

ANNEX D – Example template for communication planning

Using this template: Good communication with stakeholders should be ongoing in regular cluster work. This template is designed to help a cluster coordination team think through how communication on cluster transition will be done. It is applicable to clusters and Areas of Responsibility (AoRs), but the term ‘cluster’ is used to be concise.

A written communication plan is not required at cluster level, but it can be useful to have written commitments to communication, to hold the Cluster Coordinator and CLA to account, help manage expectations of stakeholders, and help maintain consistency of messaging. An overview can be included in the main transition strategy (see **IASC, Guidance on Cluster Transition and Deactivation, Annex B Example Transition Strategy Template**), and key messages might be developed as needed. If an HCT Communication Strategy is developed to support an over-arching response transition plan, the cluster approach should align with this. The following guiding questions can be used as inspiration. See **Annex A.4 Planning communication** for more considerations.

Define: Who will receive communication?

Identify which actors should receive communication about the cluster transition process and deactivation. For example: national and local government counterparts, affected people, cluster members at national and sub-national level (including local, national and international NGOs), other clusters, donors, development actors.

Define: Who will be communicating?

The main actors communicating on cluster transition will be the Cluster Coordinator (and members of the coordination team) and CLA senior management. Consider any other actors that may be asked for information about transition plans, to help ensure consistency of communication. For example: sub-national cluster members might be asked clarifications by local authorities, or Strategic Advisory Group members may update an NGO forum.

Define: What will be communicated?

Consider what information will need to be shared. Be clear about who is informed, who is consulted, and who are the decision-makers. It is important to be clear about what is changing – especially to differentiate coordination and operations changes. Messages should be adapted to be appropriate for different audiences.

Examples of topics that might require communication include:

- *HCT decision-making on cluster deactivation*
- *Cluster transition strategy development, reasons for development, and content*
- *Updates on cluster transition activities progress and monitoring*
- *Deactivation timeline*

Define: How and when will communication be done?

Set out the planned communication methods, and frequency if relevant. Communication should be transparent and inclusive and must take place at sub-national as well as national level. Stakeholders must be able to ask questions or raise concerns and receive answers and feedback. Ensure translation into local languages.

Examples of how communication can be done include:

- *Regular updates in national and sub-national cluster meetings*
- *Meetings between the CLA Representative and cluster members*
- *Briefings by the Cluster Coordinator/s on major decisions*
- *Introductory briefings to help all stakeholders understand the cluster system and transition implications*
- *Consultation processes supporting transition planning*

Drafting key messages

When significant changes occur, it can be helpful to draft key messages which the Cluster Coordinator (and coordination team), CLA, and cluster members can use to maintain consistency of communication. These should be designed to be sensitive, and to avoid negative interpretation as much as is possible. Reinforcing messages with recommendations about what to say, or not say – and when and why – can be helpful.