GUIDE TO DEVELOPING EDUCATION CLUSTER STRATEGIES

The Guide to Developing Education Cluster Country Strategies is an initiative of the Global Education Cluster (GEC). It is an accompaniment to and provides a theoretical foundation for the Strategy Package within the GEC's broader Education Cluster Toolkit. A five-page Summary Guide to Developing Education Cluster Strategies is also available in the Package for quick access and easy reference. An Education Cluster Strategy is a consultatively developed document that outlines the Cluster's approach and operational plan for responding to an emergency.

All Education Clusters should have a Strategy in place that guides partners in their implementation of an effective, timely, and quality emergency response. Having an Education Cluster Strategy allows us to better communicate the needs of crisis-affected children, beyond a summary in an inter-sectoral plan. The Education Cluster Strategy document will serve as a basis for quick decision-making that all partners have contributed to, understand and are committed to; helping ensure predictability and mutual understanding during emergency response. An Education Cluster Strategy is also a tool for resource mobilization and advocacy, and helps ensure alignment and continuity of education across the humanitarian-development continuum.

The purpose of this Guide and accompanying Strategy Package is to provide practical, relevant guidance and resources to education in emergencies (EiE) coordination staff on how to develop and update an Education Cluster Strategy.

The process outlined in this Guide can be expanded or compressed depending on your circumstance: you may be working in a rapid onset emergency and have only a few weeks (or even days) to produce a Cluster Strategy, or you may be working in a protracted crisis where you are developing a multi-year strategy over a number of months. This Guide provides a lot of detail and practical guidance because in acute emergencies and complex coordination contexts it can be useful to have reminders and tips even for familiar processes, but you do not need to read it all – be selective and use the parts that are most relevant for you.

Whatever the emergency context you are working in, remember:

- **Review this Strategy Guide before you start:** you do not need to read this document cover to cover, so be selective and refer to relevant sections as you need them. Use the Summary Guide to help you navigate. But do not forget that issues of alignment, continuity and planning for transition should be considered from the outset.

- **Plan ahead as much as you can:** It is not always possible, but the more you can preempt processes like the HNO and HRP, the higher quality the Strategy process can be; the Education Cluster must set a high standard.

- **Do not start from scratch:** Make full use of preexisting materials – current or previous Humanitarian Response Plans from your context, Contingency Plans, previous Strategies, agency documents, the archive of HNOs and HRPs on HR.info. Use the tools and templates available in the Strategy Package, including Education Cluster Strategies country examples. Do not be afraid to copy/paste.

- **Identify and use the expertise around you:** Strategy development is an opportunity to take stock of the different kinds of partners in your Cluster and consider how the process can effectively harness their comparative advantages and collective skills and knowledge. In particular, recognize and foster the capacities and opportunities that local partnership brings.

- **Reach out for help if you need it:** the Global Education Cluster Help Desk can be reached at help.edcluster@humanitarianresponse.info.

- **You can do it!**

'Education Cluster' as used throughout this Guide refers to both formally activated country-level Education Clusters as well as EiE working groups or other relevant coordinating body. Likewise, 'Education Cluster Team' which typically consists of a Cluster Coordinator(s) and Information Management Officer(s), also includes coordination staff for EiE working groups.

CONTENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS

3/4/5 W	Who's doing What, Where, When, and for Whom
AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
CCPM	Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring
CLA	Cluster Lead Agency
ECMT	Education Cluster Monitoring Tool
ECT	Education Cluster Team
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESP	Education Sector Plans
GEC	Global Education Cluster
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HPC	humanitarian programme cycle
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IMO	Information Management Officer
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
JENA	Joint Education Needs Assessment
LEG	Local Education Group
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NFE	Non-formal education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
SAG	Strategic Advisory Group
SDR	Secondary Data Review
TEP	Transitional Education Plans
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
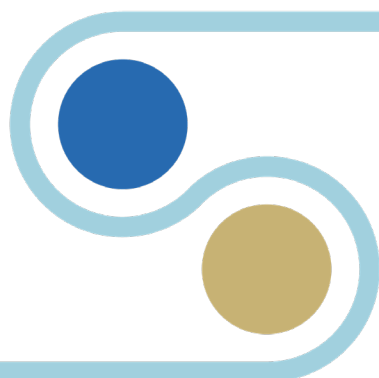
HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

After a brief Introduction to Education Cluster Strategies, including the foundational pillars and principles upon which they should be based, this Guide is divided into six chapters that provide practical guidance on how to develop and update a Strategy[1]. Chapter and section headings are written and structured as a step-by-step, task-based checklist for how to do so. This mirrors the structure found in the Strategy Workplan Template.

Chapter 2 explains how to collaboratively generate evidence and determine needs, such as through Secondary Data Review, needs assessments and stakeholder surveys of needs. It also discusses how to then calculate People-in-Need figures and summarize consolidated information into an Education Cluster Needs Overview.

Chapter 4 then explains how to ensure alignment and continuity between the harmonized plan (and overall Strategy) with other relevant plans, such as an inter-sectoral response plan, Ministry of Education (MoE) sector plans, transition plans, etc.

Chapter 6 concludes with how to draft and finalize the actual Strategy document by using the Education Cluster Strategy Template found in the Strategy Package. The Strategy Package also includes Instructions for completing the template and a Graphics file containing modifiable graphics for pasting into the template.

Chapter 1 focuses on what to do as you prepare to develop your Strategy, such as establish a Strategy Task Team and prepare a Strategy Workplan.

Chapter 3 walks you through how to plan a harmonized response, specifically through consultative prioritization processes, such as developing a Response Framework and determining the Cluster's caseload.

Chapter 5 provides guidance on how to develop a monitoring plan; seeking inputs from your Cluster partners and also affected populations.

Although the Strategy will eventually be a specific *document*, this Guide focuses on the *process* of how to develop a Strategy. For guidance on the actual compilation of the Strategy document, refer to the Education Cluster Strategy Template and accompanying Instructions found in the Strategy Package (this is covered in detail in Chapter 6). The Strategy Package also contains additional tools and resources that can be used hand-in-hand with this Guide when developing a Strategy.

The INEE Minimum Standards is the foundational tool for this Guide; be sure to to refer to and reference them in your strategy development process. The Standards on Community Participation, Coordination and Analysis should shape the Strategy preparation process, and standards across all the technical domains should inform planned activities throughout the humanitarian programme cycle (HPC).

In addition to the guidance and resources in the Strategy Package, be sure to contact the Global Education Cluster (GEC) for additional support and to inform them of your ongoing strategy development:
help.edcluster@humanitarianresponse.info.

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[1] This Guide will use "Strategy" to refer to "Education Cluster Strategy." Furthermore, 'developing' a strategy will also signify 'developing and updating.' An Education Cluster Strategy might be six months or one year in duration, or potentially multi-year in protracted crises. Alignment with the duration of the Humanitarian Response Plan is often recommended, but there might be good rational for spanning beyond the HRP in chronic emergencies where a multi-year HRP is not yet in place.

INTRODUCTION TO EDUCATION CLUSTER STRATEGIES

An Education Cluster Strategy is a consultatively developed document that outlines the Cluster's approach and operational plan for responding to an emergency. Strategy development is one of the Cluster's Core Functions,[2] and all Education Clusters should have a Strategy in place that guides partners in their implementation of an effective, timely, and standardized response. The Strategy Template in the Strategy Package recommends the following structure:
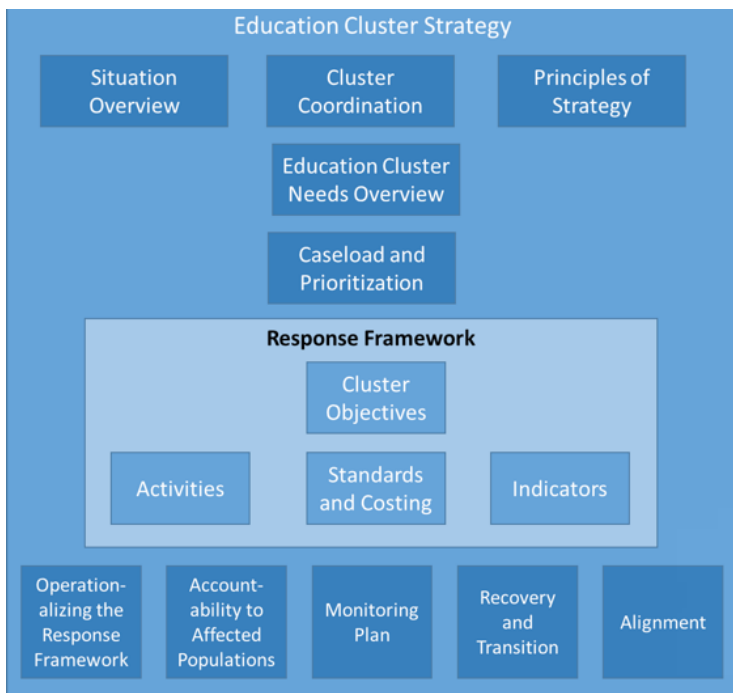
The Strategy is crucial as it brings the many different and often complicated pieces of the Cluster's work into a single, guiding document that can be shared with relevant stakeholders and updated as necessary. In addition to the document itself, the strategy development *process* is equally, if not more, important as it will bring together Cluster partners and key stakeholders around a single, unified analysis and understanding of needs and coordinated plan for best meeting those needs.

