

ANNEX E – Examples of cluster transition and coordination structures after cluster deactivation

The following are examples of past cluster transitions, focusing on the planning processes undertaken and how any continuing coordination of remaining humanitarian response or emergency preparedness was structured and supported.

Education Cluster, Nepal (Government leadership; Link to development sector coordination; CLA coordination support)	1
Nutrition Cluster, Philippines (Government leadership; Preparedness for new emergencies; CLA coordination)	2
Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster, Ukraine (Transition planning)	3
Shelter Cluster, Nepal and Pakistan (Humanitarian and recovery coordination mechanisms)	5
WASH Cluster, Iraq (Government service delivery; Continued coordination support)	6
CCCM Cluster, Iraq (Phase-out of the cluster)	7
Protection Cluster, Iraq (Retaining international coordination on protection issues)	9
Child Protection AoR, Iraq (Government humanitarian and development leadership; Localization)	10

Government leadership; CLA coordination support;
Link to development sector coordination¹

EDUCATION CLUSTER
Nepal

Response and cluster leadership: The IASC cluster system was first activated in Nepal in 2008, following which the government established a national sectoral emergency response coordination system – locally called clusters – led by sectoral line ministries. In 2015, a major earthquake struck Nepal and the government requested international assistance due to the scale of the disaster. The IASC cluster system was reactivated, and a Flash Appeal launched. The Education Cluster was led by the Department of Education and co-led by UNICEF and Save the Children.

Planning the transition: Once the education response was moving into a recovery and reconstruction phase, a transition plan was drafted by the Cluster coordination team, based on discussions with Cluster members and government. A dual handover was planned: handover of recovery and reconstruction coordination to a unit within the Department of Education, and handover of preparedness to a dedicated emergency education coordination group linked with the development sector coordination structure. Advocacy for education emergency coordination to be institutionalized in government-led sectoral coordination was conducted by the Cluster coordination team, supported by the CLAs.

Transition activities included: a joint review of the education response between the Department of Education and Cluster members to inform future preparedness planning; revision of the national Nepal

1. See *Global Education Cluster, Guidance on Practical Steps towards Nexus*, 2023

Education Contingency Plan; gradual phase-out of sub-national coordination and gradual handover of coordination leadership (combined with capacity-strengthening); continuation of resourcing by the two CLAs; and IM and assessment tool adaptation and handover of tools and data. The Cluster also drafted a lessons learned report to support future coordination, and made recommendations for continuing coordination workplans.

Continuing coordination: A national emergency education cluster is now in place, part of the Government of Nepal's emergency coordination mechanism, adjusted from the original structure planned when the Cluster deactivated. It is led by a government unit and co-led by UNICEF and Save the Children, with membership of all relevant actors including UN and NGOs – responsible for preparedness and coordination of education emergency response at sub-national and national level. It has formalized and regular interaction with the development sector Local Education Group.

For education, Local Education Groups (LEGs) are established in many countries where clusters are activated, as a development sector working group focused on national education sector planning and systems-strengthening. They are chaired by the ministry for education, with participation of education development actors and international financial institutions (IFIs), and ordinarily one or two civil society organizations. In some countries, an education in emergencies working group is established to lead national strategy and preparedness, which may be associated with the LEG. In some countries, education working groups are managed by NGOs. In this case, a transition plan of an Education Cluster should start by engagement to understand where the mandate for education emergency response sits, and if an existing forum can take forward cluster coordination functions that need to continue¹.

Support to coordination has continued to be a priority of the two (former) CLAs – UNICEF and Save the Children – which has been integral to its success. This has included advocacy, technical support, and resourcing including the secondment of coordination and IM staff to the government. Sectoral (programmatic) staff from both CLAs were engaged with and supportive of the Education Cluster from its activation. The support of development-oriented staff was particularly important in initial relationship-building between the Cluster and Department of Education, and later in establishing formal links between the continuing emergency education cluster and the Local Education Group.

