

QUICK GUIDE

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for every child



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# UNICEF Country Office Guide on Cluster Lead Agency Accountabilities and Humanitarian Coordination

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Fulfilling UNICEF Cluster Lead Agency Accountabilities  
and its Coordination Role in Humanitarian Settings

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# Acronyms

<b>AA</b>	Anticipatory Action	<b>HPM</b>	Humanitarian Performance Monitoring
<b>AAP</b>	Accountability to Affected Populations	<b>HRP</b>	Humanitarian Response Plan
<b>AoR</b>	Area of Responsibility	<b>IA</b>	Inter-Agency
<b>AWP</b>	Annual Work Plan	<b>IASC</b>	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
<b>C/AoR</b>	Cluster/Area of Responsibility	<b>ICCG</b>	Inter Cluster Coordination Group
<b>CCCs</b>	Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action	<b>ICT</b>	Information, Communication and Technology
<b>CCPM</b>	Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring	<b>IM</b>	Information Management
<b>CCRM</b>	Cluster Coordination Reference Module	<b>JIAF</b>	Joint Needs Analysis Framework
<b>CLA</b>	Cluster Lead Agency	<b>MYHS</b>	Multi-year Humanitarian Strategy
<b>CMT</b>	Country Management Team	<b>MPS</b>	Minimum Preparedness Standards
<b>CO</b>	Country Office	<b>MTR</b>	Mid-Term Review
<b>COAR</b>	Country Office Annual Report	<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>CP</b>	Child Protection	<b>OCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>CPAoR</b>	Child Protection Area of Responsibility	<b>ORE</b>	Other Resources Emergency
<b>CPD</b>	Country Programme Document	<b>ORR</b>	Other Resources Regular
<b>CPP</b>	Country Programme Planning	<b>PBR</b>	Programme and Budget Review
<b>CSIs</b>	Core Standard Indicators	<b>PER</b>	Performance Evaluation Review
<b>CWG</b>	Cash Working Group	<b>PHE</b>	Public Health Emergency
<b>EMOPS</b>	Office of Emergency Programmes	<b>PME</b>	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>EMT</b>	Emergency Management Team	<b>PMT</b>	Programme Management Team
<b>ERC</b>	Emergency Relief Coordinator	<b>PoLR</b>	Provider of Last Resort
<b>EPF</b>	Emergency Programme Fund	<b>ProCap</b>	Protection Capacity Project
<b>ERP</b>	Emergency Response Preparedness	<b>PSEA</b>	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
<b>FO</b>	Field Office	<b>RAM</b>	Results Assessment Module
<b>FT</b>	Fixed Term	<b>RD</b>	Regional Director
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-Based Violence	<b>RO</b>	Regional Office
<b>GCCS</b>	Global Cluster Coordinating Section	<b>RR</b>	Regular Resources
<b>GEC</b>	Global Education Cluster	<b>RRF</b>	Results and Resources Framework
<b>GenCap</b>	Gender Standby Capacity Project	<b>RRP</b>	Results and Resources Plan
<b>GHTF</b>	Global Humanitarian Thematic Fund	<b>RWP</b>	Rolling Work Plan
<b>GNC</b>	Global Nutrition Cluster	<b>SAG</b>	Strategic Advisory Group
<b>GWC</b>	Global WASH Cluster	<b>SI</b>	Standard Indicators
<b>HAC</b>	Humanitarian Action for Children	<b>TA</b>	Temporary Appointment
<b>HAP</b>	UNICEF Humanitarian Action Plan	<b>ToC</b>	Theory of Change
<b>HC</b>	Humanitarian Coordinator	<b>ToRs</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>HCT</b>	Humanitarian Country Team	<b>TWG</b>	Technical Working Group
<b>HCTs</b>	Humanitarian Cash Transfers	<b>UNHCR</b>	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>HNO</b>	Humanitarian Needs Overview	<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>HPC</b>	Humanitarian Programme Cycle	<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

# Introduction

UNICEF addresses the needs of children and their families in humanitarian crises since its origins. The Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs) are the core UNICEF policy and framework for humanitarian action and are mandatory for all UNICEF personnel. Coordination is one of the overarching commitments established in the CCCs: the organization “**Support[s] the leadership and coordination of humanitarian response, along with national and local stakeholders, and in compliance with humanitarian principles.**”

As a global humanitarian organization, **UNICEF has committed to the Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) to lead/co-lead four of the clusters/AoR that constitute the current humanitarian architecture: child protection, education, nutrition, and WASH**; this global leadership is replicated at a country level. In addition to countries in which clusters have been formally activated, **UNICEF plays a coordination role in other humanitarian contexts**, by supporting national and sub-national sector coordination, leading or co-leading sectors or other coordination mechanisms, and providing coordination support in its areas of programmatic responsibility.

This **Quick Guide** is the summary version of the “UNICEF Country Office Guide on Cluster Lead Agency Accountabilities and Humanitarian Coordination” that has been developed to assist **UNICEF Country Offices and their personnel to better fulfil CLA accountabilities in emergencies**, with reference to relevant IASC protocols and internal UNICEF procedure and guidance. It is focused on the **role of the Country Office in ensuring that UNICEF-led/co-led clusters and AoR are properly staffed and supported in the exercise of their functions.**

The Quick Guide summarizes in easy-to-consult tables the thematic chapters (**Part One**) of the “UNICEF Country Office Guide on Cluster Lead Agency Accountabilities and Humanitarian Coordination.” In each chapter:

**THE FIRST BOX INCLUDES RELEVANT CORE COMMITMENTS FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR BENCHMARKS**

**THE SECOND ONE SUMMARIZES KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THEMATIC CHAPTERS OF THE MAIN GUIDE**

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
The following table indicates key actions, who is responsible for them (in Country Office or Regional Office), and existing tools and references	In a CO, the Representative is ultimately accountable for the actions of the CO and its personnel in most cases. To simplify the tables, we have omitted accountability and only indicated responsibility. <sup>1</sup>	Tools and references provide more in-depth information and support for decisions and action, including pros/cons tables, checklists, flowcharts, questions to ask. <sup>2</sup>

**THE LAST BOX INCLUDES USEFUL LINKS, SUCH AS THE RELEVANT INTRANET PAGE IF EXISTING, UNICEF PROCEDURES (WHICH ARE AUDITABLE), MANUALS AND OTHER GUIDANCE, AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT RESOURCES.**

1 **Accountable** is defined as the person ultimately answerable for the correct and thorough completion of the deliverable or task, who ensures the task’s prerequisites are met and delegates work to those responsible. The accountable person must sign off (approve) the work of the responsible person. **Responsible** is defined as the person who does the work to complete the action.

2 Some tools cannot be linked and they are only available in the main Guide. If that is the case, it is indicated; please consult the corresponding chapter in the main Guide to have access to these tools

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For more extensive explanations including overviews of each topic and a **description of the key aspects** related to Cluster/AoR coordination, please consult the main Guide, which also includes in **Part Two** the **key actions specific roles or functions are responsible for**:

- Representative
- Deputy Representative – Programmes and Operations
- Cluster/AoR Coordinator supervisor
- Cluster/AoR Coordinator (national/sub-national)
- Sector coordinator
- Chief of Field Operations/Emergency
- Chief of Field Office
- Programme Chief/Operations Chief
- Chief of PME
- HR Manager
- Resource Mobilization Manager
- Regional Office

A [companion intranet site](#) is available and similarly structured by topic and by role, for ease of consultation.

## WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR AND HOW TO USE IT

The Guide has been developed to assist **UNICEF Country Offices and their personnel to better fulfil CLA accountabilities in emergencies**, with reference to relevant IASC protocols and internal UNICEF procedure and guidance. It is focused on the **role of the Country Office<sup>3</sup> in ensuring that UNICEF-led/co-led clusters and AoR are properly staffed and supported in the exercise of their functions**. UNICEF plays a double role in the clusters/AoRs it leads – it is the lead agency, and also a member. This guide only addresses CLA's role and responsibilities, and does not include actions UNICEF should take as a cluster/AoR member.

**It is not a guide on cluster coordination** or meant for Cluster/AoR Coordinators; while there are mentions of Cluster/AoR Coordinator responsibilities, they are only included when related to UNICEF CLA accountabilities. The official IASC guide on cluster coordination is the [IASC 2015 Reference Module on Cluster Coordination](#). **It is not a guide for UNICEF programmatic humanitarian work**, which is instead fully described in several programmatic guidance tools, including the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs) and in the Emergency Handbook.

**This guide is a tool addressed to Country Offices and their personnel, who collectively ensure the fulfilment of UNICEF CLA accountabilities, whether they have direct responsibilities in clusters/AoR or not.**

It is expected that guidance and procedures (both internal and external) will evolve over time, and while all efforts have been made to ensure continuous **updating** through the [companion intranet site](#), should you find any inconsistency between this resource and others, do verify what the most recent information is and contact the [Global Cluster Coordination Section \(GCCS\)](#).

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3 Including its Field Offices if existing, and with the support of the Regional Office.

# 1. The cluster approach

CORE COMMITMENTS	BENCHMARK
<p><b>COORDINATION</b> Support the leadership and coordination of humanitarian response, along with national and local stakeholders, and in compliance with humanitarian principles</p>	<p>① UNICEF, at CO/RO/HQ level, actively contributes to intersectoral coordination and ensures that sectors/clusters under its leadership are adequately staffed and skilled.</p>

<p><b>KEY TAKEAWAYS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① UNICEF leads/co-leads three clusters (education, nutrition and WASH) and one AoR (child protection) at the global level, and generally the same clusters/AoR at the country level.</li> <li>① Cluster coordination is an institutional accountability and is reflected in the CCCs.</li> <li>① Cluster/AoR leadership is of strategic value for UNICEF.</li> <li>① In the HCT, the Representative represents both the interests of UNICEF as an organization and the interests of the four clusters/AoRs.</li> </ul>
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ACTION	RESPONSIBLE <sup>4</sup>	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
Discuss the strategic value of clusters/AoRs for UNICEF COs and FOs within the team and promote active engagement with clusters/AoRs	Representative Deputy Representative - Programmes Programme Chief Chief of Field Operations/Emergency Chief of Field Office Chief of PME	
Consider the strategic value of cluster leadership during the elaboration of emergency response plans/humanitarian plans	Programme Chief Chief of Field Operations/Emergency Chief of PME	
Ensure active participation of UNICEF programme sections in respective cluster/AoR at national and sub-national level, and in their activities including the elaboration of the HNO and HRP	Programme Chief Chief of Field Office	See Chapter on <a href="#">UNICEF Programmes and Clusters/AoRs</a>
Meet with Cluster/AoR Coordinators before HCT meetings to discuss cluster/AoR issues, plans, and progress; if supervisor is other than the Representative, brief Representative on issues discussed.	Representative C/AoR Coordinator C/AoR Coordinator supervisor Chief of Field Operations/Emergency	
When UNICEF co-leads a cluster, meet with the Representative/Country Director of the co-lead agency to discuss strategic issues of the cluster and agree on representation at the HCT	Representative	
If not already happening, advocate with HCT for the participation of Cluster/AoR Coordinators in meetings when relevant issues are discussed	Representative	
In HCT meetings, differentiate when speaking on behalf of UNICEF and when speaking on behalf of the various clusters/AoR	Representative	<a href="#">IASC Guidance on Humanitarian Country Teams</a>
In HCT meetings, advocate for issues pertaining to UNICEF-led clusters/AoR	Representative C/AoR Coordinator (if attending HCT) Deputy Representative - Programmes (if attending HCT) Chief of Field Operations/Emergency (if attending HCT)	

<sup>4</sup> In a CO, the Representative is ultimately accountable for the actions of the CO and its personnel in most cases. To simplify the tables, we have omitted to indicate accountability and only indicated responsibility. *Accountable* is defined as the person ultimately answerable for the correct and thorough completion of the deliverable or task, who ensures the task's prerequisites are met and delegates work to those responsible. The accountable person must sign off (approve) the work of the responsible person. *Responsible* is defined as the person who does the work to complete the action.