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[2] The Cluster's Core Functions according to the IASC are listed on page 11.

The images below summarize this process (and this Guide). They also provide rough estimates for the approximate timeframe. Please note: while each of the steps are key for developing your Strategy, the amount of time needed and allocated will vary by context. The timeframes proposed below, for example, are perhaps more suitable for a protracted crisis where the Cluster Teams have anticipated and planned ahead for this process. Multi-year Humanitarian Response Plans and Cluster Strategies are increasingly common in protracted contexts, and the process outlined here is certainly applicable for longer-term planning. Multi-yea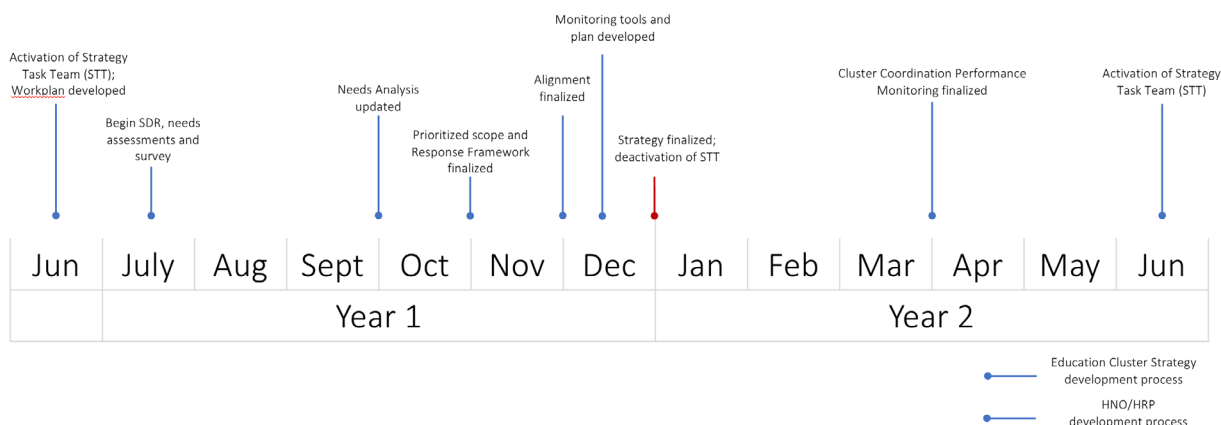r Cluster Strategies will need to be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they are responsive to any changes in context, needs and priorities of affected people (See Section 4.1. for more information on Transition and multi-year plans). In rapid-onset emergencies or in contexts where time is limited, these steps and their timeframe will need to be adjusted for a 'lighter' and more expedited process.

Strategy Development Process

1. PREPARE FOR STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

2-3 days	1 days	1 days
Introduce Process and establish Strategy Task Team	Review Support Materials	Workplan

CONSULTATION

2. GATHER EVIDENCE AND DETERMINE NEEDS

1-2 weeks	1-3 months	1-2 weeks	3-5 days
Secondary Data Review	Needs Assessment	Stakeholder survey: Needs and Capacity	Calculate People-in-Need

1 week
Education Cluster Needs Overview

Ongoing Needs Analysis

3. PLAN A HARMONISED RESPONSE

1-2 weeks		1-3 weeks
Framework Surveys		Framework Workshops

1-2 days	1-2 days	3-7 days	1 day	1 day
Prioritize/ Determine Scope	Response Framework	Harmonize Projects	Caseload and Financial Requirements	Operationalize the Framework

4. ENSURE ALIGNMENT AND CONTINUITY

2-3 days	N/A	N/A
Alignment	Plan for Recovery	Plan for Transition

5. DEVELOP MONITORING TOOLS AND PLAN

3-5 days	1 days
Monitoring Tools	Monitoring Plan

6. FINALIZE THE STRATEGY

2-3 days	1 week	2-3 days	1 day	0.5 day
Draft the Strategy	Finalization Consultations	Communications and Advocacy	Strategy Review/ Update	GEC Evaluations

A sample timeline for key milestones for Strategy Development may look like this:[3]

Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
			Year 1						Year 2			

Timeline milestones:
- Activation of Strategy Task Team (STT); Workplan developed
- Begin SDR, needs assessments and survey
- Needs Analysis updated
- Prioritized scope and Response Framework finalized
- Alignment finalized
- Monitoring tools and plan developed
- Strategy finalized; deactivation of STT
- Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring finalized
- Activation of Strategy Task Team (STT)

Legend:
- Education Cluster Strategy development process
- HNO/HRP development process

Although there are important similarities and overlaps, the Education Cluster Strategy is different from the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) documents and processes. The HNO and HRP provide general and summarized inter-sectoral needs, priorities and plans. The Education Cluster Strategy will be much more comprehensive in terms of the *education* sector's needs, priorities and plans. There will need to be a give-and-take relationship between the two documents and processes as they should inform one another (e.g. an understanding of education needs will help inform an inter-sectoral analysis, and the inter-sectoral analysis can in turn inform education's needs analysis). This is also true for the Strategy's prioritizations and Response Framework which must be aligned with the HRP's inter-sectoral priorities and Strategic Objectives (see Section 4.1.). The image below shows the relationship between the Strategy and the HNO/HRP; for more information on how to appropriately sync these two processes, see Section 1.3. on creating a Cluster Strategy Workplan.

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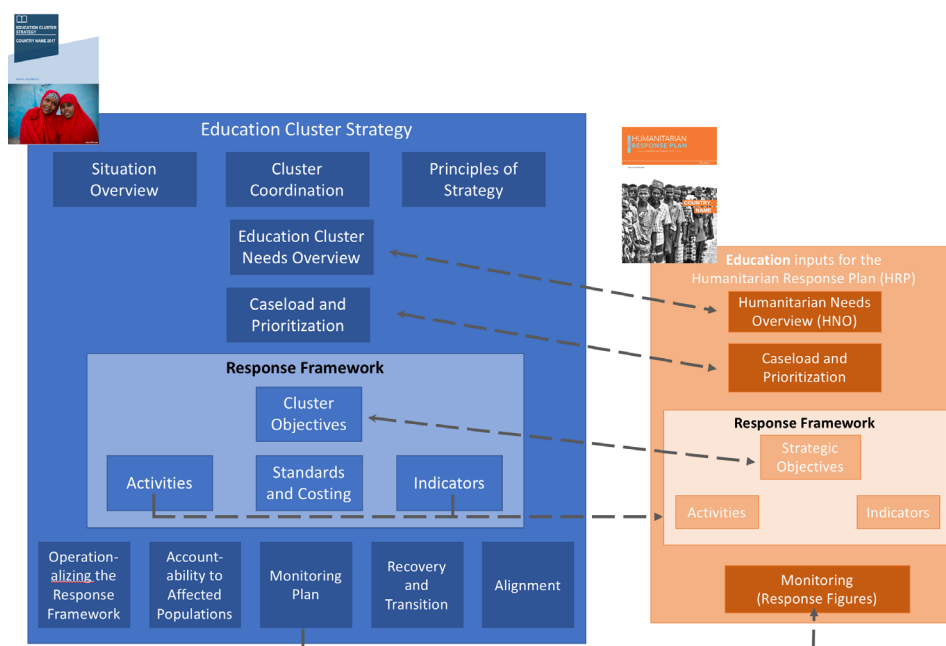
[3] A modifiable version of this timeline can be found in the Education Cluster Strategy Template Graphics file in the Strategy Package.

Apart from the link between your Education Cluster Strategy and processes within your country context[4], it is also important to note the relationship between your country-based Strategy and the Global Education Cluster's work. Using this Guide and the accompanying Education Cluster Strategy Template will ensure there are commonalities and agreed structures across countries, which in turn allows for consolidation, aggregation and global-level analysis of data, advocacy issues and emerging trends. Your Strategy will also provide the GEC with an overview of your needs and constraints and may inform decisions relating to country support.

Strategic Pillars

Three pillars – accountability, partnership and the humanitarian-development nexus – guide the _____ and should serve as foundational approaches for country-level strategic planning processes. This section provides a brief summary explanation of each pillar.

1.   Strategic Pillar: Accountability

Building on the commitments in the Core Humanitarian Standard[5], at the country level, accountability is focused on two complementary areas:

- **Accountability to affected populations** – Clusters facilitate generating the best possible results for affected people, and work to ensure their rights are protected through:

  - The **shared responsibility** to work towards for timely, relevant, appropriate **results** for affected people that maximise response coverage and minimise gaps, in line with their own needs and priorities.

  - The **shared responsibility** to protect the **rights** and dignity of affected people, including the right to access, protection, quality, coordinated responses, participation and two-way communication.