Government leadership; Preparedness for new emergencies; CLA coordination support

NUTRITION CLUSTER Philippines

Response and cluster leadership: The Government of the Philippines has a long-established national disaster management system. Designated government departments are responsible for emergency sectoral coordination, with UN counterparts identified to provide technical support. This 'national cluster approach' mirrors the IASC cluster system. In 2013, the government requested international support for the major emergency following Typhoon Haiyan, and the IASC clusters were activated. The Nutrition Cluster was led by UNICEF, supporting the government's National Nutrition Council (NNC) leadership of nutrition response.

Planning the transition: For most clusters, handover back to government leadership was planned as soon as feasible. Three months after activation, all clusters were requested to submit an initial transition plan for handover to national structures, identifying capacities required, as well as any challenges, and benchmarks.

Nutrition Cluster transition activities started in February, with phased handover of coordination leadership starting at sub-national level from June, and Cluster deactivation in November. This short

timeline was possible due to two conditions being met (reflecting IASC cluster deactivation criteria): a phase-down of emergency nutrition activities, and a government structure for leadership and implementation of nutrition response already being in place. A transition workshop with participation of Government, UN, and NGOs was the foundation for both operational and coordination transition. A Cluster transition plan was then drafted, including a risk analysis, transition approach for key cluster activities, consideration of accountability to affected people, and preparedness planning. It included a workplan with timelines, and provision for monitoring of the plan by the Cluster Strategic Advisory Group.

The Cluster set benchmarks for transition, which informed transition activities – with a focus on capacity-strengthening: *Government (NNC) demonstrates capacity and willingness to lead coordination, and maintain accountability for delivery; national Emergency Preparedness Response Strategy for nutrition updated; NNC Nutrition Coordinator in place, to take over from Cluster Coordinator; information management capacity in place; capacity development plan in place, with a plan for UNICEF and NNC/DoH to monitor progress and emerging needs.* The Global Nutrition Cluster delivered coordination training for government counterparts, and a Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring (CCPM) was conducted to help the NNC develop their coordination approach. The transition was enabled by close joint planning between the Cluster coordination team and the CLA, and the CLA continuation of coordination support after Cluster deactivation.

Continuing coordination: The nutrition coordination mechanism that continues is designed to maintain emergency preparedness on an ongoing basis. It is led by the NNC, and UNICEF has continued to provide coordination support through technical support and resourcing – benefiting from the knowledge and skills of national programmes staff who participated in the Cluster then were then given coordination support responsibilities. UNICEF initially funded staff positions to support IM and sub-national coordination, and later designated a programme staff member responsible for supporting NNC coordination on an ongoing basis. A national body meets quarterly to review preparedness, with membership of government departments, UN and key NNGO and INGOs. Sub-national coordination bodies are activated in an emergency and include all response actors, especially local actors. Preparedness plans are regularly reviewed, and coordination and Nutrition in Emergencies refresher trainings are conducted annually by the NNC and UNICEF if needed.

Transition planning

FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS CLUSTER Ukraine

Response and cluster leadership: The 2021 HNO for Ukraine demonstrated an improving humanitarian situation in the Government-controlled areas (GCA) of the country, although there was a continued deterioration in the non-Government controlled areas (NGCA). Humanitarian transition was set as a strategic objective in the 2021 HRP and continued in 2022: *to ensure implementation of a humanitarian exit strategy in Government-controlled areas from 2021 to 2023.* This included an exit of international humanitarian assistance in favour of Government of Ukraine and national actor service delivery, and deactivation of the clusters for the GCA by the end of 2023. Clusters were requested to develop and start to implement transition plans for the GCA, while coordination was planned to continue in the NGCA.

By early 2022, the Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL) Cluster, led by FAO, had 38 partners, providing direct food assistance and agricultural and non-agricultural livelihoods assistance, and was actively planning transition. While the transition plan was not implemented and the anticipated cluster deactivation did not take place due to the escalation of conflict and humanitarian response scale-up in early 2022, the steps taken by the Ukraine FSL Cluster are nevertheless of interest to demonstrate a transition planning process.