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## USEFUL LINKS

- ① ICON page: [Sectoral Coordination and the Cluster Approach](#)
- ① Guidance: [Emergency Handbook](#), Chapter 9.Sector/Cluster Coordination
- ① Other resources:
  - [IASC Reference Module on Cluster Coordination](#)
  - [IASC Guidance on Humanitarian Country Teams](#)
  - [AGORA Humanitarian Coordination Learning Channel](#)

# 2. Cluster Lead Agency accountability

CORE COMMITMENTS	BENCHMARK
<p><b>COORDINATION</b> Support the leadership and coordination of humanitarian response, along with national and local stakeholders, and in compliance with humanitarian principles</p>	<p>① UNICEF, at CO/RO/HQ level, actively contributes to intersectoral coordination and ensures that sectors/clusters under its leadership are adequately staffed and skilled</p>

KEY TAKEAWAYS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① UNICEF CLA accountabilities are: ensuring functioning of the cluster/AoR and high standards of predictability, accountability, and partnership; ensuring staffing of the cluster; being the Provider of Last Resort.</li> <li>② The Representative, CMT, Regional Director and EMOPS Director have specific accountabilities about cluster/AoR leadership.</li> <li>③ The leadership function of a CLA is as important as the coordination function.</li> <li>④ UNICEF as CLA is obligated to act as PoLR when situations require it.</li> </ul>

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
Monitor that CLA accountabilities are fulfilled (key positions are created and filled; cluster coordinators are supported, supervised and are able to provide leadership in their key functional areas; and cluster priorities are appropriately brought to the attention of the HCT and other relevant inter-agency for a)	Representative C/AoR Coordinator supervisor Chief of Field Office (at sub-national level)	<a href="#">Accountability Compendium</a>
Oversee fulfilment of leadership function in clusters/AoR, particularly around setting vision and strategy, partnership, intersectorality	Representative C/AoR Coordinator supervisor	<a href="#">QTA – leadership role of the CLA</a> See extended Guide
Strengthen leadership, communication and cross-cultural skills of C/ AoR Coordinators, if needed, through appropriate capacity building and professional opportunities; include leadership, communication and cross-cultural skills as required in C/AoR selection processes	C/AoR Coordinator supervisor HR Manager	<a href="#">Competency Framework for Cluster Coordination</a> <sup>5</sup>
Conduct regular joint meetings with Cluster/AoR Coordinators and programme sections, to build on intersectoral opportunities and facilitate integrated interventions (including at sub-national/field level if existing)	Deputy Representative - Programmes Chief of Field Operations/Emergency Chief of Field Office	
Support cluster/AoR leadership function at country level through technical support, capacity building, financial support for skills strengthening, and other actions as relevant; support Representatives in humanitarian situations to fulfil the UNICEF Cluster Lead Agency role	Regional Office	<a href="#">Accountability Compendium</a>
Clarify the concept and application of Provider of Last Resort (PoLR) within the CO; drive its fulfilment through implementation, advocacy or resource mobilization as needed	Representative	<a href="#">IASC Operational Guidance on PoLR</a>
In case of co-leadership, clarify with the co-lead agency how the PoLR accountability is shared	Representative	

<sup>5</sup> Included here is the Competency Framework developed by the Global Nutrition Cluster; frameworks for the other clusters/AoR only present minor variations to make it relevant to the specific Cluster/AoR, beside the adaptation of Competency A2.

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## USEFUL LINKS

- ① ICON page: [Sectoral Coordination and the Cluster Approach](#)
- ① Guidance: [Emergency Handbook](#), Chapter 9.Sector/Cluster Coordination; [Accountability Compendium](#)
- ① Tools: [Competency Framework for Cluster Coordination](#)
- ① Other resources:
  - [IASC Operational Guidance on PoLR](#)
  - [AGORA Humanitarian Coordination Learning Channel](#)

# 3. The 6+1 core cluster functions

CORE COMMITMENTS	BENCHMARK
<p><b>COORDINATION</b></p> <p>Support the leadership and coordination of humanitarian response, along with national and local stakeholders, in compliance with humanitarian principles</p>	<p>① <b>UNICEF, at CO/RO/HQ level, actively contributes to intersectoral coordination and ensures that sectors/clusters under its leadership are adequately staffed and skilled</b></p>

<p><b>KEY TAKEAWAYS</b></p> <p>① Representative, Cluster/AoR Coordinators and their supervisors and CO Programme Chiefs have specific responsibilities to ensure the fulfilment of the 6+1 core cluster functions</p>
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ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
Oversee the implementation of 6+1 core cluster functions (see <a href="#">Responsibility Matrix</a> details)	Representative	<b>Cluster/AoR Responsibility Matrix (Representative)</b> See extended Guide
Actively participate in cluster activities and processes or support them as relevant (see <a href="#">Responsibility Matrix</a> organized around 6+1 functions and <a href="#">Tasks Matrix</a> organized around tasks and roles in CO)	Programme Chief Chief of PME	<b>Cluster/AoR Responsibility Matrix (Programme Chief) Tasks Matrix</b> See extended Guide

<p><b>USEFUL LINKS</b></p> <p>① ICON page: <a href="#">Sectoral Coordination and the Cluster Approach</a></p> <p>① Guidance: <a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>, Chapter 9.Sector/Cluster Coordination; <a href="#">CCCs</a>, Chapter 2.1.2 Coordination</p> <p>① Tools: <a href="#">Cluster/AoR Responsibility Matrix</a> See extended Guide</p> <p>① Other resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">IASC Reference Module on Cluster Coordination</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">AGORA Humanitarian Coordination Learning Channel</a></li> </ul>
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# 4. Cluster activation, transition and de-activation

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ① Cluster/AoR activation and its (shared) leadership are based on an analysis of context, including the scale of humanitarian need and the capacity of existing coordination structures on the ground
- ① Cluster/AoR deactivation is decided when activation conditions are no longer met
- ① The transition process is essential to ensure an effective transfer of leadership and accountabilities to sectorial and development-focused coordination mechanisms
- ① UNICEF as CLA and its staff have clear responsibilities in the transition planning and process
- ① Where clusters are not activated, UNICEF is accountable for its respective sectors to support coordination mechanisms

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
<b>ACTIVATION</b>		
Proactively engage in discussion, analysis and decision-making on activation of clusters and AoRs in-country	Representative Chief of Field Operations/Emergency Programme Chief Chief of Field Office	
If not done under UNICEF MPSs, assign sector/cluster lead roles in agreement with the UNCT/HCT and have them signed off by the Emergency Relief Coordinator/Resident Coordinator. Advocate for the activation of all UNICEF-led sectors/clusters, no matter the response	Representative Programme Chief Chief of Field Office	<a href="#">MPS2</a> ; See <a href="#">Chapter on Preparedness</a> ; <a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
Ensure that UNICEF-led clusters are established at national and where needed at sub-national level in coordination with the UNCT/HCT, including defining the relationship to the national cluster in terms of accountability	Representative Deputy Representative - Programmes Programme Chief Chief of Field Office C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
Consider co-leadership at national or sub-national level as relevant, discuss roles and responsibilities with co-leads. Liaise with the Global Cluster/AoR on specific leadership arrangements	Representative C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
Sign an agreement <sup>6</sup> on leadership arrangements and division of responsibilities and provide technical support to national NGO co-leads. To ensure funding does not limit NGO co-leadership, advocate for fund mobilization to cover these positions at all levels	Representative C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
If national authorities participate in cluster leadership, invest in technical support and capacity building to national co-leads. Ensure UNICEF maintains a leading role in addition to contributions by local actors <sup>7</sup>	Representative C/AoR Coordinator Programme Chief	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
Immediately start the process for staffing of clusters at national and sub-national levels, as needed; clearly define line management arrangements for supervision of cluster/AoR coordination. Preferably assign to Representative	Representative C/AoR Coordinator supervisor	See Chapter on <a href="#">Human Resources</a> ; <a href="#">Minimum Coordination Structure</a>

6 For a sample agreement, please contact the relevant Global Cluster/AoR.

7 The Emergency Handbook highlights the risk linked to national participation in cluster leadership: politicization and/or inadequate capacity, which can impact the neutrality and coverage of the humanitarian response.