- **Accountability for functional performance of the Cluster** – Cluster Lead Agencies are accountable for ensuring the fulfilment of core cluster functions:

  - The **shared responsibility** to promote effective and equitable **relationships** between cluster partners in order to fulfill cluster core functions

  - The **shared responsibility** to coordinate and align work around the Humanitarian Programme Cycle to address priority needs, and support the **capacity** and **resilience** of communities and local national actors.

A good quality Strategy (document and process) is itself a benchmark of and tool to contribute to these two types of accountabilities.

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[4] Alignment is covered in more detail in Chapter 4.

[5] The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS) sets out Nine Commitments that organisations and individuals involved in humanitarian response can use to improve the quality and effectiveness of the assistance they provide. It also facilitates greater accountability to communities and people affected by crisis: knowing what humanitarian organisations have committed to will enable them to hold those organisations to account. The CHS places communities and people affected by crisis at the centre of humanitarian action.

Facilitating accountability to affected populations[6] (or making accountability happen)

When it comes to accountability to affected populations, the Cluster is the sum of its parts. Or rather, the sum of its partners. National governments and individual humanitarian organisations ultimately have the responsibility to ensure that the needs and aspirations of affected people inform the response.[7] The Education Cluster provides leadership at all stages in the humanitarian programme cycle, they must work to ensure AAP is considered throughout the humanitarian response. Two priority areas of AAP facilitation for Education Cluster Teams include:

1.   Facilitate Accountability to Affected Populations through ensuring all coordinated response actions (e.g. joint assessments, coordinated strategic planning, response monitoring, etc.) consider and address accountability to affected populations.

2.   Facilitate capacity development so that cluster partners are aware of their responsibilities relating to accountability to affected populations in their respective response activities and are able to deliver against them.

Education actors should actively partner with members of the affected population to implement emergency programming. As stipulated in the INEE Minimum Standards' Foundational Standard on Community Resources, a quality education response builds upon the capacities of the affected population. In many interventions community members from the affected population will initiate education programming, build temporary spaces, teach, manage supplies, support learners and keep facilities safe and maintained. Following the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, the humanitarian community reiterated its commitment to move from the present "supply-driven model dominated by aid providers to a demand-driven model more responsive to the people we are assisting."[8] Education is prioritised by communities themselves in the aftermath of a crisis and you have a responsibility to ensure that aspirations and needs of parents and communities are prioritised in humanitarian responses. You need to amplify this upwards and outwards. Where needed, you should contribute to inter-sectoral Accountability processes and ensure they are functioning and utilized in inter-sectoral coordination and decision-making fora.

Accountability to Affected Populations is a thread that should run through all parts of the Strategy development process and should be explicitly highlighted as such. Suggestions for how to integrate Accountability to Affected Populations into Strategy development are discussed throughout the chapters below as well as in an Accountability to Affected Populations Checklist in the Strategy Package.

Clusters are important spaces for actors to discuss and promote a consistent approach to accountability across operations, not only as part of the strategy development process. It is therefore recommended that the Cluster works to develop an Accountability to Affected Populations Plan which outlines when and how the Cluster will coordinate and engage in AAP activities at each stage of the HPC, as well as build capacity on the integration of AAP activities within cluster partner programming. If this plan is already in place when the Strategy is drafted, it should be carefully reviewed as you prepare for Strategy development (see Section 1.2). If no Accountability to Affected Populations Plan is in place, reference should be made to the timeframe for the development of one (see Section 5.2.5.).

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[6] Important to note, is the heterogeneous nature of "affected populations" with numerous different needs, opinions, priorities and concerns. There will likely be gender, age, diversity, and other socio-economic or conflict dynamics that must be accounted for and considered when planning participatory accountability processes.

[7] IASC Suggested Actions for cluster coordination groups to strengthen accountability

[8] See The Grand Bargain: http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Grand_Bargain_final_22_May_FINAL-2.pdf

Accountability for functional performance of the Cluster (or accountability for making things happen)

The Cluster Team and the Cluster Lead Agencies are accountable for ensuring the Cluster performs the core functions outlined by the IASC. They are accountable to the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), to cluster partners, to donors and, ultimately, to affected populations in as far as these functions facilitate results, enable rights, and support equitable relationships.

The 6+1 people-centered core cluster functions are:

1. Supporting effective and accountable service delivery

2. Informing strategic decisions of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) based on the experiences and feedback from affected people and local expertise.

3. Planning and implementing Cluster strategies to address affected people's needs and priorities

4. Monitoring and evaluating quality, accountability and performance.

5. Building local national capacity in preparedness, response, coordination and contingency planning.

6. Supporting robust advocacy on behalf of affected people

A final cluster function was added to make it explicit that cluster functions need to be considered from a people-centered approach:

7. Accountability to affected populations and other stakeholders (including cluster partners)

Note: This list adapts the IASC Core Cluster Functions, to emphasize a people-centered approach to humanitarian coordination that is focused on effective, meaningful and durable outcomes for crisis-affected people.

Strategy development and planning are one of the core functions. Without a Strategy in place, the Cluster is not meeting at least one of its core functions. Furthermore, as you will see in this Guide, the development of a comprehensive Strategy contributes significantly to all other core functions.

One process that aims to support accountability for functional performance is the Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring (CCPM) process (see Section 5.2.6), which in turn should inform Cluster Strategy reviews.

2. Strategic Pillar: Partnership

The Cluster is a collective, and partnership is therefore the basis for all our work both globally and at the country and local levels. The Cluster is made up of its partners, with shared responsibilities for collective performance and outcomes. It is helpful to collectively define the roles and responsibilities of a Cluster partner.

The World Humanitarian Summit recognised that increased localisation is fundamental to the delivery of a dignified and effective humanitarian response, concluding that humanitarian action should be "as local as possible, as international as necessary."[9] The associated Grand Bargain emphasized the need to make more deliberate and explicit efforts to better engage with, empower and promote the work of local actors. Local actors – as individuals, and as part of government institutions and international, national and local organisations – are inevitably a key part of partnership within country Clusters and you should recognize and foster the capacities and opportunities that local partnership brings to an emergency response. As you prepare to develop your strategy, take stock of the different kinds of partners you have in your Cluster, and consider how the process can effectively harness their comparative advantages and collective skills and knowledge. For more tips on engaging all partners in Strategy development, especially local actors, see the Localization Checklist in the in the Strategy Package.

The Strategy development process is key for strengthening partnership. Likewise, partnership strengthens and is vital to the Strategy process; different partners have different roles to play:

Ministry of Education (MoE): In most cases the MoE, with technical support of the Cluster Team, will lead the humanitarian response for the education sector, in coordination with national government disaster response agencies.[10] Part of the mandate of the Cluster, given their temporary nature, is to build on local capacities, so wherever possible MoE leadership at national as well as local levels, is encouraged. This leadership will result in greater MoE capacity, enhanced partnership as well as a Cluster Strategy that is fully owned and endorsed[11] by the government, and therefore more likely to be relevant and effectively implemented. It is recommended that senior government officials are briefed about the Strategy process; ideally the development of a Strategy would be a step included in a standard operating procedure within a pre-prepared and government-approved national Contingency Plan. The briefing can be used as an opportunity to ask for their guidance, and to request a designated official to be able available to lead in detailed technical meetings on behalf of the MoE.[12]

Education Cluster Team: You, the Coordinator(s), Information Management Officer(s), and any other Cluster staff, have primary responsibility for managing an inclusive and participatory Strategy process and delivering the final product. You will need to play a facilitative role throughout the entire process. It is a significant task, hence this Guide's emphasis on forward-planning, application of pre-existing tools, identifying and utilizing strengths of partners and other stakeholders. You can do it! But ask for help from the GEC if you need it (help.edcluster@ humanitarianresponse.info).

Cluster Lead Agencies (CLA): Keep senior management of CLAs fully briefed on the Strategy process timeline. A technical specialist from the CLAs should participate in the Strategy Task Team and should take on responsibilities that support other partners in their engagement in the process. Engage them early and often and ensure the senior leadership in the respective agencies is aware of these responsibilities. The CLAs will also often be expected to take on key roles in supporting the organisation of consultations or workshops both at the national and sub-national levels. Share a close to final draft with senior managers, including Representative, Deputy Representative and Chiefs of the Emergency and Education Sections (UNICEF) or Country Director, Deputy Country Director, Emergency Director (Save the Children) or other lead heads of agencies prior to sharing with the MoE for final endorsement. This is important given the responsibility CLAs have as providers of last resort as well as the implications for Cluster staffing that the plan may require.

Cluster Partners: Ensure a range of Cluster partners are engaged in the Strategy process, with special attention to national and local partners[13] who can bring a deeper knowledge of the local context and dynamics than others. For tips on how to engage national and local partners in the process, see the Localization Checklist in the Strategy Package. Strategy development can also serve as a way to engage new partners in the Cluster. Inviting the participation of academics, the private sector, or teachers' unions for example, in shaping the Strategy can be valuable and lead to more meaningful engagement in response activities. If you are short of partners to participate in the process, see Section 3.7.4. below on Operational Capacity.