Planning the transition: All clusters were required to develop transition plans with benchmarks, which were then periodically reviewed by the HCT. The FSL Cluster developed a detailed transition plan, with phases, benchmarks and timelines, in 2020-2021 (through multiple rounds of consultations and adjustments). The plan was drafted by the Cluster coordination team with inputs from cluster partners and the CLA, presented to the HCT, and endorsed by the Cluster SAG. The transition planning was characterised by strong support of the CLA to the Cluster coordination team for overall planning and government engagement.

As a rearrangement of ministries had recently taken place, and there was no government counterpart engaged with the cluster at the time, the initial phase included the identification of a government body interested to take on coordination functions for continuing humanitarian FSL response. A consultation period was then planned to define the objectives and the responsibilities of the coordination body. The next phase would have involved a gradual capacity transfer, starting with co-chairing and then a scale-down of the visibility of the Cluster Coordinator in favour of the government representative. Capacity-building of identified government counterparts was planned to be conducted at the same time, following a capacity assessment agreed with the government counterpart, to include refresher trainings and mentoring as needed. The final phase was planned to be a more active handover – transferring information management tools and other documentation, and conducting a Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring exercise to help inform the coordination activities to continue. An evaluation of the transition process was also planned, prior to the final handover to government leadership in the Government-controlled areas from the FSL Cluster.

The transition plan included the handover of IM functions, plus knowledge accumulated by the cluster such as guidelines, lessons-learned documents, assessment reports, standard operating procedures, and reporting tools (including 5W databases and reports, reports to OCHA, donors and other counterparts). Communication was also prioritised in the plan, particularly at regional and local level, to ensure that local service providers (previously mapped by the FSL cluster team) and all relevant government bodies were made aware of the transition plan. Handover of the leadership of the Cluster's Technical Working Groups was also planned, to either the government or a humanitarian actor, to continue to provide technical support for livelihoods response.

The FSL Cluster set two levels of benchmarks to assess readiness for deactivation in the Government-controlled areas, reflecting the two IASC cluster activation and deactivation criteria. The first was on reduction in humanitarian needs, including: *"people with poor and borderline levels of food consumption score is estimated not higher than 2.0% in conflict-affected [regions]."* The second was on response and coordination capacities, including: the government counterpart's willingness to take on coordination leadership, for these responsibilities to be integrated within the counterpart's structure; and for the government to have sufficient capacity to sustain the coordination functions. Progress towards these benchmarks was assessed at the end of 2021, noting interim achievements including improvement of available information to be able to better assess the needs benchmarks.

Humanitarian and recovery coordination mechanisms

SHELTER CLUSTER Nepal, Pakistan

Response and cluster leadership: The IASC cluster system was first activated in Nepal in 2008, following which the government established a national sectoral emergency response coordination system – locally called clusters – led by sectoral line ministries. In April 2015, a major earthquake struck Nepal and the government requested international assistance due to the scale of the disaster. The IASC clusters were reactivated, and a three-month Flash Appeal launched.

The Shelter Cluster in Nepal was led by the government and co-led by IFRC and Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS). Multiple organizations provided coordination staff at national and sub-national level, including the secondment of a recovery coordinator. At its peak, over 300 organizations were cluster partners, with around 150 having longer-term plans and operations at the time of transition. In September 2015, a Recovery and Reconstruction Working Group was established under the Shelter Cluster, co-chaired by UN-Habitat and IOM. Recognizing the need for longer-term thinking, the Working Group was tasked with preparing the sector transition from emergency to recovery and reconstruction, and drafted a framework on housing recovery.

Planning the transition: In June 2015, the Government of Nepal indicated that it considered the initial emergency to be over, and the IASC clusters were deactivated in December 2015. For the Shelter Cluster, a clear split in coordination needs emerged when considering transition: the continuation of coordination of remaining humanitarian activities and preparedness for future emergency response, and the significant efforts needed to support housing recovery. By the end of 2015 there was an ongoing humanitarian winterization response, while government structures to lead on recovery were still being developed. Detailed discussions on structures and funding for housing recovery coordination took place between the CLA and cluster coordination team, UN agencies in the shelter sector, donors, government counterparts, and the Cluster SAG and members. Recovery and emergency coordination were separated, and it was agreed that the Recovery and Reconstruction Working Group would be adapted into a Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platform (HRRP).