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
<b>TRANSITION AND DEACTIVATION</b>		
Engage proactively in deactivation decision-making: Consult Cluster/AoR coordination teams and members on transition and deactivation decisions, and engage proactively with the HC and HCT on transition, deactivation, coordination architecture reviews and in deactivation decision-making. If annual coordination reviews are not conducted, regularly review appropriateness of the cluster/AoR.	Representative	<a href="#">Guidance on Cluster Transition and Deactivation for the Country-Level Cluster and Cluster Lead Agency</a> <sup>8</sup>
Ensure robust transition processes are followed and monitored, including development of realistic cluster/AoR transition plans with benchmarks and defined accountabilities; assign internal responsibilities and sufficient resourcing and staffing to support transition, and monitor progress periodically	Representative	<a href="#">Guidance on Cluster Transition and Deactivation for the Country-Level Cluster and Cluster Lead Agency</a>
Lead strategic engagement before and during the transition process, facilitating engagement with government authorities; establishing links with development coordination bodies and guiding engagement with the UNSDCF, advocate for continuing coordination and engagement of local and national civil society actors, ensure necessary capacity-strengthening support is provided to any entity taking over coordination functions, and define how UNICEF will support coordination after cluster/AoR deactivation	Representative	<a href="#">Guidance on Cluster Transition and Deactivation for the Country-Level Cluster and Cluster Lead Agency</a>
Ensure Global Clusters are informed of and actively engaged in reviews of cluster coordination architecture and transition planning	Representative C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">Guidance on Cluster Transition and Deactivation for the Country-Level Cluster and Cluster Lead Agency</a>
Facilitate appropriate consultation and communication with all relevant stakeholders, especially local and national actors and affected people	C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">Guidance on Cluster Transition and Deactivation for the Country-Level Cluster and Cluster Lead Agency</a>
Lead the cluster/AoR coordination team to develop and roll out realistic and viable transition plans through a consultative process with all relevant actors, with benchmarks for transition, and ensure good communication of transition plans and decisions to all relevant stakeholders	C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">Guidance on Cluster Transition and Deactivation for the Country-Level Cluster and Cluster Lead Agency</a>
Advocate and work with national actors, including government counterparts, to ensure continued coordination through a sector working group and/or other mechanism	C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">Guidance on Cluster Transition and Deactivation for the Country-Level Cluster and Cluster Lead Agency</a>
Advise the Representative on the likelihood that criteria for deactivation may be met, and progress toward transition plans and benchmarks, to inform HCT decision-making	C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">Guidance on Cluster Transition and Deactivation for the Country-Level Cluster and Cluster Lead Agency</a>
Facilitate links between the Cluster Coordinator and government and development actors and coordination bodies to support transition planning, and linkage of the transition with UNSDCF objectives	Programme Chief	<a href="#">Guidance on Cluster Transition and Deactivation for the Country-Level Cluster and Cluster Lead Agency</a>
Contribute to cluster transition planning, and support the planning and integration of any humanitarian coordination functions into national sectoral structures after cluster deactivation	Programme Chief	<a href="#">Guidance on Cluster Transition and Deactivation for the Country-Level Cluster and Cluster Lead Agency</a>

8 (UNICEF, 2023) [Guidance on Cluster Transition and Deactivation for the Country-Level Cluster and Cluster Lead Agency](#). Forthcoming. Contact [GCCS](#) for the final version and link to the Guidance, its summary and the accompanying short document for UNICEF Country Offices on cluster transition and deactivation.

Ensure suitable structures, resources, and capacities are in place for any support to sectoral coordination that UNICEF will continue after cluster deactivation	Programme Chief	<a href="#">Guidance on Cluster Transition and Deactivation for the Country-Level Cluster and Cluster Lead Agency</a>
Strengthen national capacities and preparedness through technical assistance, as required, for national actors (government and/or civil society) to be able to take on leadership of sectoral coordination functions that support humanitarian response to be in line with humanitarian principles	Programme Chief	<a href="#">Guidance on Cluster Transition and Deactivation for the Country-Level Cluster and Cluster Lead Agency</a>
Advise on and input to transition planning wherever relevant, including on scenario planning, risk analysis, and in preparedness arrangements and capacity-strengthening	Chief of Field Operations/Emergency	<a href="#">Guidance on Cluster Transition and Deactivation for the Country-Level Cluster and Cluster Lead Agency</a>

#### USEFUL LINKS

- ① Guidance: [Emergency Handbook; Recommended good practices for minimum coordination structure](#)
- ① Tools: [MPS2 – Humanitarian Coordination Template](#)
- ① Other resources:
  - [IASC Reference Module on Cluster Coordination](#)
  - [IASC Operational Guidance for Cluster Lead Agencies on Working with National Authorities](#)

# 5. Other forms of humanitarian coordination

CORE COMMITMENTS	BENCHMARK
<p><b>COORDINATION</b> Support the leadership and coordination of humanitarian response, along with national and local stakeholders, and in compliance with humanitarian principles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF, at CO/RO/HQ level, actively contributes to intersectoral coordination and ensures that sectors/clusters under its leadership are adequately staffed and skilled</li> </ul>
<p><b>LARGE-SCALE MOVEMENTS OF REFUGEES, MIGRANTS AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS</b> <b>1: Coordination and leadership</b> Effective coordination is established UNICEF's participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interagency and intersectoral coordination mechanisms, including cross-border, are in place and allocate clear roles and responsibilities across sectors, without gaps nor duplications</li> <li>In situations where the Humanitarian Coordination System and Refugee Coordination Mechanism co-exist, response modalities are adapted accordingly</li> <li>UNICEF-led sectors are adequately staffed and skilled at national and sub-national levels</li> <li>UNICEF core leadership and coordination accountabilities are delivered</li> </ul>
<p><b>PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES (PHE)</b> <b>1: Coordination and leadership</b> Effective coordination is established with governments and partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interagency and intersectoral coordination mechanisms, including cross-border, are in place and allocate clear roles and responsibilities across sectors, without gaps nor duplications</li> <li>UNICEF-led sectors are adequately staffed and skilled at national and sub-national levels</li> <li>UNICEF core leadership and coordination accountabilities are delivered</li> <li>Surge deployments and emergency procedures are activated on a no-regrets basis</li> <li>In case of the activation of the IASC Protocol for the Control of Infectious Disease Events, response modalities and capacities are adapted and scaled up accordingly</li> </ul>

KEY TAKEAWAYS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where clusters are not activated, UNICEF is accountable for its respective sectors to support humanitarian coordination mechanisms</li> <li>The role of CLAs is clearly established in refugee and mixed settings coordination by the Refugee Coordination Model and by OCHA-UNHCR guidance respectively; if the IASC protocol on infectious diseases is activated, UNICEF has responsibilities equivalent to CLA</li> <li>In all other hybrid and evolving contexts, UNICEF core leadership and coordination responsibilities must be delivered, and UNICEF contributes as required to the coordination mechanisms established in country and regionally</li> </ul>

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
<b>HUMANITARIAN SECTOR COORDINATION</b>		
If relevant, request the activation of the Emergency Procedures	Representative	<a href="#">Emergency Procedures</a>
Identify staff within the CO who can build national capacity for sector/ cluster coordination and sector-wide information management prior to, during and after an emergency; if relevant, second staff to support national/ sub-national coordination, in particular information management functions	Representative Programme Chief	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
Clarify roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis national authorities in coordination of sectoral response	Sector coordinator	

Manage risk of politicization of humanitarian response	Representative	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
Coordinate with and support national/sub-national authorities in needs assessments, analysis of needs and response planning, monitoring, development of technical standards and tools; support as relevant to the development of Flash Appeals, HNOs and HRP and in strengthening authorities' preparedness capacities and plans	Sector coordinator Programme Chief Chief of Field Operations/Emergency Chief of Field Office	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a> ; <a href="#">IASC Guidance for CLAs on working with national authorities</a>
Provide support on quality of the response, cross-cutting issues and people-centred approach, including a nexus approach	Sector coordinator Programme Chief	
Mobilize and provide resources (cash transfers or supplies) and technical assistance as required to national and sub-national government to support the response. Regularize these emergency-related activities through an updated workplan endorsed by an exchange of letters or documented in official minutes with government	Deputy Representative - Programmes Programme Chief Resource Mobilization Manager	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
Advocate with national authorities for the fulfilment of children's rights and the response to their needs; advocate as needed for adequate information management	Sector coordinator Programme Chief	
Plan for the transition between emergency and development coordination, to sustain the capacity created through sector coordination support	Sector coordinator Programme Chief	
<b>REFUGEE AND MIXED SETTINGS</b>		
Advocate in HCT meetings for the needs of children in refugee response, as required	Representative	
Participate in refugee response planning as needed	Programme Chief C/AoR Coordinator Chief of Field Operations/Emergency	<a href="#">UNHCR Refugee Coordination Model</a>
Conduct joint meetings and ensure harmonization of approach with Protection Working Group	AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">UNHCR Refugee Coordination Model</a>
Participate in joint Protection Working Group/Protection Cluster + AoR meetings	Programme Chief (Child Protection)	<a href="#">UNHCR Refugee Coordination Model</a>
In contexts where refugees and IDPs are geographically separated, share information with UNHCR sectors	C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">UNHCR Refugee Coordination Model</a>
In contexts where refugees and IDPs are geographically mixed, conduct joint meetings between clusters and sectors, and ensure coordination on activities including needs assessments, planning, implementation and monitoring	C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">UNHCR Refugee Coordination Model</a>
<b>OTHER HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION MECHANISMS</b>		
Support the coordination mechanism in place with staffing and resources as needed; assign or hire staff for both coordination and information management functions when UNICEF leads sectors of the response	Representative Programme Chief	<a href="#">IASC Guidance on strengthening participation, representation and leadership of local and national actors in iasc humanitarian coordination mechanisms</a>
Harmonize approaches between UNICEF-led components of different coordination mechanisms	Sector coordinator C/AoR Coordinator	
Support and actively participate in regional and cross-border coordination mechanisms, including large-scale movement and migration crises, and PHE	Regional Office Sector coordinator C/AoR Coordinator	

If needed, clarify in the HCT and with the overall coordination leadership (OCHA, UNHCR, WHO, Government or others) the specific role of UNICEF as sectoral or operational lead	Representative	
Assign or hire staff for both coordination and information management functions when UNICEF leads sectors of the response	Representative Programme Chief	
If the response is Government-led, proactively support authorities in engaging and coordinating with the cluster system to increase opportunities for synergies, efficiencies and a more effective response	Sector coordinator C/AoR Coordinator	
Ensure internal coordination for all aspects of responses that UNICEF leads or co-leads; similarly, ensure complementarities and efficiencies between different coordination mechanisms in UNICEF-led sectors	Deputy Representative -Programmes C/AoR Coordinator supervisor Sector coordinator C/AoR Coordinator	
Proactively engage with multiple coordination platforms if they remain separated (for example, ensure a Cluster/AoR member participates in PHE coordination meetings for the same sector and reports back)	Sector coordinator C/AoR Coordinator	
If multiple coordination mechanisms exist, to the extent possible align response plans and resource mobilization efforts of different coordination mechanisms with each other	Sector coordinator C/AoR Coordinator Resource Mobilization Manager	
Remote deployment: In situations of reduced access and or increased insecurity, including public health emergencies, deploy surge staffing and new recruits remotely for all or part of an assignment	HR Manager Regional Office	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>

#### USEFUL LINKS

- ① Procedure: [Emergency Procedures](#)
- ① Guidance: [Emergency Handbook](#)
- ① Other resources:
  - [IASC Guidance for CLAs on working with national authorities](#)
  - [IASC Guidance on strengthening participation, representation and leadership of local and national actors in iasc humanitarian coordination mechanisms](#)
  - [UNHCR Refugee Coordination Model](#)
  - [UNHCR Updated Refugee Coordination Guidance Note](#)

# 6. Cluster co-leadership and co-coordination

CORE COMMITMENTS	BENCHMARK
<p><b>COORDINATION</b> Support the leadership and coordination of humanitarian response, along with national and local stakeholders, and in compliance with humanitarian principles</p>	<p>① <b>UNICEF, at CO/RO/HQ level, actively contributes to intersectoral coordination and ensures that sectors/clusters under its leadership are adequately staffed and skilled</b></p>
<p><b>CHILD PROTECTION</b> 1: Leadership and coordination Effective leadership and coordination are established and functional</p>	<p>① Child Protection Sector/Area of Responsibility (AoR) coordination and leadership functions are adequately staffed and skilled at national and sub-national levels</p> <p>① Core leadership and coordination accountabilities are delivered</p>
<p><b>EDUCATION</b> 1: Leadership and coordination Effective leadership and coordination are established and functional</p>	<p>① Education sector/cluster coordination and leadership functions are adequately staffed and skilled at national and sub-national levels</p> <p>① Core leadership and coordination accountabilities are delivered</p>