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[10] In some cases, particularly in situations of ongoing conflict, the willingness or capacity of a Government or State institutions to lead or contribute to the response may be compromised or may compromise humanitarian principles. In this guide, we will assume that the Ministry of Education is a fully engaged partner in the Cluster and in a leadership role, and is not party to the conflict. However, if this is not the case in your context, some suggestions relating to the role of Ministry of Education and other government actors may not be appropriate.

[11] See Section 6.2.

[12] See Section 1.1. on including MoE in the Strategy Task Team

[13] E.g. National and local-level NGOs, civil society organizations (CSOs), community based organizations (CBOs), faith-based organizations, private sector organizations, etc.

Affected Populations: As discussed above, facilitating the participation of affected populations is a fundamental part of an accountable and quality emergency response. Engaging with affected populations can help ensure different needs and priorities of all groups of the population are correctly identified, and that response strategies and interventions are relevant and appropriate to the context and crisis situation. Finding ways to meaningfully engage representatives of the affected populations as partners in Strategy development is what you should be aiming for. For suggestions of how to engage representatives of affected populations in strategy development, see the Accountability to Affected Populations Checklist in the Strategy Package.

Education Stakeholders: Engaging stakeholders who may not be formal partners within the Cluster, but have a role to play in the response and recovery can be strategic. Unfortunately, donors are often overlooked in the Strategy consultation process, particularly during the development of the Response Framework (survey and workshops); however, they can be powerful political and financial allies when partners know that donors are in support of and looking to fund projects that align with the Response Framework (see Section 3.5.). Development actors (often referred to collectively as the Local Education Group – LEG, usually with significant overlap in membership with the Cluster) should also be fully included, particularly in discussions relating to transition and harmonization with development sector plans, and especially if the Strategy has a multi-year timeframe. The LEG may not be fully functioning or present in country during an acute emergency period, but it is strategic to identify and communicate with key actors in the group so that they are involved in the Strategy development process and can support transition and continuity in the medium to long-term.

Inter-Sector Humanitarian Actors: Including inter-sector technical expertise is also valuable for the Strategy itself, as well as for fostering cross-sectoral coordination and a people-centered approach to the humanitarian response - detailed guidance on key ways to engage other sectors in Strategy development is in the Inter-Sector Checklist in the Strategy Package). Inviting your coordinator counterparts from relevant clusters to engage with pertinent parts of the Response Framework will ensure any duplicative activities are avoided or are clearly demarcated (see Section 4.1 and the Alignment Matrix for help in capturing inter-sectoral links). Inviting experts in cross-cutting issues such as gender or disability to review key tools, participate in consultative events and review drafts, will strengthen the strategy immeasurably. It can also be strategic to invite the Humanitarian Coordinator or Head of OCHA to one of the strategic planning events (a consultative workshop, for example), so that they are aware of the quality process you are facilitating (and perhaps available to lend their support to it).

3.   Strategic Pillar: Humanitarian-development nexus

Bridging humanitarian and development responses has long been acknowledged as a way to advance resilience, reduce vulnerability, and promote human security. Yet current donor, agency and government structures separate humanitarian and development streams of work.[14] A number of recent global initiatives have rearticulated the call for better alignment.[15]

Education is not a short term intervention and education in emergencies strives to establish continuous, uninterrupted education for children and youth in crisis. Linking education in emergencies to development and recovery processes that precede and follow crises is therefore essential, and the Strategy process is one of the most important moments for this to happen; helping to translate this globally agreed strategic approach to the country level in concrete and functional ways.

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[14] Linking Development and Humanitarian Programming, UNICEF 2016

[15] The include (but not exhaustive) the Secretary Generals' Agenda for Humanity, Sendai Framework for DRR, The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative, the Busan Partnership for effective development cooperation. The Grand Bargain, and OCHA's New Way of Working.

The key principle of Alignment and Continuity – which should underpin the entire Strategy development process – will ensure Cluster Strategies speak to humanitarian needs while also building towards long-term solutions and contributing to the vision of educational development in the country. Alignment efforts also involve Cluster contributions to development planning, working to ensure that Sector plans take into account preparedness actions, address vulnerabilities and root causes of crisis, and build upon lessons resulting from humanitarian action to strengthen resilience. Chapter 4 and the Alignment Matrix in the Strategy Package contains more guidance on this topic.

Multi-year planning is a central component of the New Way of Working and the Grand Bargain, and it plays an important role in enhancing the humanitarian-development nexus.[16] Multi-year Humanitarian Response Plans are now increasingly common, and are intended to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian response through more predictable and realistic operational arrangements and a greater focus on the sustainability of results. Given this increasing focus on inter-sectoral multi-year planning, the protracted nature of many of the contexts where Clusters are working, and the long-term nature of education, Education Clusters will increasingly need to develop multi-year Strategies that make explicit the efforts between humanitarian and development actors to ensure continuity of education for crisis-affected children.

Whether an annual or multi-year document, the Strategy process provides additional opportunities to strengthen humanitarian development coherence. Systems strengthening and capacity building are fundamental parts of bridging humanitarian and development efforts. The role of national government is particularly important as you collaboratively work to stitch together response and development efforts to seamlessly and sustainably meet the educational needs and priorities of children affected by crisis. Clusters become necessary where there are constrained national capacities to coordinate a large scale emergency response. The Cluster therefore has an inherent responsibility to positively influence government institutions so that when the time comes for transition and deactivation, there is a strengthened national system with resources and capacity to systematically prevent, mitigate, prepare and respond to emergencies.

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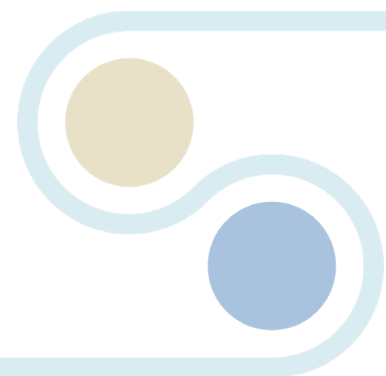
[16] OCHA Humanitarian Programme Cycle: Multi-Year Humanitarian Planning: Tip Sheet for OCHA Country/Regional Offices

Preparation of the Education Cluster Strategy is itself an opportunity for developing capacity within the system. As the Cluster Team and partners support the preparation of the Strategy, the processes should be structured to facilitate leadership of ministry staff, at both local and national-level consultations and meetings. It is through leadership and active participation in the development process that ministry staff, as well as partners, will be better able to apply key knowledge and skills during future sector planning or emergency response coordination and can help ensure existing structure and processes are not undermined, but strengthened. Like the engagement with affected populations, it is also an important way to ensure response strategies and interventions are relevant, appropriate, and contribute to more sustainable education programming and outcomes.

In addition to government leadership in Strategy development, systems strengthening and capacity building should also be encouraged within and between cluster partners as you prepare your Strategy:

• **Partners with dual mandates:** It is highly likely that there will be Cluster partners who deal with both humanitarian and development work, often at both policy and programmatic levels. Strategy development discussions can provide a good opportunity to bring internal expertise together and develop approaches that link emergency specific responses to ongoing development, emphasizing the role emergency interventions play in progress towards development goals such as "education for all" articulated in Sustainable Development Goal 4 (or at least maintaining progress achieved prior to the crisis).[17]

• **National and local partners:** Ensuring national and local organisations are fully engaged in Strategy development and other Cluster processes including funding appeals can help ensure continuity and strengthen links between local development efforts and humanitarian aid.

• **All partners:** Articulating the links between an emergency response and longer term development within an Education Cluster Strategy can help all partners consider how to build resilience and early recovery related work into emergency programming, and emergency preparedness and response flexibility into longer term development programmes.[18]

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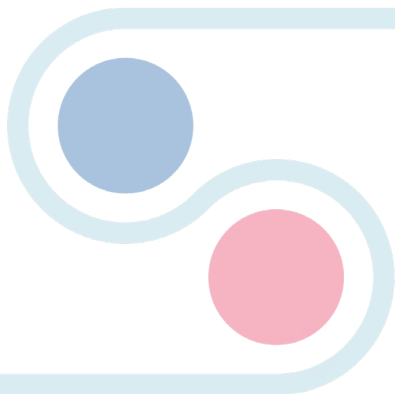
[17] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4
[18] Section 4.1. on Alignment of humanitarian and development plans.

Considering systems strengthening and longer term development goals may feel secondary to the pressing needs of the immediate crisis and the complexities of response planning, but how you partner and collaborate and act in the acute phase can lead to longer term systemic change that addresses the root causes of vulnerability and risk. Systems strengthening, capacity building and risk reduction efforts do not happen quickly, but strategy development and review processes that are led by government actors with the support of the Cluster Team and full engagement of all partners, can help ensure the alignment of emergency plans with development efforts and encourage greater resilience and preparedness measures across the sector.