Continuing coordination: As Nepal had an already established national cluster system, the national Shelter Cluster continued after the IASC deactivation, scaled back down to continue its responsibilities under the Government of Nepal's leadership and IFRC/NRCS co-leadership. The cluster coordinated the remainder of the humanitarian response, and updated preparedness plans for future emergency response.

The HRRP was established in December 2015 as a coordination platform for housing recovery, with dedicated donor funding plus in-kind contributions from its members (supporting coordination and providing technical capacity). Its structures, functions, and geographic reach were adapted in the subsequent years, based on consultation with members. The HRRP was initially led by UN-Habitat and IOM, with CRS later taking over leadership alongside national NGOs providing sub-national and technical coordination capacity – a coordination setup which has enabled the HRRP to continue.

In its third phase, the HRRP had 12 district coordination teams, delivering coordination, technical, and IM support for housing recovery. It had three areas of focus: improving quality of technical assistance, addressing gaps and duplications, and advocacy and communications between shelter recovery partners and government authorities. The HRRP was closely linked to the government bodies responsible for recovery, working to support government objectives. In 2021, the HRRP expanded to support multi-hazard recovery including for flooding, working in sequence with (and, occasionally supporting) the national Shelter Cluster's emergency response coordination.

Recovery inspiration in Pakistan: In 2022, major floods affected Pakistan, particularly the province of Sindh. A sector coordination system, supported by designated CLAs, was established. The Government of Pakistan led the emergency response through its National Disaster Management Authority and established a new reconstruction authority. For this, the government looked to Nepal for learnings, and,

following a visit to Nepal facilitated by the World Bank, decided that a similar recovery platform to the HRRP would be required. Members of the HRRP coordination team in turn visited Pakistan to see if they could support its setup and consulted shelter recovery actors who confirmed that they saw need for it.

The Sindh Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platform (SHRRP) was then established to support recovery efforts, hosted by CRS with dedicated donor funding, with the contribution of 10 organizations providing funding or coordination activities. A steering committee is chaired by the government, and participants include UN agencies, NGOs, private sector, and universities. The SHRRP's remit started with housing and expanded to include WASH (with a WASH specialist planned to be seconded from UNICEF) and economic recovery plus responsibility for a multi-sector recovery IM, and with discussions ongoing on geographic expansion to other disaster-affected areas.

Differing transition examples from Iraq: Iraq: In December 2021, the Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq announced the intention to work towards deactivation of all clusters by the end of 2022, as part of an effort to transition the overall humanitarian response. Some discussions on humanitarian transition had previously been started but then paused, so both individual cluster and response-wide transition planning started in 2022. The cluster system in Iraq was deactivated at the end of 2022, keeping to the set timeline, although transitions of some clusters were still ongoing. While the overall transition in Iraq is acknowledged to have had multiple challenges [2], the individual cluster transitions provide useful examples of both the processes of transition planning and design of structures for continuing sectoral coordination.

Different transition and handover options were pursued by the clusters and AoRs, depending on continuing coordination needs. Transition planning started in early 2022. For the CCCM Cluster, which fully phased out, transition was completed by end 2022. For the Protection Cluster, a newly created Protection Platform was in place by end 2022, and the (former) Cluster Coordinator's contract was extended into 2023 to support its establishment. For the WASH Cluster and Child Protection AoR, establishment and handover to new government-led coordination structures extensive advocacy, discussion, and planning between the CLA, government departments, cluster members, and other stakeholders. The Iraq clusters were deactivated before the arrangements were finalized, and in both cases the CLA, and WASH Co-Coordinating Partner, continued to work with the authorities in 2023 to establish the new coordination structures.

**Government service delivery;
Continued coordination support**

**WASH CLUSTER
Iraq**

Response and cluster leadership: The WASH Cluster in Iraq was led by UNICEF and co-coordinated by Mercy Corps. The deactivation of the clusters in Iraq was part of an overall transition of the humanitarian response, including handover of some service delivery activities to government implementation. The transition of the WASH Cluster happened at the same time as the CLA was handing over its remaining humanitarian WASH activities to government in IDP and refugee camps, with some NGOs continuing implementation particularly in priority camps while planning a longer-term phase-out.