KEY TAKEAWAYS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① UNICEF leads the Child Protection AoR. AoR and cluster lead agencies' functions and responsibilities are identical.</li> <li>① Globally UNICEF co-leads the Education Cluster with Save the Children international, which can but does not necessarily turn into co-leadership at the country level. Articulate the division of labour in a co-leadership agreement, based on respective strengths and complementarities.</li> <li>① Wherever possible, consider shared leadership of the cluster/AoR for stronger engagement and better coordination, and support the government and/or local organizations in taking co-leadership and / or co-coordination roles.</li> </ul>

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
Where possible and appropriate, engage in co-leadership and / or co-coordination of the cluster/AoR with the government and/or another organization, especially a local organization; if needed provide institutional, technical or financial support. Selection of the co-leadership or co-coordination partner should be done through consultations with cluster/AoR partners	C/AoR Coordinator Programme Chief	<b>Questions to ask for co-leadership or co-coordination</b> ; See extended Guide <a href="#">IASC Guidance on strengthening participation, representation and leadership of local and national actors in IASC humanitarian coordination mechanisms</a>
Develop a co-leadership and / or co-coordination agreement with relevant organizations, detailing roles and responsibilities, and mutual accountabilities. The agreement documents how representation, advocacy, strategy, fundraising and other key functions will be managed by UNICEF and the other organization	Representative C/AoR Coordinator	
If needed, advocate for funding for co-leadership/co-coordination with HCT and donors	Representative C/AoR Coordinator	<b>Emergency Handbook</b>

Agree on ToRs and reporting lines for co-leadership/co-coordination roles, including matrix management where relevant	Representative C/AoR Coordinator
Conduct an annual meeting for mutual accountability with clusters/AoR co-lead / co-coordinating organizations' heads of agency	Representative C/AoR Coordinator
In case of co-leadership, arrange for joint office space for Cluster/AoR Coordinators	C/AoR Coordinator supervisor

#### USEFUL LINKS

- ① Guidance: [Emergency Handbook](#)
- ① Tools: [Questions to ask for co-leadership or co-coordination](#) See extended Guide
- ① Other resources:
  - [GCCG Terms and Definitions Paper](#)
  - [Principles of Partnership](#)
  - [IASC Guidance on strengthening participation, representation and leadership of local and national actors in iasc humanitarian coordination mechanisms](#)
  - [Guidance Note on Supporting NGOs' Contribution to Nutrition Cluster Leadership at National and Sub-National Level \(GNC\)](#)

# 7. Cluster/AoR coordination and management at national and sub-national levels

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ① Establish/recruit national cluster/AoR coordination teams, as required by the context. Refer to the “Recommended good practices for the minimum structure of coordination teams” for suggested team composition.
- ① If relevant, establish/recruit sub-national cluster/AoR coordination teams, as required by the context. Refer to the “Recommended good practices for the minimum structure of coordination teams” for suggested team composition.
- ① Support cluster/AoR leadership at sub-national level by local organizations/authorities
- ① Support and facilitate neutrality of national and sub-national Cluster/AoR Coordinators
- ① Participate in cluster/AoR strategic management arrangements (SAG and TWGs) and fulfil the 12 minimum commitments for partners’ participation in clusters/AoRs

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
Ensure the timely recruitment of cluster/AoR coordination teams with adequate seniority level and reporting lines; at a minimum, recruit national Cluster/AoR Coordinator and IMO roles for a period of at least six months for L2 and L3 emergencies	C/AoR Coordinator supervisor HR Manager	<b>Decision Tree (national)</b> See extended Guide See <b>Human Resources</b> chapter; <b>Recommended good practices for the minimum structure of coordination teams at country level for UNICEF as a Cluster Lead Agency.</b>
Oversee the establishment and management of effective national and sub-national coordination structures for each of the clusters and AoRs UNICEF leads or co-leads	Representative Chief of Field Office	<b>WASH</b> and <b>Nutrition</b> sub-national cluster ToRs examples; <b>Decision Tree (sub-national)</b> See extended Guide <b>Minimum coordination structure</b> See <b>Human Resources</b> chapter
Advocate for more resources if needed for cluster/AoR coordination at national and sub-national level, with HCT and donors	Representative C/AoR Coordinator supervisor Programme Chief Chief of Field Office	<b>Minimum coordination structure</b>
Appoint a focal point/specialist in CO to advise UNICEF-led clusters/AoR on better mainstreaming people-centered and accountability approaches in their work	Representative Deputy Representative - Programmes	<b>Minimum coordination structure</b>
Engage in analysis and decision-making within the HCT on the establishment of sub-national clusters	Representative Chief of Field Office	<b>Minimum coordination structure ; IASC reference module on cluster coordination</b>

Establish/recruit cluster/AoR sub-national level coordination teams following recommended minimum structure (as a minimum coordination and information management functions) and/or adapting to new sub-national coordination models emerging	C/AoR Coordinator Chief of Field Office HR Manager	<b>Decision Tree (sub-national)</b> See extended Guide See <b>Human Resources</b> chapter
Support co-ordination at sub-national level by local organization, through institutional, technical and financial resources as possible	Programme Chief C/AoR Coordinator	
Provide internal operational and administrative support to enable the clusters/AoRs to function effectively (both at national and sub-national level)	Deputy Representative – Operations	See <b>Operational and administrative support</b> chapter
Ensure TORs for country clusters, sub-clusters, co-leads, strategic advisory groups and technical working groups should be developed, indicating membership, leadership and respective responsibilities	C/AoR Coordinator	<b>IASC Reference Module on Cluster Coordination</b>
Where appropriate, ensure that relevant government sectors are appropriately engaged with and involved in cluster/AoR management, and where possible, chair or co-chair the cluster/AoR	Representative	
Oversee UNICEF participation in cluster/AoR strategic management and the implementation of the 12 minimum commitments for cluster/AoR membership	Representative	<b>IASC Reference Module on Cluster Coordination</b>
Actively participate in cluster/AoR meetings (especially when the Cluster/AoR Coordinator is double-hatting), in strategic management of the cluster/AoR through SAG and TWGs, and fulfil IASC 12 minimum commitments	Programme Chief	<b>IASC Reference Module on Cluster Coordination</b>
Periodically participate in cluster/AoR meetings to demonstrate UNICEF commitment to its CLA role, and engage in strategic discussions with partners	Representative	

#### USEFUL LINKS

- ① ICON page: **Sectoral Coordination and the Cluster Approach**
- ① Guidance: **Emergency Handbook**, Chapter 9.Sector/Cluster Coordination; **Minimum coordination structure**
- ① Tools: **Decision Tree (national)**; **Decision Tree (sub-national)** See extended Guide
- ① Other resources:
  - **IASC Reference Module on Cluster Coordination**
  - **WASH** and **Nutrition** sub-national cluster ToRs examples
  - **AGORA Humanitarian Coordination Learning Channel**

# 8. People-centered approach

CORE COMMITMENTS	BENCHMARK
<p><b>ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS</b></p> <p>Ensure that affected children and families participate in the decisions that affect their lives, are properly informed and consulted, and have their views acted upon</p>	<p>All COs, with the support of ROs/HQ, establish processes to ensure that affected and at-risk populations, including children and women:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Participate in humanitarian planning processes and in decisions that affect their lives</li> <li>① Are informed about their rights and entitlements, expected standards of conduct by UNICEF personnel, available services, and how to access them through their preferred language and methods of communication, as per the Sphere standards</li> <li>① Have their feedback systematically collected and used to inform programme design and course correction</li> <li>① Have access to safe and confidential complaint mechanisms</li> </ul>
<p><b>LINKING HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>Foster coherence and complementarity between humanitarian and development programming</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① All COs, with the support of ROs/HQ, design and implement risk-informed and conflict-sensitive humanitarian programmes that build and strengthen national and local capacities and systems from the start of humanitarian action to reduce needs, vulnerabilities of and risks to affected populations; and contribute to social cohesion and peace, where relevant and feasible</li> </ul>
<p><b>GBV RISK MITIGATION</b></p> <p><b>1: Ending Gender-Based Violence.</b></p> <p>GBV prevention and risk mitigation for all is included in programmes, with a focus on the safety and resilience of girls and women</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Programmes are designed to prevent and mitigate the risks of GBV</li> <li>① Coordination is established with GBV actors to ensure that GBV is mainstreamed in all sectors</li> <li>① All sectors' frontline workers and personnel are trained and equipped with information on available GBV response services and referral procedures to support GBV survivors</li> </ul>
<p><b>DISABILITIES</b></p> <p><b>1: Inclusive needs assessments, planning and monitoring</b></p> <p>The needs of children with disabilities and their caregivers are identified and reflected in planning and monitoring</p> <p><b>2: Inclusive and safe access to information and services</b></p> <p>Children with disabilities and their caregivers have safe access to humanitarian programmes</p> <p><b>3: Participation</b></p> <p>Children with disabilities participate in the design of programmes and in the decisions that affect their lives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Identification of risks and barriers faced by children with disabilities is included in needs assessments and analysis, and incorporated in humanitarian programme planning and monitoring</li> <li>① Physical accessibility for children with disabilities is included in planning and design of humanitarian services and facilities</li> <li>① Accessibility of communication and information for children with disabilities is incorporated in planning and design of humanitarian programmes</li> <li>① Community-based mechanisms/platforms exist for the systematic engagement of children with disabilities</li> </ul>
<p><b>LOCALIZATION</b></p> <p>Invest in strengthening the capacities of local actors (national and local authorities, CSOs and communities) in humanitarian action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① All COs, with the support of ROs/HQ, invest in strengthening institutional and technical capacity of local actors to deliver principled humanitarian response</li> </ul>
<p><b>PSEA</b></p> <p>Deliver on UNICEF's commitment to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.</p> <p>UNICEF has zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and is committed to the effective prevention and response to SEA, as set out in the Secretary-General's bulletin, Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13) and the IASC Six Principles on related to SEA. [...] UNICEF partners are also obligated to promptly report allegations of SEA to UNICEF, in accordance with the United Nations Protocol on Allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Involving Implementing Partners, and to meet the PSEA requirements outlined in UNICEF's Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA).</p>	<p>All COs, with the support of ROs/HQ, establish processes to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Every child and adult in humanitarian contexts have access to safe, child- and gender-sensitive reporting channel(s) to report SEA</li> <li>① Every survivor is promptly referred for assistance in line with their needs and wishes (such as medical care, mental health and psychosocial support, legal assistance, reintegration support), as part of UNICEF's gender-based violence (GBV) and child protection programmes</li> <li>① The prompt, safe and respectful investigation of SEA cases, is consistent with the wishes and best interest of every survivor</li> </ul>