Looking beyond the education sector, an essential part of meaningful and sustainable impact across the humanitarian-development divide involves working cross-sectorally for two main reasons:

1. **Sustainable results:** A quality and sustainable education programme, whether humanitarian or development, necessitates inter-sectoral linkages. Building these links from the outset of a crisis, and in such a way that they intentionally consider longer term development requirements supports the continuity of quality education provision. Early inter-sectoral collaboration is also efficient, as costly short-term solutions can be avoided in favour of more sustainable approaches.[19]

2. **Comparative advantage:** Using education interventions as an entry-point for the provision of nutrition, health, child protection, and WASH services which build on local networks and capacity can be a strategic approach as humanitarian and development actors work towards the achievement of collective outcomes that span across traditional sectors. As education actors, you should advocate for programming that leverages the inherent strengths of the education sector – the opportunity to build capacity, resilience, and inclusive community development at the most local levels and with the youngest and most vulnerable parts of an affected population.

Both of these inter-sectoral approaches to the nexus can be initiated or strengthened through the strategy development and drafting process. Engaging other sectors and the humanitarian leadership in discussions about what the education sector has to offer when it is prioritized and protected can be strategic and will result in a stronger plan that is built on foundations that link phases but also sectors and actors.

Finally, the role of affected populations throughout Strategy development shows clearly how all three strategic approaches to strategy development – accountability, partnership and nexus – link and reinforce each other. A plan that is not only relevant and responsive to the priorities of those affected, but also seeks to build partnership that engages and mobilizes local capacities will ground response efforts and make educational continuity and ongoing development more likely.

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[19] For example, emergency latrine provision for learning spaces in a crisis can be planned with long-term sanitation provision in mind, considering location, inclusive, gender and child friendly design and maintenance and training issues from the outset.

Principles of Strategy Development

In addition to the three pillars discussed above, a brief explanation of the key principles that should guide your Strategy process is provided here. It is recommended to explicitly summarize the specific approach your Cluster has taken regarding these principles within your Education Cluster Strategy document, with contextual details and specific references to documents, events and processes (a modifiable version of the graphic below can be found in the Education Cluster Strategy Template Graphics file in the Strategy Package).
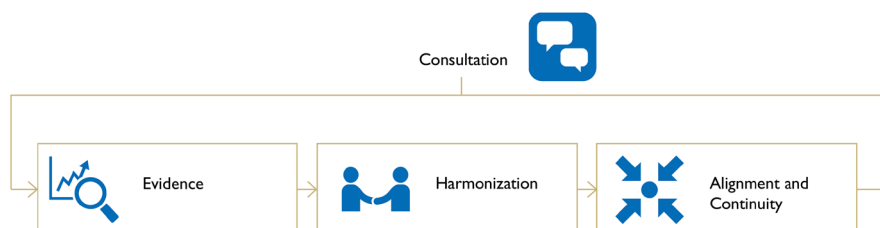
1.   Consultation

Unlike the other principles of strategy development, consultation does not have a full section of this guide dedicated to it. This is because the entire strategy process should involve consultation. The richer and more inclusive our consultations can be, the stronger our final document and buy-in surrounding that document will become. Including local actors and affected populations in the consultation process empowers them to be more involved in the decision making processes. Consultations do take time so be sure to schedule sufficient time for consultative activities in your Strategy Workplan (see Section 1.3.). Not all consultations need to involve all actors; it is the cumulative outcomes of all the consultations with different stakeholders that the Strategy document should seek to distil and capture.

2.   Evidence

If consultation is the cement holding an Education Cluster Strategy together, then evidence is the foundation. Responses must be evidence-based and the process for defining scope and prioritization of needs and response activities has to be driven by a robust analysis of needs. Ongoing review, new assessment data, including multi-sector assessments/analyses, and an up-to-date Secondary Data Review is needed in order to inform real-time decisions and adjust implementation plans as necessary. Chapter 2 walks you step-by-step through the process of generating evidence, as well as dealing with the inevitable information gaps.

3.   Harmonization

As discussed in Chapter 3, the Cluster has a critical role to play in ensuring there is a harmonized response to an emergency. With multiple agencies working to respond to a crisis, the process for transparently and inclusively determining priorities and shaping a common approach to the identified needs is a key part of the Strategy process. This will help reduce duplication, mitigate inefficiencies and help ensure gaps in response are addressed. The Cluster's response plan should provide scaffolding for all Cluster partners, as they develop their programmatic plans. Operational standards as part of this harmonized approach provide a common language for the response and help to ensure quality of service prevision across agencies and affected areas in line with the *INEE Minimum Standards*. An agreed criteria for peer review of Cluster projects included in common appeals and funding processes is another tool that can be used to support the harmonization process (see Section 3.5. as well as the Partner Project Peer Review Template in the Strategy Package).

4.   Alignment and Continuity

The humanitarian-development nexus is a strategic pillar of the Global Education Cluster's Strategy, and should guide our way of working at the country level too. Linking education in emergencies to development and recovery processes that precede and follow crisis is essential and requires acknowledging the temporary nature of Clusters and that local expertise and institutions existed prior to the Education Cluster's activation and will continue to exist after the Cluster's deactivation. Chapter 4 of this guide tackles the issue of alignment and continuity head on, highlighting how the links between humanitarian and development work can be not only explicitly referenced but strengthened throughout the strategy development process. Linkages with other sectors and the broader humanitarian response plan are also important for a quality Education Cluster Strategy, and this is referenced in Section 3.7.5., Section 4.1 and in the Alignment Matrix in the Strategy Package.
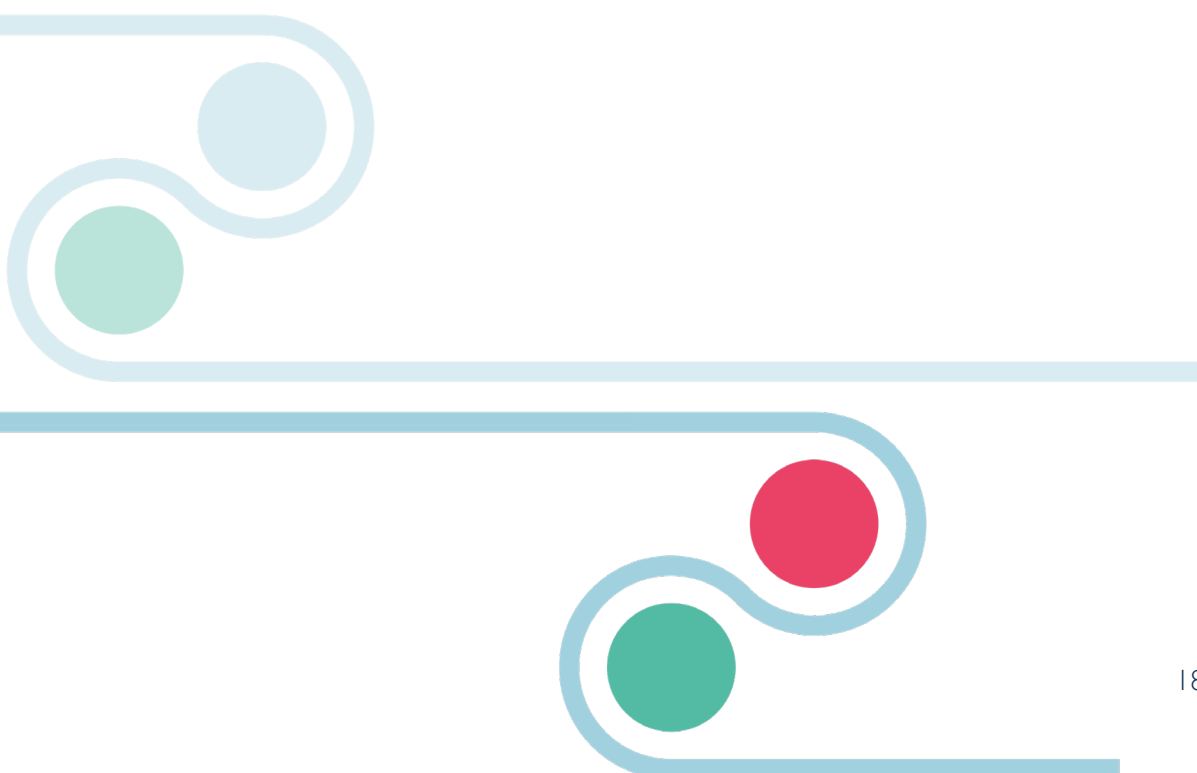
1. PREPARE FOR STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

> **STRATEGY PACKAGE TOOLS AND RESOURCES:**
> - Summary Guide to Developing Education Cluster Strategies
> - Strategy Task Team ToR Template
> - Education Cluster Strategy PowerPoint Presentation
> - Accountability Checklist
> - Localization Checklist
> - Inter-Sector Checklist
> - Strategy Workplan Template

Before you begin developing your Strategy, you may find it useful to do the following preparatory activities:

1.1 Introduce the Strategy process and establish a Strategy Task Team

Education Cluster partners will have a key role to play in strategy development. Early on in the planning process, it is important to update your Cluster Contact List[20], send a brief email to partners explaining the Strategy development process (including timeframe and their involvement) and present this Strategy process to Cluster members at national and sub-national Cluster meetings. An Education Cluster Strategy Presentation Template (in PowerPoint) can be found in the Strategy Package.
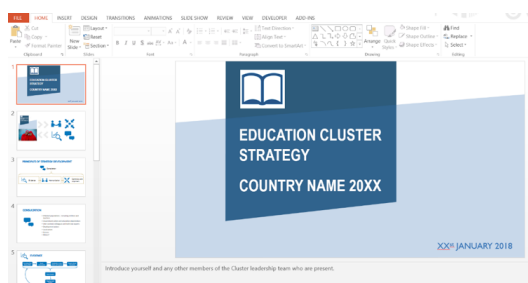
While the wider Cluster partners will be involved in the process, you, the Cluster Team, will have primary responsibility for overseeing the Strategy process. However, you will need support from a Strategy Task Team. If your Cluster already has a functioning Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), you may decide to use it instead. However, the SAG's function will typically be broader and longer-term than developing a Strategy document, so a task team would provide you with a time- and task-bound team of individuals that can be predictably activated and de-activated on an as-need basis (i.e. when the Strategy needs to be developed or updated). It also provides you the added flexibility of including key individuals and organizations who may not already be on the SAG. Benefits of having a Strategy Task Team include:

1. Better quality **inputs**, as key tasks can be outsourced and feedback provided

2. Strengthened **process**, ensuring continued consultation/collaboration with the MoE and key partners

3. A **final product** with greater buy-in, ownership and authority

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[20] A Microsoft Excel-based Education Cluster Contact List template can be found in the GEC Toolkit

Be sure to clearly outline in a Terms of Reference the objectives, activities, responsibilities, and membership composition of the Strategy Task Team. Membership in the Strategy Task Team will need to be defined contextually, but will typically be between 5-10 members with representation from the MoE (if appropriate), Cluster Lead Agencies (CLAs) and international and national actors. Ensuring full participation of MoE and national and development actors in the strategy development process will help ensure representation from local education experts and longer-term staff and avoid a situation, particularly in sudden onset acute crises, where the Strategy is developed predominately by those in the country on surge assignments and without a comprehensive understanding of longer-term emergency and development dynamics. Be sure to pay attention to gender balance and diversity in terms of Strategy Task Team membership, as well as sensitivity to conflict and other crisis-related dynamics. A Strategy Task Team Terms of Reference Template can be found in the Strategy Package:
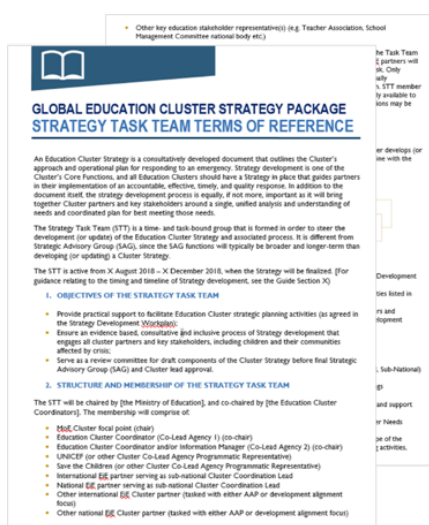
FILE AND DATA MANAGEMENT

From the beginning of the Strategy Development process you should begin planning how you will manage and store the plethora of files and data that you will be collaborating on. As you will be collaborating on most documents with multiple people, having clear and agreed-upon file naming and data storing practices is essential. Furthermore, depending on the crisis, there is often a high likelihood that the Cluster will need to repeat the Strategy development process and update the Strategy in the future. With high turnover of staff and to ensure continuity, it is extremely important to leave a clear paper trail that shows evidence of a transparent process that can be easily built upon. This means that all files and data are easy to access, understand, and update. Consider these tips:

· When preparing for the Strategy development process, establish an online, shared folder for the Cluster Team and Strategy Task Team for ease of collaboration and file sharing (e.g. **Dropbox** or **Box**). Rather than using a personal email account to set up this folder, it is advisable to use an email address created for the Cluster so that access to this folder can be easily transferred (note: make sure all passwords are provided to incoming Cluster staff in your handover notes).

· Within this folder, use a clear and logical folder structure taxonomy so that files are easy to find. You may consider using the Chapter and sub-section headings in this Guide as a potential folder structure. Within each of these sub-folders use a 'Drafts' or 'Archive' folder where you can quickly file older versions of documents, leaving only the newest version visible.

· Ensure that all collaborators understand and respect agreed-upon file naming practices. Use clear, short and logical document names followed by an inverted date and/or version number to ensure proper version control of your files. For example: "Strategy Task Team ToR_2017-12-31".

· Save, save save! When drafting documents, regularly save to avoid losing your work. In addition to using an online shared folder, be sure to back up all files and data (e.g. external hard drive).

1.2.   Review existing Strategy support materials

The GEC has and continues to produce resources to support Strategy development. Guidance (such as this Guide and accompanying Summary Guide), tools and templates and vetted country examples can save you enormous amounts of time and energy. It is particularly important to review the Accountability to Affected Populations Checklist, Localisation Checklist and Inter-Sector Checklist as these all contain guidance that should be considered from the very beginning of the process. You can download and review the latest resources from the Strategy Package as well as the broader Education Cluster Toolkit.
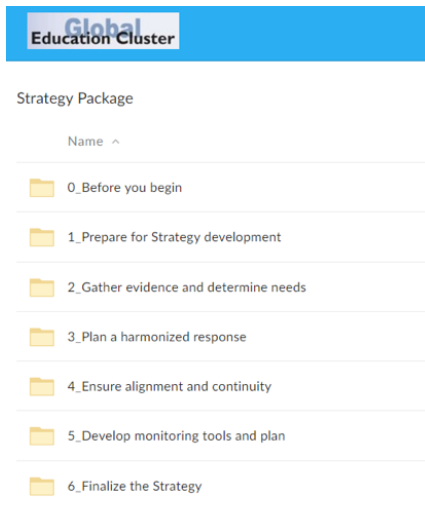
You may also want to contact the GEC (help.edcluster@humanitarianresponse. info) to request any additional resources and to inform them you are beginning the Strategy process as you may require remote support. In-country resources should also be sought-out, particularly any Contingency Plans or previous Cluster Strategies.

1.3.   Create a Cluster Strategy Workplan and timeline

In consultation with the Strategy Task Team, draft and agree upon a Strategy Workplan outlining key tasks for developing a Strategy, responsibilities, specific outputs and the timeframe and deadlines. The Strategy process will have activities that will need to be conducted simultaneously, so keeping a clear and up-to-date workplan will be essential. The chapters and sections in this Guide outline the tasks you may want to consider including in your Workplan (see figures on page 7 as well as the Summary Guide for a visual summary) and the Strategy Package contains a pre-populated Strategy Workplan Template organigram for easy contextualization. You may like to share a simplified Workplan or summary of key milestones with the broader Cluster as well as other key stakeholders you plan to engage in the process, such as key technical experts, other sectoral Coordinators and development actors and donors.

As discussed in the Introduction, in order for the Cluster Strategy and HNO/HRP processes to inform one another, it is essential that the timing be planned and synced appropriately. Contact OCHA for information regarding plans and timeline for the HNO/HRP and ensure that your timeline and workplan for the Strategy considers the HNO/HRP process. For example:

- If HNO sectoral inputs are due to OCHA beginning of mid October, and you are planning on conducting a two-month joint education needs assessment, then that assessment should begin no later than the beginning of August. This may also need to be adjusted, however, based on a country's academic school-year calendar; assessing education needs when schools are on vacation may not provide the best results!

- If a workshop to establish inter-sectoral priorities, scope and Strategic Objectives is scheduled for the beginning of November you may want to *draft* your Response Framework before (based on your Education Needs Overview and HNO findings) but schedule your Response Framework workshop *after* so that the framework you are workshopping can be first aligned with the inter-sectoral HRP.

The example below shows a potential timeline and how the Strategy development process may align with the HNO/HRP process. Note how determining needs for the Strategy may need to begin well before the official launch of the HNO process as well as how finalization of the Strategy will most likely occur after the finalization of the HRP (to allow for alignment).