Planning the transition: The transition of the WASH Cluster reflected the administrative structures in Iraq and differing continuing WASH priorities. Two parallel WASH Working Groups were established: one in federal Iraq and one in the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region. In both, multiple directorates and line ministries are responsible for WASH services.

2. Global Cluster Coordination Group, *Note to the EDG: Learning from the Cluster Transition in Iraq*, 24 February 2023

The CLA programmatic staff initially took the lead in engagement with government authorities. The WASH Cluster coordination team held transition workshops with Cluster members, and the presence of the Coordinators with CLA technical unit staff in discussions with government was vital to draw together the transition approach. Government representatives had previously been minimally involved in cluster coordination, and the setup of new coordination structures took some time – continuing well after cluster deactivation. The parallel operational handover of WASH services meant that government focus was often more on operational and financial concerns than on future coordination.

In the Kurdistan Region (KRI), there was no existing forum for internal government coordination on WASH emergency issues. Following advocacy from UNICEF, a WASH Working Group was established by the government. The Working Group was tasked with: service coordination and strategic WASH planning between government bodies for IDP and refugee camps, facilitating coordination with remaining humanitarian WASH actors, and contingency planning for future emergencies (including water scarcity and climate emergencies – issues of high concern in Iraq at the time). The Working Group was led by a government department, and, on decision of the authorities, membership was of government and UN agencies (and potentially donors). This meant the transition strategy of the WASH Cluster had to pivot to establish a method for NGO engagement with the WASH Working Group.

Continuing coordination: In KRI, the former CLA, UNICEF, committed to providing technical support to the new WASH Working Group through its WASH technical unit. The former Cluster Co-Coordinating Partner, Mercy Corps, committed to continuing a coordination staff position for a year after cluster deactivation, and secured donor funding for supporting the establishment and capacity-strengthening of the WASH Working Group. The Cluster Co-Coordinator – a national staff position – was retained. This position was critical in maintaining a link of the KRI WASH Working Group to remaining NGO WASH service providers, helped maintain momentum in the setup of the mechanism, and meant the setup benefited from the existing trusting relationships with authorities and the coordination skills and experience of the staff member.

The Global WASH Cluster supported the cluster coordination team to plan the transition, and continued engagement after cluster deactivation to help establish local coordination capacities. Support after deactivation included delivering a training in 2023 on Coordination of the HDP Nexus and Transition in the WASH Sector, supported logistically by Mercy Corps, funded by the German FFO. The training included government representatives, UN agencies, and WASH actors from the KRI and federal Iraq WASH Working Groups, on topics including risk analysis, emergency preparedness, and advocacy. In addition, the staff member from Mercy Corps supporting the KRI Working Group was trained on strategic advocacy.

Phase-out of the cluster

CCCM CLUSTER Iraq

Response and cluster leadership: The CCCM Cluster in Iraq was activated in 2014. It was led by UNHCR and co-chaired by IOM, with sub-national coordination also supported by NGOs. By 2022, CCCM needs had significantly reduced, after large-scale returns and the closure of many of the IDP camps. 25 IDP camps remained in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), managed by the government, supported by UNHCR. One IDP camp remained in federal Iraq, supported by IOM. In some prioritized informal sites, CCCM support was provided by NGOs and IOM.

A durable solutions coordination mechanism had been established in Iraq in 2020, which included area-based coordination groups in some of the locations of the informal sites of continuing concern. Prior to transition, the Cluster had been working with the Durable Solutions Technical Working Group for over a year to contribute to planning and implementation of durable solutions efforts. This included design and sharing of CCCM data (including demographics and intentions) and using CCCM partner community engagement activities and relationships to understand barriers to resolving displacement.