### CENTRALITY OF PROTECTION (Global Standards and Principles)

Protection is the purpose and intended outcome of humanitarian action and must be central to preparedness efforts, as part of immediate and life-saving activities, and throughout the duration of humanitarian response and beyond. UNICEF commits to design and implement a humanitarian response that helps keep people with vulnerabilities from harm, protect them from violence, coercion and abuse, reduce the threats they face, minimize their exposure to these and increase their capacity to cope. The protection of all persons affected and at-risk is central to UNICEF decision-making and response, including UNICEF engagement with states and non-state parties to conflict.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- To ensure that crisis-affected populations are reached with safety and dignity and their diverse priorities reflected in the response, UNICEF shall adopt a people-centered approach and integrate Policy Commitments and Cross-Cutting Issues into the work of clusters/AoRs. These include accountability to affected populations (AAP), centrality of protection, localization, the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus, GBV risk mitigation and disability inclusion, as well as the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA)

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
Recruit or deploy cluster/AoR coordination staff with knowledge and experience on PSEA, policy commitments and cross-cutting issues	C/AoR Coordinator supervisor HR Manager	
Address PSEA, policy commitments and cross-cutting issues in a coordinated manner through the internal inter-sectorial coordination committees and meetings	C/AoR Coordinator supervisor Deputy Representative – Programmes Chief of Field Operations/Emergency	See chapter on <a href="#">UNICEF Programmes and Cluster/AoRs</a>
Appoint a focal point/specialist in CO to advise UNICEF-led clusters/AoR on better mainstreaming people-centered and accountability approaches in their work	Representative Deputy Representative - Programmes	<a href="#">Recommended good practices for the minimum structure of coordination teams at country level for UNICEF as a Cluster Lead Agency.</a>
Champion a people-centered approach in HCT and ICCG meetings	Representative	
Ensure that SAGs are inclusive and organizations such as women-led organizations, youth-led organizations, organizations of people with disabilities, and local organizations are part of them	C/AoR Coordinator	
Oversee that cluster/AoR strategies, plans and monitoring frameworks take into account PSEA, policy commitments and cross-cutting issues	C/AoR Coordinator supervisor	
Oversee the implementation of the top 5 key actions for each of the 6 cluster/AoR core functions as described in the Practical Guide to Advancing Policy Commitments and Cross-cutting Issues <sup>9</sup>	C/AoR Coordinator supervisor C/AoR Coordinator	
Support partners to be part of inter-agency coordination structures for AAP and for GBV risk mitigation and for disability inclusion	Programme Chief	<a href="#">AAP Handbook</a>
Advocate for local actors' participation in coordination mechanisms in which UNICEF is a key party, such as inter-cluster coordination groups and HCT; advocate for the HCT to have an AAP strategy reflected in the cluster strategies and HNO and HRP	Representative	<a href="#">AAP Handbook</a>
Ensure coordination between the cluster/AoR and other interagency platforms on AAP, including engaging with the AAP Working Group (or Community Engagement Working Group or other denominations), which can support the cluster/AoR in promoting a collective community participation approach, collective information provision and messaging, and a collective complaints and feedback mechanism	C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">AAP Handbook</a>
Ensure that Cluster/AoR Coordinators engage with development coordination mechanisms to foster linkages as relevant	C/AoR Coordinator C/AoR Coordinator supervisor	

<sup>9</sup> Included here is the Competency Framework developed by the Global Nutrition Cluster; frameworks for the other clusters/AoR only present minor variations to make it relevant to the specific Cluster/AoR, beside the adaptation of Competency A2.

Leverage UNICEF dual mandate and engagement with both humanitarian and development actors to create opportunities to connect humanitarian, development and peace actions	C/AoR Coordinator Programme Chief	<a href="#">Procedure on Humanitarian, Development and Peace Nexus</a>
Clarify for both Cluster/AoR Coordinators and CO programme/field operations teams the role that clusters/AoRs can play in strengthening national systems and building national capacities	C/AoR Coordinator supervisor Deputy Representative – Programmes Chief Field Operations/Emergency	See Section on the <b>strategic value of clusters/AoRs</b> in the extended Guide
Oversee clusters/AoR work on preparedness and contingency planning	C/AoR Coordinator supervisor	See chapter on <b>preparedness</b>
Where relevant, support multi-year humanitarian response strategies and inter-agency plans	Representative	
Strengthen government/authorities' capacities – especially for local governments – for coordination and information management so that they can co-lead clusters/AoRs at national and subnational levels, or at least participate actively and meaningfully in coordination mechanisms	Programme Chief	<a href="#">Technical note on Localization in Humanitarian Action for Children</a>
Support local (national and sub-national) CSOs to initiate mechanisms that promote coordination among CSOs, such as CSO networks, for a or consortia	C/AoR Coordinator Programme Chief	<a href="#">Technical note on Localization in Humanitarian Action for Children</a>
Support the mapping of local actors, including WLOs, organizations for people with disabilities, youth organizations and LGBTQI organizations to ensure diversity in cluster/AoR membership	C/AoR Coordinator Programme Chief	<a href="#">Technical note on Localization in Humanitarian Action for Children</a>
Support local actors to access humanitarian funding, including country-based pool funds	C/AoR Coordinator Programme Chief	<a href="#">Technical note on Localization in Humanitarian Action for Children</a>
Ensure effective coordination with government authorities in case of deactivation of clusters and transfer to them of humanitarian coordination responsibilities	C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">Technical note on Localization in Humanitarian Action for Children</a> ; See chapter on <b>deactivation</b> in the extended Guide
Support the institutionalization of the IASC Guidelines on Disability Inclusion; IASC PSEA guidelines; IASC GBV guidelines, gender handbook and other resources and measurement indicators on a people-centered approach; and integrate their recommendations into clusters/AoRs tools	C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">IASC GBV Guidelines</a> <a href="#">IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities</a>
Leverage existing (or potential) partnerships with Organizations of People with Disabilities (OPD), youth led organizations, women-led organizations to facilitate and support their participation in UNICEF-led clusters/AoR	Programme Chief	<a href="#">Disability Inclusive Humanitarian Toolkit</a>
Ensure budget for people-centered humanitarian approaches and inclusion is considered in cluster/AoR plans and in resource mobilization processes and initiatives	C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">Disability Inclusive Humanitarian Toolkit</a> ; <a href="#">AAP Handbook</a> ; <a href="#">AAP helpdesk</a>
If not existing, advocate at the HCT for the establishment of a disability focal point, focal agency or task force to represent disability issues in humanitarian coordination mechanisms	Representative	<a href="#">Disability Inclusive Humanitarian Toolkit</a>
When establishing cluster or sector capacity, identify, create and foster partnerships with government stakeholders and civil society organizations that have expertise on disability, gender, GBV and/or representing marginalized group	C/AoR Coordinator Programme Chief	<a href="#">Disability Inclusive Humanitarian Toolkit</a>
Support the RC/HC and UNCT/ HCT to establish or strengthen a PSEA Network, including coordination and co-chair functions, to scale up PSEA from the outset of the emergency response.	Representative	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook; Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) in Humanitarian Action: A UNICEF Handbook</a> (draft)

Integrate IASC PSEA core activities and indicators in the HRP and/or any other relevant IA response plan (including clusters/AoR ones), with requisite funding requirements included to establish IA PSEA systems.	C/AoR Coordinator C/AoR Coordinator supervisor Chief of Field Operations/Emergency	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
In collaboration with the IA PSEA Network, ensure that SOPs or a protocol on IA reporting and referral is established and rolled out at the outset of the emergency response. The SOPs or protocol should connect with IA community-based complaint mechanisms for PSEA.	C/AoR Coordinator C/AoR Coordinator supervisor	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>

## USEFUL LINKS

- ① ICON pages:
  - [Centrality of Protection](#)
  - [AAP page](#) and [AAP Commitment page](#)
  - [Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus and Humanitarian-Development-Peace \(HDP\) Nexus](#)
  - [Localization and Localisation](#)
  - [GBViE](#)
  - [Disability](#)
  - [PSEA](#) and [PSEA in Emergency Response](#)
- ① Procedures: [Procedure on Humanitarian development, and peace nexus](#)
- ① Guidance: [Emergency Handbook, AAP Handbook, HPC Toolkit on GBV Risk Mitigation for UNICEF-Led Clusters and AoRs and matching matrices; Guidance for Risk-Informed Programming \(GRIP\); Technical note on Localization in Humanitarian Action for Children; Disability Inclusive Humanitarian Toolkit ; Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse \(PSEA\) in Humanitarian Action: A UNICEF Handbook](#) (draft)
- ① Tools:
  - [Tip sheet to integrate localization in HNO and HRP](#)
  - [Mainstreaming accountability to affected population and core people-related issues in the humanitarian programme cycle through the cluster system](#)
  - HPC toolkit on GBV risk mitigation for UNICEF-led clusters/AoRs: [CP](#), [Nutrition](#), [WASH](#), [Education](#)
  - [Quality check-list for cross-cutting themes in HNO/HRP](#)
  - [Essential actions on disability-inclusive humanitarian action](#)
- ① Other resources:
  - [IASC Collective AAP Framework](#) (draft, 2021)
  - [Inter-Agency Toolkit on Localization in Humanitarian Coordination](#)
  - [IASC Guidance. Inclusion of persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action](#)
  - AGORA Course: [An Introduction to the HDP Nexus for AoRs/clusters/sectors](#)
  - [Update on UNICEF humanitarian action with a focus on linking humanitarian and development programming](#)
  - CP AoR, Good practice [Accelerating Local and National NGOs leadership in Humanitarian Coordination mechanisms](#)
  - [Guidance on strengthening disability inclusion in Humanitarian Response Plans](#)
  - [IASC GBV Guidelines](#)
  - [IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities](#)
  - [IASC Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#)
  - [IASC PSEA](#)

# 9. Inter-cluster coordination

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ① UNICEF participates in ICCG through Cluster/AoR Coordinators, and can also influence it through the HCT, to which the ICCG reports.
- ① UNICEF can leverage its dominant position as the lead of four clusters/AoR to ensure that all cross-sectoral opportunities are taken to respond to the needs of children.
- ① UNICEF COs should play a proactive, strong role in interagency cash coordination and are encouraged where relevant and possible to become programmatic co-chair of the CWG.
- ① Until a clearer division of labour is established, UNICEF should seek clarity within the HCT/ICCG on the division of roles and responsibilities between CWG and clusters/AoR.

