda, Tsunami, the response to the Haiti earthquake and Pakistan floods in 2010
* Also consolidates many of the "system-wide" changes introduced by the Humanitarian Reform which began in 2005
* Emphasizes that the "system" is more than the UN, and that it needs to build on effective ***partnerships*** between different actors, including the Red Cross Red Crescent, NGOs and national and local actors
* Overall aim is to ensure more ***reliable, predictable responses*** to major crises and ***improve quality, consistency***
* The TA also focuses on strengthening and clarifying ***mutual accountabilities*** of actors for achieving better results for affected people as well as the centrality of protection.

Three pillars of the Transformative Agenda:

* The slides go through the three pillars of the Transformative Agenda, including the tools and processes introduced into the system:

1. **Leadership:**

* The role of *Humanitarian Coordinators* and the *Humanitarian Country Team* was strengthened to provide better strategic oversight and accountability for the overall response at country level
* At the same time, the HC and HCT have greater accountability for protecting the rights and generating results for affected people - and should be held to account for the overall response.
* But the TA also promotes shared responsibility of the Humanitarian Country Team and other actors for response quality and outcomes
* The TA established a roster of senior leaders to deploy for L3 emergencies, increased role of HCTs to support HCs, greater access and participation of local actors in HCTs, etc.

1. **Coordination:**

* Strengthened the *Cluster Approach* - to provide more consistent quality and coherence in different programming sectors
* Greater clarity on roles of clusters and partners, tools to support better cluster management and performance, more inclusive for local and national actors, more emphasis on cross-cluster (or inter-cluster) collaboration
* Coordination is a mutual responsibility to achieve outcomes that are more effective at meeting the needs and priorities of affected people.
* Clusters have a key role in promoting quality assurance (coverage, consistency and coherence), and risk management (minimizing gaps and addressing risks)
* Like HCs and HCTs, this is a mutual accountability for protecting the rights and generating results for affected people - to the extent that clusters have control over the delivery of assistance in their sectoral area.

1. **Accountability:**

* The TA places much greater emphasis on Accountability to Affected People (AAP)
  + Accountability is the mutual responsibility of CC, cluster partners, inter-cluster/sector, HC/HCT, donors, etc.) to achieve more effective outcomes for affected people while protecting their rights.
  + While tools and processes can help facilitate this, the most important element is shifting attitudes and behaviours to become more "people-centred" in our ways of working.
  + Clusters (coordinators and partners) can play an important role in advocating, promoting these ideas and putting them into practice.
* The TA also introduced a number of common tools and approaches to improve coherence and consistency, such as ***Humanitarian Programme Cycle*** (HPC) and cluster performance management.
* Also more emphasis on accountability at the level of HC, HCT, clusters, etc., especially for protection and ***Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation*** (PSEA).

Other outcomes:

* The TA also consolidated mechanisms for Humanitarian Financing - to ensure more timely, flexible and predictable funding for responses (for example, CERF, HRF, CHF, ERF, etc.)

The Cluster Approach

* Participants will then look at the cluster approach, with an emphasis on the main intended outcomes for clusters when they were introduced.
* This can reference back to group discussion earlier on the role and purpose of coordination.
* The slides for this part of the session include two versions of the cluster diagram: one with the HC in the centre, and one with affected people in the centre. This is to emphasize that while the formal "accountability" is to the HC and ERC, the role and purpose of clusters is to provide an integrated, consistent, coherent and coordinate means to address the needs, priorities and rights of affected people.
* The facilitator can explain the different clusters, but the intention is NOT to work in isolation
* Additional slides explain the CLA role, temporary nature of clusters, activation and de-activation, and the differences between cluster and sector.

**Key Messages:**

* The underlying motivation for the Transformative Agenda and the cluster approach was to address some of the consistent gaps in the way humanitarian assistance has been provided.
* These include a lack of leadership and coordination, and too many examples where aid actors have not been accountable for protecting the rights and dignity of vulnerable and affected people, or generating meaningful results and outcomes for them.
* The Transformative Agenda is the results of years of efforts to improve the quality, effectiveness and accountability of humanitarian action.
* It resulted in concrete measures to further improve coordination, leadership and accountability, including strengthening the cluster approach.
* The Cluster Approach is meant to strengthen the national government in its response and non-UN centric, meaning many different actors can participate in coordinating their actions to improve outcomes for affected people.
* The Transformative Agenda also underlines the centrality of protection and accountability to affected people.
* The rest of the course will look at how clusters and coordination can support these two important goals.

Game – 20 minutes: (OPTIONAL)

* The participants are asked to judge whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE. If TRUE, the participants raise their arms in the air, if FALSE, they need to cross their arms.
* The answers of the game (explained in the PowerPoint) are as follows:
  + The NC is a physical structure - false
  + The NC has a legal status - false
  + The NC has programme funding - false
  + The NC is a coordination mechanism - true
  + The NC has only funding for the coordination team – true
  + The NCC represents *all* members - true
  + Ban-Ki Moon - false

Cluster vs. Sector – 10 minutes (OPTIONAL)

* In pairs or groups, ask participants to list 5 differences between the (Nutrition) Cluster and the (Nutrition) Sector in your country.

The Future of Coordination (OPTIONAL) 5min

* This is an optional component that can provide an opportunity to very briefly outline some of the trends and developments that are influencing how we approach humanitarian coordination.
* The main point is that current mechanisms such as clusters are likely to evolve, but the main principles of AAP and coordination will continue regardless of the coordination modalities that emerge.
* There is no need to explain in detail, but facilitators can briefly present these new developments, and explain how this may affect clusters' work. These include:
* SDGs - increased "sovereignty" of national authorities to define development priorities
* World Humanitarian Summit - putting people at the centre
* Grand Bargain
  + Participation Revolution - commitment to greater engagement and participation of affected people in the design and implementation of humanitarian responses
  + Localization - greater recognition and prioritization of local knowledge, capacities and resources in the management of responses
  + Humanitarian Financing - moving to multi-year funding
  + Transparency - greater emphasis on transparency on how and where aid resources are used
  + Cash - increased use of cash in responses
  + Humanitarian-development nexus
* Facilitators can explain to participants that these trends are already influencing how UNICEF, partners and clusters function in many crises situations.
* Also an opportunity to remind participants of alternative coordination mechanisms and approaches
  + Sector coordination mechanisms
  + Government-led coordination
  + Sub-national coordination
  + Consortia approaches