Planning the transition: As for the other clusters in Iraq, the timeline for CCCM Cluster deactivation was set at response level. An operational transition of the overall humanitarian response was planned at the same time as the cluster system deactivation, with handover of some service provision in IDP camps to government. The CCCM Cluster therefore had a three-part approach to overall planning, reflecting these interconnected issues: 1) *Coordination transition*; 2) *CCCM operational response transition & forward planning*; 3) *Longer-term planning for camps and informal sites and supporting other sectoral response handover*.

The Cluster coordination team held extensive consultations with Cluster members, CLA and Co-Chair agency, donors, other clusters, and durable solutions coordinators to develop its transition approach. These included identification of CCCM actor plans and funding for continued implementation or exit. A Cluster coordination transition strategy was drafted, along with two Operational Roadmaps: for IDP camps, and priority informal sites.

The core functions of the Cluster were split, and absorbed by humanitarian actors that were continuing response – with no ‘CCCM’ forum being continued. For IDP camps, Cluster functions that remained relevant were internalized by UNHCR and IOM who were already supporting government camp management and coordination. For informal sites, coordination functions were mainly devolved to sub-national level and transferred to CCCM partners that planned to continue programming. The Cluster drafted an IM transition strategy, with some IM products and processes phased out and others adjusted and handed over to UNHCR and IOM.

The Cluster’s transition activities focused on transferring responsibilities mostly to existing cluster focal points who already had coordination experience. The Cluster coordination team also worked closely with the CLA on longer-term planning and advocacy. For informal sites, activities focused on strengthening engagement of CCCM teams with durable solutions area-based coordination groups and inclusion of priority informal sites into their area plans.

In parallel to the coordination transition, the Cluster coordination team and Cluster members implemented the Operational Roadmaps. This included creation of longer-term site-level plans and advocacy objectives for prioritised sites, to then be taken forward by continuing CCCM and other sectoral actors. The Roadmaps also supported the operational and coordination transition of other sectors, working with other clusters and their main partners on planning, advocacy and communication for services handover (particularly, WASH) to the government, and adjusting inter-sectoral camp coordination structures to continue to function after cluster deactivation.

Coordination after cluster deactivation: In KRI, UNHCR continued to support government camp management, and to engage at national level on camp coordination issues while advocating for the government to take on more camp coordination responsibilities. At governorate level, UNHCR staff who had been Cluster sub-national focal points continued this coordination function while gradually handing over more responsibility to government counterparts. In federal Iraq, IOM continued to support the authorities to manage and coordinate the remaining IDP camp, which the government was working towards closing. For informal sites, CCCM partners took forward coordination at local level with durable solutions area-based coordination groups.

Retaining international coordination on protection issues

PROTECTION CLUSTER Iraq

Response and cluster leadership: The Protection Cluster in Iraq was led by UNHCR, with a high number of both national and international cluster members implementing a range of protection activities. Prior to transition, the Cluster had already downscaled in line with coordination needs, reducing national and sub-national staffing.

Planning the transition: The continuation of some protection risks relating to displacement was identified as an issue, with government capacity and/or willingness to fully take on addressing these not being adequate. The CLA committed to continuing to work on and support advocacy for the reduction of the identified protection risks, and a structure through which continued efforts could be coordinated and linked to the UNSDCF was designed.

Given the nature of the protection concerns identified (some of which needed high-level advocacy and government policy or legal changes), and the concurrent downscaling and transition of humanitarian response toward development approaches, UNHCR engaged with OHCHR to jointly lead on the issues after cluster deactivation. The idea of creating a 'protection platform' of a small group of core actors working on specific issues at national level was first proposed to Protection Cluster members. The eventual transition approach was shaped by discussions between the Cluster coordination team, CLA, OHCHR, Cluster SAG, and Cluster members. The UNHCR Representative joined several Protection Cluster meetings to discuss the transition.

The parallel operational transition in Iraq meant that, as well as being concerned about the narrowing of the protection coordination remit to specific issues, many Cluster members were concerned about reduction of funding and their own operational exit and/or transition from humanitarian to development funding and approaches. Some capacity-mapping was undertaken alongside efforts to link NGOs with development donors, although this was restricted in the available time.