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
Advocate in the HCT, as necessary, for improved inter-cluster coordination to address key strategic issues with the multi-cluster approach	Representative	
Participate in CWG meetings and activities as needed	C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">Cash Coordination Model</a>
Designate or recruit a Humanitarian Cash Transfer Specialist or Focal Point (P3/NOC or above) to provide technical expertise to emergency and programme colleagues, as well as coordinating internal and/or interagency initiatives and cluster-related HCTs activities	Deputy Representative - Programmes HR Manager	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
Promote the use of Humanitarian Cash Transfers, both from a sector and multisectoral perspective, in HCT and cluster/AoRs	Representative C/AoR Coordinator	<a href="#">HCTs guidance</a>
Seek clarity on the division of labour between clusters/AoRs and the Cash Working Group by discussing it in the HCT and ICCG/CWG, and determining a division of labour adapted to the country context	Representative C/AoR Coordinator	
If relevant and possible, take a leadership role in the CWG as programmatic lead	Representative	
When recruiting C/AoR Coordinators, include knowledge and experience about HCTs in the profile	C/AoR Coordinator supervisor HR Manager	

## USEFUL LINKS

- ① ICON page: [HCT Resource Site](#)
- ① Guidance: [UNICEF Humanitarian Cash Transfer Programme Guidance](#) (chapter on Coordination), [Emergency Handbook](#)
- ① Other resources:
  - [IASC Cash Coordination Model](#)

# 10. Partnership

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ① Within a cluster, Cluster/AoR members are equal partners to the CLA
- ① To maintain the credibility of UNICEF as CLA, UNICEF must ensure a clear separation of the role of the cluster/AoR lead and that of UNICEF as a donor to partners
- ① Strengthening capacities of partners is an advantage for the UNICEF CO, which will have a broader pool of potential implementing partners for response, better access to affected populations through these local partnerships, a timelier and better response, and a stronger membership of the cluster/AoR it leads.

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
Engage with cluster/AoR members as equal partners (not as implementing partners) within the context of the Cluster/AoR	C/AoR Coordinator Programme Chief	<a href="#">Principles of Partnership</a>
Maintain UNICEF's roles as CLA and donor clearly separate, even though a donor/grantee relationship exists with between some cluster/AoR members and UNICEF programmes	C/AoR Coordinator Programme Chief	
Strengthen capacity of cluster/AoR members who are also UNICEF implementing partners (especially local organizations) by adding a capacity strengthening component to the partnership agreements	Programme Chief	

## USEFUL LINKS

- ① Other resources:
  - [Principles of Partnership](#)

# 11. Preparedness

CORE COMMITMENTS	BENCHMARK
Improve humanitarian response through investing in preparedness with a focus on enabling effective and timely response, reducing costs and reaching the most vulnerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All COs, ROs and HQ meet the Minimum Preparedness Standards (MPS) as per the UNICEF Procedure on Preparedness for Emergency Response and the Guidance Note on Preparedness for Emergency Response in UNICEF</li> </ul>

KEY TAKEAWAYS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take into consideration cluster/AoR coordination in CO preparedness</li> <li>Ensure UNICEF-led clusters/AoRs participate as needed in interagency preparedness and complete their own sectoral preparedness</li> </ul>

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
Ensure CO risk analysis and corresponding scenarios take into consideration (if relevant) cluster activation or other forms of humanitarian coordination; and ensure preparedness actions take into consideration clusters/AoR where relevant (especially but not exclusive to MPS2, MPS4, MPS6, MPS7)	Chief of Field Operations/Emergency Deputy Representative - Programmes	<a href="#">EPP – Step 1 (Risk Analysis)</a> <a href="#">EPP – Step 2 (Scenarios)</a> <a href="#">EPP – Step 4 (MPS); Emergency Preparedness Procedure</a>
Identify personnel within the CO who can build national capacity for sector/cluster coordination and sector-wide information management prior to, during and after an emergency and, if needed, temporarily coordinate UNICEF-led or co-led sectors	Representative	<a href="#">MPS 2; Emergency Handbook</a>
Strengthen internal knowledge (especially with Programme Chiefs, managers and decision makers in the CO) on the cluster system and on UNICEF accountabilities as CLA	Chief of Field Operations/Emergency Deputy Representative - Programmes	
Ensure Cluster/AoR Coordinators and IMOs – as well as Chiefs of Section and Emergency Focal Points – have an induction session with the respective global clusters, where training options are discussed	Programme Chief Chief of Field Operations/Emergency C/AoR Coordinator supervisor	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
Systems strengthening: Based on humanitarian principles, and where feasible, establish and maintain relationships with local actors/authorities. Strengthen the preparedness plans of local authorities through technical assistance, as required. This includes the existing and/or proposed coordination structures that will be used during a response, and in the event of a cluster activation and/or deactivation	Programme Chief	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
If simulations are conducted, ensure to include cluster/AoR leadership role in the design (injects) and in the simulation exercise	Chief of Field Operations/Emergency	
Identify possible sources of funding for cluster/AoR coordination teams and cluster coordination activities; explore resource mobilization opportunities for cluster/AoR coordination through the Emergency Preparedness Funding Initiatives	Chief of Field Operations/Emergency Resource Mobilization Manager	

As member of the HCT, and particularly in high-risk countries, advocate for risk analysis, scenario developments, interagency preparedness, preparedness and/or contingency planning to be initiated/updated as relevant	Representative	<a href="#">IASC ERP Guidance</a>
Oversee that cluster/AoR preparedness is completed and that UNICEF-led / co-led clusters/AoRs participate in interagency preparedness initiatives as required	C/AoR Coordinator supervisor	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a> ; <a href="#">IASC ERP Guidance</a>

#### USEFUL LINKS

- ① ICON page: [Risk Analysis and Emergency Preparedness](#)
- ① Procedure: [UNICEF Procedure on Preparedness for Emergency Response](#) (to be reviewed in 2023)
- ① Guidance: [Preparedness for Emergency Response in UNICEF Guidance Note 2016](#) and [EPP Help. Emergency Handbook. Guidance on Risk-Informed Programming \(GRIP\)](#)
- ① Tools: [MPS 2 – Humanitarian Coordination Template](#)
- ① Other resources:
  - [Emergency Preparedness Platform](#) (to be reviewed mid-2024)
  - [In-Depth Simulation Package](#) (includes clusters in the simulation scenarios)
  - Mozambique good practice showing how preparedness contributed to a faster cluster response [Mozambique – Emergency Preparedness in Action for Cyclone Response.pdf](#)
  - First Action Initiative (FAI) and Co-Funding Initiative [Emergency Preparedness Funding Initiatives](#)
  - [IASC ERP Guidance](#)
  - [AGORA Humanitarian Coordination Learning Channel](#)

# 12. Planning, programme implementation, monitoring and reporting

CORE COMMITMENTS	BENCHMARK
<p><b>3: Response planning</b></p> <p>Response plans are evidence-based and consistent with interagency planning. They address coverage, quality and equity, adapt to evolving needs, ensure conflict sensitivity and link humanitarian and development programming</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Planning is informed by evidence, including needs assessments, vulnerability analysis, pre-crisis data, learning from evaluations/ reviews, partner dialogue and feedback from affected populations</li> <li>① Indicators and targets are identified, including high frequency indicators</li> <li>① Ongoing needs assessment and monitoring plans are in place and reviewed twice a year, addressing coverage, quality, equity and “do no harm”</li> <li>① Humanitarian and development programming are linked through preparedness, system strengthening, resilience and transition planning</li> </ul>
<p><b>4: Monitoring</b></p> <p>The humanitarian situation and the coverage, quality and equity of the humanitarian response are monitored to inform ongoing corrective action and future planning processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Progress against targets is regularly reported, including through high frequency indicators</li> <li>① Structured field monitoring, including partner dialogue and feedback from affected populations, is undertaken in line with the UNICEF Field</li> </ul> <p>MONITORING GUIDANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Situation Monitoring tracks evolving humanitarian needs at a frequency appropriate to the context</li> <li>① Intended and unintended consequences<sup>31</sup> are monitored, with a focus on equity and conflict sensitivity</li> </ul>

KEY TAKEAWAYS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① In Country Programme Planning (CPP), issues related to cluster/AoR coordination should be considered by countries with high risk of emergencies (of any kind) and countries with protracted crises.</li> <li>① In countries where clusters/AoR are already activated, engage them to contribute to the planning process, through data and analysis, or by participating in relevant CPP of the steps</li> <li>① Where new humanitarian needs arise due to deterioration or sudden-onset crises that require additional humanitarian/ emergency interventions, revise the existing work plan structure and include additional activities to respond to emerging needs, as a first option, or develop a new humanitarian plan if needed. In both cases, include leadership and humanitarian coordination.</li> <li>① Monitor CLA accountabilities through the dedicated Cluster Monitoring Tool</li> <li>① Ensure COs support the cluster information management function</li> <li>① Streamline reporting and ensure that UNICEF Ips are not required to ‘double report’ to both eTools PRP and 4/5Ws.</li> <li>① Report cluster/AoR leadership results and achievements in SitReps and COAR.</li> </ul>

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
Ensure inclusion of CLA role and accountabilities in relevant steps of the CPP	Representative Chief of PME	<a href="#">Core Standard Indicators</a>

Participate as relevant in the different steps of the CPP (or facilitate cluster/AoR member participation), share data and analysis that can be useful for UNICEF strategic planning	C/AoR Coordinator	
Include CLA responsibilities/humanitarian coordination and relevant Core Standard and Standard Indicators in programme RRP, and estimate ORE required	Programme Chief	<a href="#">Core Standard Indicators</a>
Ensure cluster/AoR leadership or humanitarian coordination is included in revised AWP/RWP in case of emergency, or in new humanitarian plans, developed in line with the CCCs, IA planning and with the contingency plans developed under MPS where available.	Deputy Representative - Programmes Chief of PME Chief of Field Operations/Emergency Programme Chief	<a href="#">Operational Response Plan Template</a> and <a href="#">Response Plan Narrative Template</a> ; <a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
Implement cluster coordination monitoring, the 3rd pillar of Humanitarian Performance Monitoring (HPM) including through its dedicated tool	Chief of PME Chief of Field Operations/ Emergency Programme Chief C/AoR Coordinator supervisor	<a href="#">Cluster Coordination Monitoring</a> ; <a href="#">Quick guide on cluster coordination monitoring</a> ; <a href="#">Cluster Monitoring Tool</a> ; <a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
Oversee that CCPM is conducted regularly (3–6 months after activation of cluster/AoR and then annually)	C/AoR Coordinator supervisor	
Through the HCT, actively engage in the planning of cluster architecture reviews and in oversight of review implementation, as well as in discussion on the way forward based on findings of the architecture review	Representative C/AoR Coordinator	
Include the 12 Minimum Commitments for Cluster/AoR Membership as annex in PCA/SSFAs with partners who are also cluster/AoR members	Programme Chief Chief of Field Operations/Emergency	<a href="#">12 Minimum Commitments</a> See extended Guide
Consider including capacity building on data quality and information management in PCA/SSFAs with partners who are also cluster/AoR members	Programme Chief Chief of Field Operations/Emergency	<a href="#">Agora</a> courses as relevant
Align the indicators chosen in donor appeals (HAC), HPM, UNICEF's response plan, AWPs, IA plans (HRP), Results Assessment Module (RAM) in inSight, PDs and Small-Scale Funding Agreements. Indicators should measure access, reach, quality and equity of humanitarian programming, as well as coverage.	Chief of PME C/AoR Coordinator Programme Chief	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
Identify preferred solution for streamlining reporting for UNICEF implementing partners who are also cluster/AoR members, either through eTools or 4W/5W. IPs should not be required to 'double report'. Either UNICEF collects reporting and passes it on to clusters, or IPs report to clusters and UNICEF extracts the UNICEF funded results.	Chief of PME Programme Chief	
Ensure regular reporting of cluster/AoR leadership achievements in SitReps and other relevant reports	Chief of Field Operations/ Emergency Deputy Representative - Programmes	<a href="#">SitRep Guidelines</a> and <a href="#">SitRep Annotated Template</a>