Where relevant plan for the translation of various surveys, documents and reports produced during strategy development as well as the Strategy document itself; this is especially important for ensuring national and local participation and consultation.
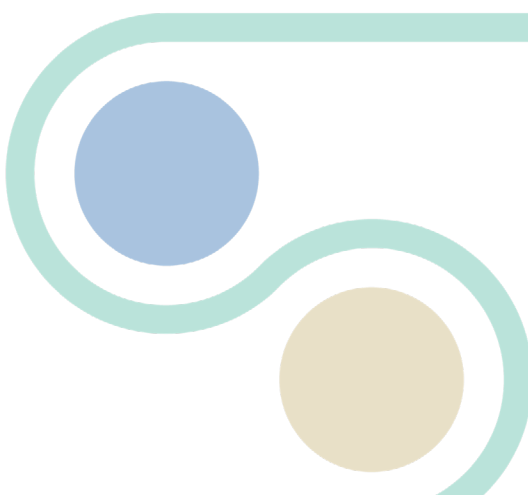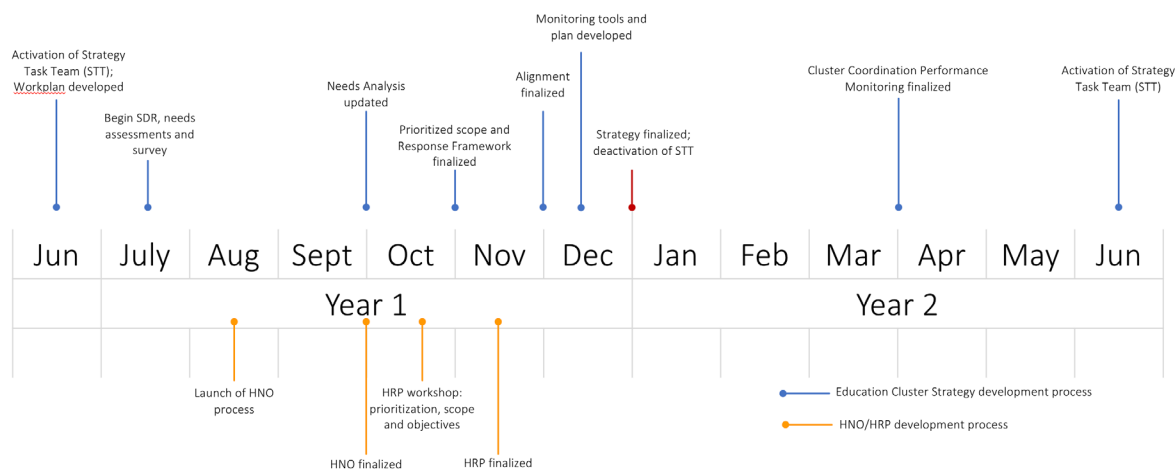
2. GATHER EVIDENCE AND DETERMINE NEEDS

> **NEEDS ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND RESOURCES:**
> - Guide to Education in Emergencies Needs Assessments
> - Needs Assessment Package
>
> **STRATEGY PACKAGE TOOLS AND RESOURCES:**
> - Survey of Needs Template
> - Survey of Capacity Template
> - PiN Rationale Template
> - Education Cluster Needs Overview Template

To a large extent, the Education Cluster Strategy (process and document) follows the humanitarian programme cycle (HPC):

The first step in the HPC is "Needs Assessment & Analysis;" before planning, mobilizing resources or implementing response activities you must first generate the evidence to inform these activities. Cluster Teams should plan carefully and work to develop systems and processes that allow you to maintain an accurate understanding of needs (see sub-sections below).

The Education Cluster should be the primary mechanism for the collaborative generation of evidence to collectively determine needs and plan a prioritized a response. The Cluster partnership is ideal for the gathering and generation of evidence because it enables the pooling of resources and technical expertise leading to greater efficiency, transparency and coverage. Joint analysis also leads to a shared understanding of needs which lays an essential foundation for planning a unified response. This applies at the inter-sectoral level as well, so be sure that Cluster-level assessment and analysis activities are informing and being informed by those taking place inter-sectorally (e.g. HNO).

As discussed in the Introduction, it is important to plan ahead and synchronize the Strategy process with the HNO/HRP processes; this is especially true for activities to gather evidence and determine needs. Be sure these are properly scheduled in your Strategy Workplan to give you adequate time to complete them prior to commencement of the HNO.

The importance of consultation and collaboration when conducting these activities and generating evidence for a coordinated response cannot be overemphasized. When relevant stakeholders come together to pool resources and expertise the final result is more effective in terms of quality, time and resources. Furthermore, when consultation has taken place during every step of this process, key relationships are strengthened, and there will be a single and unified understanding and vision of the needs of the affected population. This process must find opportunities to engage in and reflect the needs and priorities of the affected population themselves, including children. This is a necessary precursor to, and will serve as a solid foundation for, planning and implementing a coordinated response.

2.1.   Conduct a Secondary Data Review[21]

An SDR is an ongoing summarization and compilation of available information for regular analysis to inform decision making. Regardless of any other assessment plans, Cluster Teams should always have an ongoing, up-to-date SDR with regular SDR reports. Conducting a 'round' of SDR, including updating an SDR analysis and report, during the Strategy process will provide key information for the Strategy and highlight information gaps. An up-to-date SDR matrix also provides a searchable database you can refer to and draw from quickly and easily when developing the Strategy. Seek out data relating to protection or equity issues or to particularly vulnerable groups; EMIS reports and analyses can be useful here. Also look for any existing reports, evaluations or other documentation that reflect the views and perspectives of affected people themselves; this will contribute to integrating some people-centred information into the needs analysis process.

A Secondary Data Review is a key opportunity to consult and engage with Cluster partners. Train partners on how to identify relevant types of secondary data and how to share with the Cluster for compilation and analysis. Sharing regular and predictably scheduled SDR reports for feedback and finalization with partners will also help them to see the value and increase buy-in.

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[21] Chapter 2 in the "Guide to Education in Emergencies Needs Assessments" contained in the Needs Assessment Package of the GEC Toolkit provides step-by-step instructions for conducting an SDR, including how to draw upon government documents and data such as EMIS reports. The Needs Assessment Package also includes templates and country examples of SDR matrices and reports.

2.2.   Conduct a needs assessment[22] (if needed)

The SDR will most likely highlight information gaps needing to be filled through primary data collection. This can be done by participating in and integrating education-related questions into multi-sector assessments as well as conducting harmonized or Joint Education Needs Assessment (JENA). The information needs/gaps, timeframe/deadlines for the information needed and other contextual factors (resources, partner capacity, security and accessibility, etc.) will determine the type and scope of your assessment.

Assessments are also key opportunities for collaborating and consulting with Cluster partners, including affected populations:

- Use a partner-based Assessment Working Group to plan and design the assessments
- Solicit stakeholder contributions (financial, technical expertise for design, vehicles, fuel, drivers, translators, data collectors, training venues, data enterers, computers, phone credit, etc.)
- Share and receive stakeholder feedback on assessment design (methodologies, collection tools, etc.)
- During assessment design, ensure that methodologies and questions appropriately consult with affected populations, where possible, use participatory methodologies
- Conduct a shared analysis or interpretive workshop with assessment findings[23]
- Share assessment report draft[24] with relevant stakeholders and request feedback and inputs (and endorsement from the MoE, if appropriate)
- Conduct an action plan workshop[25]

2.3.   Conduct a stakeholder survey: Needs and capacity

If information gaps persist and you do not have the time or resources to conduct a formal JENA, it may be useful to collect information from relevant stakeholders via a survey.[26] Depending on your context, information needs, and timeframe, this may include (at national and sub-national levels):

- Cluster partners (international, national and local; see 'Strategic Pillar: Partnership' in the Introduction)
- MoE officials
- Representatives from affected populations
- Donors
- Development actors
- OCHA and inter-sector representatives (e.g. other Cluster teams)
- Technical experts in relevant cross-cutting issues (e.g. gender advisors, inclusion specialists)

The perspectives from individuals and organizations working with the affected communities at sub-national and local levels is crucial as they often have their 'finger on the pulse' and have a good understanding of the situation. Certain stakeholders (development actors, MoE officials, affected population, etc.) will not only be key in identifying needs but also providing useful information on the structural root causes of those needs. While this approach is not a formal 'needs assessment' *per se*, you may still also be able to quickly survey some purposely selected representatives

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[22] Chapters 3 and 4, respectively, in the "Guide to Education in Emergencies Needs Assessments" provide guidance on joint and harmonized assessments, respectively.

[23] For more information, see Section 3.4.7. in the "Guide to Education in Emergencies Needs Assessments"

[24] For more information see Section 3.5. in the "Guide to Education in Emergencies Needs Assessments" as well as an Assessment Report Template in the Needs Assessment Package

[25] An assessment action plan workshop is a workshop conducted with relevant stakeholders to plan how to implement the recommendations based on the findings included in the assessment report. For more information see Section 3.5.4. in the "Guide to Education in Emergencies Needs Assessments" as well as an Action Plan Template in the Needs Assessment Package

[26] Technically, you could still do this survey of needs and capacity even if you have conducted a recent JENA; however, if you have conducted the JENA in a consultative and collaborative manner (including the interpretive workshop and receiving stakeholder feedback) this is typically not necessary.

from the affected population, such as head teachers and representatives from teachers' unions, parent-teacher associations, and student bodies. While formal assessments are preferred as they are (in theory) more rigorous, transparent and less biased, a stakeholder survey can provide quick, top-line information pertaining to what, where and how large the affected population's needs are, thus providing insight and justifiable evidence if you are short on time and resources.

To see a list of potential questions to include in your survey, refer to the Stakeholder Survey of Needs Template in the Strategy Package.

In addition to the survey of needs, you may also want to conduct a survey for Cluster partners pertaining to their capacities. This will allow you to later do a capacity analysis. To see a list of potential questions to include in your survey, refer to the Stakeholder Survey of Capacity Template in the Strategy Package. Depending on your context, you may choose to merge the survey of needs and survey of capacity when sending to Cluster partners.