A key transition activity for the Cluster was the adjustment of protection monitoring – recognizing that monitoring would still be needed to inform evidence-based advocacy of the Protection Platform. A small group of NNGOs, INGOs, and UN agencies (UNHCR, OHCHR, IOM, UNDP) was formed to revise the tool to include all population groups and add topics that hadn't been under the cluster remit. Protection actors who were continuing response after cluster deactivation committed to undertaking data collection, and UNHCR to conducting analysis.

Continuing coordination: The Protection Cluster was succeeded by a newly-created **Protection Platform**, co-led by UNHCR and OHCHR, designed to ensure the centrality of protection in the UNSDCF and to support efforts to reduce protection risks through advocacy and technical support. The Platform covered all populations, including IDPs, IDP returnees, refugees, migrants, and vulnerable and minority groups. Its remit was to perform a strategic advisory role at national level, and at local level to engage with durable solutions coordination bodies to ensure protection objectives were followed.

The Platform had core members of UN agencies contributing to UNSDCF protection objectives, plus one INGO and one NGO representative. The INGO representation was to rotate every 6 months, relying on continuing NGO coordination to support selection. Quarterly meetings were planned with a wider group of NGOs, civil society, and donors. The Platform was co-chaired by an OHCHR staff member and UNHCR's Assistant Representative for Protection. The Protection Cluster Coordinator was retained by UNHCR for six months after Cluster deactivation to support the Platform setup, following which a UNHCR protection staff member was designated to support.

The issues for the Protection Platform to work on were identified through consultation with first its core members and then with the larger group. The initial priorities set were on civil documentation and community-based protection, with a timeframe agreed for these to be reviewed.

Government humanitarian and development
coordination leadership; Localization

CHILD PROTECTION AoR
Iraq

Response and cluster leadership: The Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR) in Iraq was led by UNICEF and co-coordinated by Save the Children, and also coordinated a refugee child protection response. Iraq is a federal country, with a central government and a government responsible for the autonomous Kurdistan Region. Multiple state institutions in both systems interact with child protection issues.

Planning the transition: In parallel to humanitarian transition, UNICEF had been advocating to establish child protection development coordination between the government and international actors and civil society. This effort influenced the transition options and planning of the CP AoR. The initial transition strategy of the CP AoR was adjusted during the transition period, considering inputs from AoR members and SAG, preferences of the government, and the evolution of the parallel development coordination discussions. Programmatic staff from the CLA worked closely with the Cluster coordination team on government advocacy and shaping the coordination structure to continue. Two separate coordination structures were pursued by the CP AoR, with efforts more successful in the Kurdistan Region (KRI). In KRI, a three-part coordination structure was set up (outlined below), covering humanitarian and development coordination issues.

Previous CP AoR efforts to promote localization of coordination leadership were important for the setup in KRI: sub-national coordination had already been transferred to government leadership, which continued after cluster deactivation. Additionally, the CP AoR had made substantial efforts to strengthen capacity and support resource mobilization for local and national NGOs, which supported their continued operations and engagement in government-led forums.

Continuing coordination: In KRI, at national level a Child Protection Committee was established, led by a government ministry, with membership of all ministries working on child protection issues, plus UNICEF, one INGO (Save the Children), and one NNGO. The Committee focused on policy and national planning for long-term child protection issues, also responsible for humanitarian issues.

At governorate level, Child Protection Committee Working Groups were mandated, led by a government directorate with open participation of other directorates and NGOs. Technical support was provided by UNICEF, and by UNHCR for refugee children. These were a continuation of the CP AoR's sub-national coordination groups, which were already being led by government directorates and supported by UNICEF and CP AoR NGO members. These were responsible for operational coordination of remaining IDP and refugee response, plus a new focus on long-term child protection issues.

Also at national level a *Child Protection Actors' Platform* was established, for interaction between the government and civil society. Led by the chairperson of the Child Protection Committee, it had open participation, focusing on information exchange on humanitarian needs and implementation and policy update from the government.

The establishment of these structures took over a year, with advocacy and support by UNICEF at national level continuing after CP AoR deactivation, as well as coordination support from child protection NGOs continuing at governorate level.