## USEFUL LINKS

- ① ICON pages:
  - [Country Programme Document \(CPD\) Development](#)
  - [Humanitarian Planning](#) and [Humanitarian PME - Planning](#)
  - [Cluster Coordination Monitoring](#)
- ① Procedures:
  - [UNICEF Procedure on Programme Implementation: Work Planning, Partnerships and Risk Management](#)
- ① Guidance:
  - [SitAn Core Guidance](#) and [SitAn Thematic Toolkit](#)
  - [Country Programme Planning Guidance](#)
  - [Guidance on Risk-Informed Programming \(GRIP\)](#)
  - [Programme Implementation Handbook](#)
  - [Using Contingency and Response Plans Templates](#)
  - [CCC indicator guidance](#)
  - [Quick Guide on Cluster Coordination Monitoring](#)
  - [Key messages on Cluster Coordination for the UNICEF Country Management Team \(CMT\)](#)
  - [SitRep Guidelines](#) and [SitRep Annotated Template](#)
  - [COAR Guidelines 2022](#)
- ① Tools:
  - [Minimum Preparedness Standard 2 – Humanitarian Coordination](#)
  - List of [Core Standard Indicators](#)
  - [Operational Response Plan Template](#) and [Response Plan Narrative Template](#)
  - [Cluster Monitoring Tool](#)
- ① Other resources:
  - [Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring](#) (IASC)

# 13. UNICEF programmes and clusters/AoR

CORE COMMITMENTS	BENCHMARK
<p><b>Commitment to deliver on the CCCs.</b></p> <p>The CCCs state the organization’s – and each Country Office’s – commitment to respond, regardless of the kind of crisis, irrespective of a country’s Gross National Income level, or legal status of the affected populations.</p> <p>UNICEF has established clear accountabilities and systems to ensure that all UNICEF personnel and all sectors of the organization at global, regional, country and local level are empowered and held accountable for the fulfilment of the CCCs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① All UNICEF personnel, sectors and offices of UNICEF at global, regional, country and local level are responsible for the fulfilment of the CCCs.</li> <li>① All UNICEF personnel, whether operating in a humanitarian or development context are expected to know the CCCs, promote their implementation and contribute to their fulfilment, according to the context.</li> <li>① Country Representatives, with the support of the Country Management Team (CMT) and the guidance of the RO and HQ, are responsible for ensuring UNICEF delivers on its IASC commitments at country level, including on coordination</li> </ul>

KEY TAKEAWAYS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① UNICEF is an essential member of clusters/AoRs (besides being CLA) and its active participation in its processes and initiatives is fundamental for the good functioning of the cluster/AoR</li> <li>① Coordination and collaboration between UNICEF programmes and clusters/AoR is articulated around: participation in respective meetings, inclusion in planning, funding for coordination functions and activities, release of funds, streamlining of processes with partners/cluster and AoR members, administrative support</li> <li>① Ensure in-house inter-cluster coordination across UNICEF-led clusters and AoR</li> </ul>

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
Ensure UNICEF active participation in Cluster/AoR meetings and processes	Programme Chief	<a href="#">CCCs</a> See <a href="#">Responsibility matrix</a> around 6+1 functions See <a href="#">Tasks matrix</a> See extended Guide
Orientation. Ensure Cluster/AoR Coordinators and IMOs, as well as the Chiefs of Section and Emergency Focal Points, have an induction session with the respective global clusters/AoR, where training options are discussed	Programme Chief Chief of Field Operations/ Emergency	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
Participate in Strategic Advisory Groups, where these are created	Programme Chief	
Facilitate collaboration between cluster/AoR teams and UNICEF programme sections (including on cross-sectoral programmes and topics) and commit necessary resources	Programme Chief	
Participate in UNICEF programme section meetings, including when relevant PMT and EMT meetings	C/AoR Coordinator	
Include coordination activities in annual workplans	Programme Chief	See chapter on <a href="#">Programme implementation</a>
Include budget for coordination functions in funding proposals submitted to HRP, pooled fund and donors	Programme Chief	

Ensure timely release of cluster/AoR funding and adequate administrative support	Programme Chief	See chapter on <a href="#">Operational and Administrative Support</a>
Coordinate and streamline processes with UNICEF partners who are also cluster/AoR members on information management, reporting and other administrative processes	Programme Chief C/AoR Coordinator Chief of PME	
Promote effective in-house inter-cluster coordination across UNICEF-led clusters and AoRs, thus enhancing UNICEF-led cluster coherence of approach and collaboration and reducing duplication of effort on common issues. This will also promote programme integration within UNICEF	Deputy Representative - Programmes C/AoR Coordinator supervisor	

#### USEFUL LINKS

- ① Guidance: [CCCs](#), [Emergency Handbook](#)
- ① Other resources: [AGORA Humanitarian Coordination Learning Channel](#)

# 14. Human Resources (HR)

CORE COMMITMENTS	BENCHMARK
<p><b>1: Timely deployment</b> Timely deployment of personnel at the onset of emergencies enables rapid emergency response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experienced and suitable personnel are identified within 48 hours after the sudden onset or deterioration of a humanitarian crisis and are deployed through surge mechanisms</li> </ul>
<p><b>2: Planning</b> ROs, COs and field offices are adequately staffed to enable ongoing humanitarian response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human resource plans are established for immediate, medium- and longer-term needs, including scale-up, scale-down and exit strategies</li> </ul>
<p><b>3: Well-being</b> Duty of care for UNICEF personnel is assured</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Duty of care measures are in place</li> <li>UNICEF personnel receive information on available care/support</li> </ul>
<p><b>4: Capacity</b> UNICEF personnel have appropriate knowledge of emergency preparedness and response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personnel complete applicable mandatory training and have access to supplementary training/learning on emergency preparedness and response</li> </ul>
<p><b>5: Standards of conduct</b> UNICEF personnel observe organizational standards of conduct, both as an individual responsibility and an organizational commitment. These include standards on discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority, child safeguarding, and SEA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards of conduct are disseminated and UNICEF personnel complete applicable mandatory training</li> <li>Appropriate and timely action is taken in response to any breaches</li> <li>Leadership promotes a culture that aligns with the organisation's standards of conduct</li> <li>Complaint and feedback mechanisms are in place and accessible to affected populations and external stakeholders</li> </ul>

KEY TAKEAWAYS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF is responsible for ensuring the timely recruitment of adequate numbers of staff with the appropriate level of seniority, facilitation and technical skills to ensure effective cluster/AoR coordination, including information management.</li> <li>As a minimum, UNICEF is committed to recruiting (at national level): a Cluster/AoR Coordinator and an Information Management Officer; it is also recommended to engage a dedicated gender/GBV technical expert for the CO within all UNICEF-led clusters/AoR, to mainstream gender and GBV risk mitigation into cluster work.</li> <li>Information management is not an optional component. Effective information management can have a significant impact on the response, advocacy, and on influencing key actors, including donors – therefore this position's value should not be underestimated.</li> <li>Cluster/AoR Coordinators should report directly to the Representative. Alternative reporting lines might be considered provided that the flow of information and communication with the Representative continues to function well.</li> <li>Double-hatting as a long-term solution is discouraged, except in specific cases.</li> <li>Cluster/AoR Coordinators have an overriding duty to the partners and must act as neutral representatives of the cluster/AoR as a whole, rather than as a representative of UNICEF.</li> <li>COs can request immediate support through internal and external surge support mechanisms, while launching recruitment for coordination positions as needed.</li> <li>Once on board, coordination teams shall be introduced to key external stakeholders and in UNICEF CO – in particular to programme teams. Proper onboarding and performance evaluations are also required.</li> </ul>

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
Preparedness. Define staffing needs for the emergency response in line with the MPSs (including technical skills, cross-cultural, communication and leadership skills). Consider whether the office would benefit from 'surging back-fill' to maintain regular work processes, allowing a CFO, Section or Unit Chief to focus on the emergency response	Representative Programme Chief HR Manager	<a href="#">MPS3</a> <a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>

<p>Staff mobilization. Suitable CO staff identified during emergency preparedness planning take on the Cluster/AoR Coordinator role immediately when clusters are activated. In parallel, initiate deployment of national-level Cluster Coordinators and IMOs from ERT, Global Cluster Rapid Response Teams, surge or stand-by partners (including CashCap) on a 'no regrets' basis for a minimum period of two months</p>	<p>Programme Chief HR Manager Chief of Field Operations/Emergency</p>	<p><b>MPS3</b> <b><a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a></b> <b><a href="#">HR in Emergencies Toolkit</a></b></p>
<p>Surge Tracking Sheet (STS): Create an STS covering immediate staffing needs. Define in the STS if support is required on-ground or can be provided remotely. Circulate the STS to RO, DHR Surge Desk and EMOPS for inputs</p>	<p>HR Manager Chief of Field Operations/Emergency</p>	<p><b><a href="#">STS E-staffing template</a></b> <b><a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a></b> <b><a href="#">HR in Emergencies Toolkit</a></b></p>
<p>Surge: Assess the STS and determine, in cooperation with RO, CO and/or EMOPS as needed, (ERT Focal Point and Standby Team) appropriate surge mechanisms (including Stand-by partners). Contact Surge Cell which will source support. Ensure that all personnel are informed of the onboarding and orientation in emergencies, which includes the predeployment in emergencies. Ensure that all personnel are informed of and complete the Humanitarian Learning Pathways</p>	<p>Representative Regional Office HR Manager Chief of Field Operations/Emergency</p>	<p><b><a href="#">STS E-staffing template</a></b> <b><a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a></b> <b><a href="#">HR in Emergencies Toolkit</a></b></p>
<p>Oversee timely recruitment of cluster/AoR coordination teams with adequate seniority level and reporting lines</p>	<p>Representative</p>	<p><b><a href="#">Decision tree (national)</a></b> and <b><a href="#">Decision tree (subnational)</a></b> <b><a href="#">QTA – Options for coordination teams</a></b> <b><a href="#">Recommended reporting lines and Advantages &amp; Disadvantages</a></b> See extended Guide for tools above <b><a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a></b> <b><a href="#">HR in Emergencies Toolkit</a></b></p>
<p>Ensure the timely recruitment of cluster/AoR coordination teams with adequate seniority level and reporting lines; at a minimum, recruit national Cluster/AoR Coordinator and IMO roles for a period of at least six months for L2 and L3 emergencies. Cluster Coordinators at the national level are expected to be at P4 level</p>	<p>C/AoR Coordinator supervisor HR Manager Regional Office</p>	<p><b><a href="#">Decision tree (national)</a></b> and <b><a href="#">Decision tree (subnational)</a></b> <b><a href="#">QTA – Options for coordination teams</a></b> <b><a href="#">Recommended reporting lines and Advantages &amp; Disadvantages</a></b> See extended Guide for tools above <b><a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a></b> <b><a href="#">HR in Emergencies Toolkit</a></b></p>
<p>Incorporate all cluster/AoR coordination posts into the PBR and operational staff matrix. Conduct a mail-poll PBR within the first month of a sudden-onset emergency or L2/L3 declaration</p>	<p>Representative Deputy Representative – Operations HR Manager Regional Office</p>	<p><b><a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a></b></p>
<p>Support sourcing for critical emergencies: Complete assessments for emergency recruitments within 20 days. Ensure approvals for emergency recruitments are received within five days. Ensure offer letters are sent within four business days, and candidates accept the offer within three business days. Use single-sourcing options in the best interest of the organization. This should be prioritized for L2/L3 emergencies</p>	<p>HR Manager C/AoR Coordinator supervisor Regional Office</p>	<p><b><a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a></b> <b><a href="#">HR in Emergencies Toolkit</a></b></p>

Onboarding and orientation: Ensure that new UNICEF personnel receive a comprehensive onboarding and orientation	Representative HR Manager	<a href="#">Onboarding guide for supervisors</a> <a href="#">A Head Start: A Quick Guide for Country and Regional Offices for Onboarding and Orientation in Emergencies</a>
Ensure capacity development and learning opportunities for Cluster/AoR Coordination teams	C/AoR Coordinator supervisor	<a href="#">Humanitarian Coordination Learning Channel on Agora</a>
Ensure regular meetings between C/AoR Coordinators and the Representative	Representative C/AoR Coordinator supervisor C/AoR Coordinator	
Mission end performance appraisal: Ensure systematic performance conversations and evaluations for all deployed personnel at the end of deployment. Ensure that the performance evaluation is properly recorded. Ensure an exit interview is completed	DHR HR Manager Programme Chief Operations Chief	<a href="#">Achieve SBP Performance Evaluation Form</a>

#### USEFUL LINKS

- ① ICON page: HR in Emergencies
- ① Procedure: [Procedure on Recruitment and Staffing in Emergencies Situations, Emergency Procedures](#)
- ① Guidance: [Emergency Handbook, Recommended good practices for the minimum structure of coordination teams at country level for UNICEF as a Cluster Lead Agency, HR in Emergencies Toolkit](#)
- ① Tools:
  - Cluster/AoR Coordinator GJD, Information Management Officer GJD, [Gender/GBV Specialist GJD](#)<sup>10</sup>
  - [Decision tree \(national\)](#) and [Decision tree \(subnational\)](#)
- ① Other resources:
  - [A talent management strategy for cluster coordination and information management.](#)
  - [A Head Start: A Quick Guide for Country and Regional Offices for Onboarding and Orientation in Emergencies](#)
  - [Resources for Managers](#)
  - [The Essential guide for UNICEF Managers](#)
  - [Addressing workplaces issues in UNICEF](#)
  - [Preparing a conversation with someone causing you issues](#)
  - [Humanitarian Coordination Learning Channel - Agora](#)

10 The Cluster/AoR Coordinator and Information Management Officer GJD are being finalized. Contact [GCCS](#) for the approved versions.

# 15. Operational and administrative support

## CORE COMMITMENTS

## BENCHMARK

### OVERARCHING COMMITMENT

All UNICEF offices are fit for purpose and personnel know and contribute to the application of minimum preparedness standards and emergency procedures, to enable the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance by UNICEF and its partners.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ① Since cluster/AoR coordination is a UNICEF accountability, by extension all relevant Operational Commitments apply to cluster/AoR-related UNICEF activities in the same way as they apply to programme activities
- ① The CO shall provide the required operational and administrative support for their effective functioning to cluster/AoRs coordination teams at national and sub-national levels.

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
Ensure CO preparedness (especially MPS3 and MPS4) take into consideration requirements for cluster/AoR Coordination	Chief of Field Operations/Emergency	<a href="#">MPS3</a> <a href="#">MPS4</a> <a href="#">Preparedness Procedure</a>
Provide required operational and administrative support for clusters/ AoR at national and sub-national level, including office space, ICT equipment and technical support, logistics support, transport, translation, administrative support	Deputy Representative – Operations	<a href="#">Core Commitments for Children, Emergency Handbook</a>
Where required, designate relevant sectors/clusters as implementors in VISION, using generic vendor number 2500240235 to transfer supplies from UNICEF to sector/cluster partners. Ensure there is a signed TOR with results reporting requirements before releasing the supplies	C/AoR Coordinator Supply and Logistics Manager	<a href="#">Guideline Release Orders from CO warehouses.</a> <a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>

### USEFUL LINKS

- ① Procedure: [Preparedness Procedure](#)
- ① Guidance: [Emergency Handbook](#), [Guideline Release Orders from CO warehouses.](#)
- ① Tools: [MPS3](#) and [MPS4](#)

# 16. Resource mobilization for cluster/AoR coordination

CORE COMMITMENTS	BENCHMARK
<p><b>1: Mobilization of adequate and quality resources</b> Adequate and quality resources are mobilized in a timely and predictable manner to support preparedness and response to humanitarian and protection needs, particularly of the most vulnerable populations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi-year, predictable and flexible funding is mobilized from private and public sectors to reduce the gap between humanitarian needs and the resources available to meet them</li> <li>Funding is secured to support preparedness for faster, timely and more cost-effective responses</li> <li>Internal funding mechanisms (Emergency Programme Fund and Thematic Funding) are used to rapidly respond and scale up programmes</li> </ul>
<p><b>2: Linking humanitarian and development resources</b> Integration of humanitarian and development resources is enhanced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic investments are made from UNICEF thematic pools to support preparedness, humanitarian response and activities related to system strengthening and resilience-building</li> <li>Localization of humanitarian and development programming is supported through multi-year, predictable and flexible funding. Systems are in place to track, monitor and report on these investments</li> </ul>
<p><b>3: Impartiality and risk-sharing</b> Resources are allocated impartially, based on the needs of affected populations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Available resources are allocated based on needs assessment</li> <li>Procedures are in place to manage donor conditions at CO level</li> <li>Donors are aware of and understand UNICEF risk management policies</li> </ul>

KEY TAKEAWAYS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources for cluster/AoR coordination should include, in addition to post costs, funding of activities in support of cluster coordination functions (travel, equipment, core coordination and leadership activities)</li> <li>CO should prioritize funding for cluster/AoR roles</li> <li>Ensure that budget for coordination roles and CLA accountabilities is included in proposals to donors, in HRP and in HAC</li> </ul>

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
Mobilize resources specifically to fulfil CLA accountabilities; ensure that funding for CLA accountabilities is included in proposals to donors, as well as monitor and maintain opportunities for coordination and CLA accountabilities within CO pipeline	Representative Deputy Representative - Programmes Resource Mobilization Manager Programme Chief Chief of Field Operations/Emergency	<a href="#">Donor profiles</a>
Include humanitarian coordination and CLA accountabilities in CO RM strategy	Resource Mobilization Manager	
Develop arguments and/or investment case for funding coordination roles	Resource Mobilization Manager Chief of Field Operations/Emergency	
If the CO launches a HAC appeal, include coordination either as a standalone budget line or integrated into sectoral budget lines	Resource Mobilization Manager Programme Chief	<a href="#">2024 HAC guidance</a> , <a href="#">2024 HAC guidance on Funding Requirements</a>

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## USEFUL LINKS

- ① ICON page: [RM in Emergencies](#); [Global Humanitarian Thematic Fund](#); [Humanitarian Action for Children](#)
- ① Guidance: [2024 HAC guidance](#), [2024 HAC guidance on Funding Requirements](#) and [HAC Template Guidance](#)
- ① Tools: [Donor profiles](#)
- ① Other resources:
  - [Resource Mobilization e-course \(Agora\)](#)
  - [Investment case for the GHTF](#)

# 17. The role of the Regional Office

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ① The Regional Director is accountable for supporting Representatives in humanitarian situations to fulfil the UNICEF Cluster Lead Agency role, ensuring oversight, quality assurance and appropriate reporting on the progress of country teams in this regard, and systematic inclusion of cluster coordination roles in mandatory Level 2 and Level 3 emergency response evaluations.
- ① Regional Offices can assist COs on fulfilling their CLA accountabilities in preparedness, deployment of surge staff, support in recruitment of coordination teams, technical assistance and resource mobilization. They take a lead role in L2 emergencies and in regional crises.

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TOOLS AND REFERENCES
Provide oversight and support cluster/AoR leadership function at country level through technical support, capacity building, financial support for skills strengthening, and other actions as relevant; support Representatives in humanitarian situations to fulfil the UNICEF Cluster Lead Agency role	Regional Office	<a href="#">Accountability Compendium</a>
Support and actively participate into regional and cross-border coordination mechanisms, including in large-scale movement and migration crises, and in PHE	Regional Office Sector coordinator C/AoR Coordinator	See chapter on <a href="#">Other forms of humanitarian coordination</a>
Support COs by deploying surge staff for coordination and information management role, if needed	Regional Office	See <a href="#">Human Resources</a> chapter
Support the recruitment of national Cluster Coordinator and IMO roles for a period of at least six months for L2 and L3 emergencies	Representative HR Manager Regional Office	See <a href="#">Human Resources</a> chapter; <a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
Incorporate all cluster/AoR coordination posts into the PBR and operational staff matrix. Conduct a mail-poll PBR within the first month of a sudden-onset emergency or L2/L3 declaration	Representative Deputy Representative – Operations HR Manager Regional Office	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a>
Support sourcing for critical emergencies: Complete assessments for emergency recruitments within 20 days. Ensure approvals for emergency recruitments are received within five days. Ensure offer letters are sent within four business days, and candidates accept the offer within three business days. Use single-sourcing options in the best interest of the organization. This should be prioritized for L2/L3 emergencies	HR Manager C/AoR Coordinator supervisor Regional Office	<a href="#">Emergency Handbook</a> <a href="#">HR in Emergencies Toolkit</a>

## USEFUL LINKS

- ① Procedure: [UNICEF Procedure for Emergency Preparedness and Response](#)
- ① Guidance: [Accountability Compendium](#), [Emergency Handbook](#), [HR in Emergencies Toolkit](#)