When developing your surveys, consider drafting first in a printable format in Microsoft Word or Excel (feel free to use the templates referenced above) and then convert it into an online survey with SurveyMonkey, Google Forms, etc. The online survey will typically be easier and quicker to complete, compile and analyze. However, it is important to have a paper-based option, especially for local partners and MoE staff who may not be able to complete an online survey.[27] An additional option to online and paper-based surveys that can be especially effective for gathering data from local partners as well as representatives from the affected populations is SMS data collection software, such as UNICEF's open-source software RapidPro.

Note: You may need to develop multiple surveys, nuanced differently for each target group. Be sure to give yourself adequate time for this exercise in your Strategy Workplan (see Section 1.3.); the amount of time needed will vary widely by context, but approximately one to two weeks should be sufficient.

2.4. Calculate People-in-Need of EiE

Total Population (of the country and/or the inter-sectorally defined 'affected areas') as well as the Affected Population figures should be calculated inter-sectorally, typically led by OCHA, and used as Common Operational Datasets.[28] People-in-Need (PiN) is a sub-set of these categories and can be defined as those: [29]

- whose physical security, basic rights, dignity, living conditions or livelihoods are threatened or have been disrupted, AND
- whose current level of access to basic services, goods and social protection is inadequate to re-establish normal living conditions with their accustomed means in a timely manner without additional assistance.
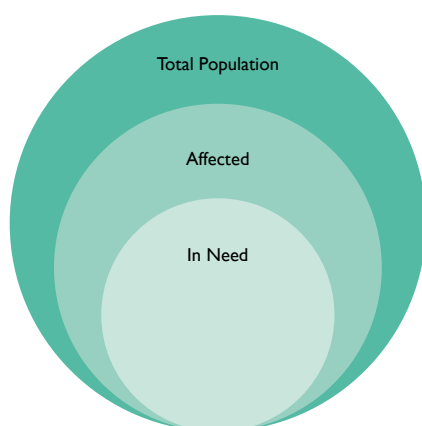
Your task is to use all the data and information you have compiled from your SDR, assessments and survey to *quantify* the number of PiN for the education sector (e.g. children/learners and education personnel).

Calculating PiN is both a science and an art. A science in the sense that it will require technical, mathematical calculations and should be as logical, detailed and concrete as possible. An art because no matter how hard you try to be exact, you will still make significant estimations, apply assumptions and use a little creativity in how you determine PiN figures. You, the Education Cluster Team (Cluster Coordinator and IMO), will most likely draft the first round of PiN calculations and rationale/explanation of those calculations (see Section 2.4.4. below).

PRIORITIZING THE PIN CALCULATION PROCESS

It is important to be as accurate, rigorous and transparent as possible when calculating and estimating PiN figures. While this process can seem difficult and daunting, DO NOT BE INTIMIDATED and take it a step at a time. Make sure you adequately prioritize this process by planning and allocating sufficient time to complete and then document your calculations (see Section 1.3 and the Strategy Workplan Template). Use instructions in this Guide, the resources in the Strategy Package and the technical experts available to you (e.g. from OCHA in-country, local EMIS experts, and the GEC.[30]).

The entire response will be based on an understanding of need and your PiN figures; being accountable to the affected population also means giving due diligence to this important process. Furthermore, by being rigorous and prepared to show your work you will be better positioned to elevate education by providing concrete evidence to humanitarian leadership and decision makers.

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[28] If this is not happening, you may need to proactively call a meeting with other Clusters, perhaps through an Information Management Working Group, to determine these figures; it is essential that all Clusters use the same population data as a starting point when calculating PiN.

[29] See the IASC Information Management Working Group's Humanitarian Profile Support Guidance. While this document focuses on deriving overall, inter-sectoral humanitarian population figures, it is still worth reviewing as some of the guidance can be applied sector specifically.

[30] White boards and caffeine are also highly recommended.

2.4.1. Gather your sources

In addition to the data, analyses and findings from your SDR, assessments and stakeholder surveys of needs and capacity, data from three key sources you will also want available (if possible):[31]

Population Census	Try to obtain the most recent and most accurate population data for the country. This includes census data, *projected* census data, and population pyramids showing the country's agreed-upon population structures (age and sex disaggregation). As it is important that all Clusters calculate need using the same starting point (i.e. Common Operational Datasets), OCHA (through an Information Management Working Group) should be able to direct you to the correct dataset. If not, you may be able to track down the most recent census online or with national staff colleagues, government counterparts or UNFPA.
Education Management Information System (EMIS)	EMIS (if available) will provide valuable data for the country's education system. While this may often be outdated, since it can be difficult for government to update EMIS during a crisis, you can often use pre-crisis data to help estimate PiN: pre-crisis enrollment and teacher figures, Net Enrollment Rates (NER), number of schools, etc. You should be able to get access to your country's EMIS data through your MoE counterparts. If not, try online sources such as the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), UNICEF country statistics, World Bank EdStats[32], OCHA Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX), etc.
Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)	Most humanitarian crises will have a DTM, typically managed by and accessible through IOM and/or UNHCR; again most Clusters should be drawing from this Common Operational Dataset, so you should also be able to access the DTM through OCHA as well. The DTM will provide you with useful data (often disaggregated by sex and age) pertaining to population movement: number of people displaced from a particular area, number of displaced persons being received in a particular area, number of returnees, number of schools being used as shelters, etc.).

Often multiple versions of these resources, with varying degree of detail, are available. Try to get the most detailed and most geographically disaggregated data as possible. The more geographically specific you can be, the more specific and accurate you can be in your calculations.

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[31] Although your SDR will most likely have some summarized data from these sources, it is still a good idea to have as much detailed and raw data at your disposal as possible for this exercise.

[32] The World Bank Education Statistics portal is a comprehensive data and analysis source for key topics in education such as access, completion, learning, expenditures and equity.

2.4.2. Identify your PiN categories

Next, determine which types of individuals will be considered in your PiN calculations. Typically, this will involve at least two strata of children/learners[33] and education personnel by: 1) level of schooling (e.g. ECD, primary, secondary, tertiary, non-formal education) and 2) 'categories' of need: IDPs[34], Returnees, Host Communities, Refugees and Other.[35] You will need to determine which of these categories is relevant for your context's PiN calculations. A simple table checklist, such as the table below may help:

	Returnees	IDPs — In site/camps	IDPs — In host communities	Host Community	Non-displaced/ non-hosting	Refugees	[…]
ECD	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Primary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Secondary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tertiary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personnel	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
[…]	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2.4.3. Calculate the PiN

When calculating PiN for each of the categories identified, you will also need to consider geographic and sex disaggregation. If you are beginning to feel overwhelmed, just remember to take it a step at a time! Start with one category (e.g. Returnees) and work through a PiN table *for each category* (contextualize for your needs). The PiN Rationale Template in the Strategy Package contains a series of tables, instructions and tips to help walk you through this process. For example:

3.1. RETURNEES

Description: [For your context, how is this group being defined? Who is included/excluded? Rationale for including them in the overall PiN? Rationale for excluding a portion of this population type from overall PiN? Etc.]

Sources:
- [List of sources used when calculating figures]
-
-

Assumptions:
- [List of specific assumptions and estimations used when calculating figures; be as transparent as possible]
-
-

Summary of returnees in need (children and personnel)

Group:	ECD [3-5] Child M	ECD [3-5] Child F	ECD [3-5] Pers. M	ECD [3-5] Pers. F	Primary [6-11] Child M	Primary [6-11] Child F	Primary [6-11] Pers. M	Primary [6-11] Pers. F	Secondary [12-17] Child M	Secondary [12-17] Child F	Secondary [12-17] Pers. M	Secondary [12-17] Pers. F	Tertiary [18+] Child M	Tertiary [18+] Child F	Tertiary [18+] Pers. M	Tertiary [18+] Pers. F	Total Child M	Total Child F	Total Pers. M	Total Pers. F	Grand Total M	Grand Total F	Grand Total T
[Location 1]																							
[Location 2]																							
[Location 3]																							
[Location 4]																							
[Location 5]																							
[Location…]																							
Total																							

Calculations:

[Step-by-step summary of the calculations used to determine the number of people in need for this category.]

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[33] 'Learners' is used here rather than 'children' in case your response includes tertiary education (i.e. adults). 'Students' also has a formal-education-only nuance that may not always apply.

[34] IDPs will usually be further broken down by those in camps/sites and those in host communities

[35] 'Other' will need to be defined contextually but will most likely include those individuals who have not been displaced and are not within a hosting community, but whose access to quality education has been interrupted.

Additional guidance and tips when calculating PiN:

Geographic disaggregation	For each PiN table like the one above, disaggregate by the *lowest* administrative boundary level for which you have data/are able to calculate. This will allow for more nuanced and accurate calculations that you can aggregate to get totals. Remember: it is easier to aggregate up using data you have than to try to disaggregate down using data you do not!
Sex and age disaggregation	If sex and age disaggregated data exists, use it! For example, if the DTM tells you exactly how many boys and girls with their ages are in a particular IDP site, you can use that data directly. However, if this level of detail is not available, apply estimations for sex and age disaggregation using the data that is available. For example, If the DTM only tells you the total number of IDPs in a particular IDP site, calculate and then apply an estimation of percentage breakdown to this total figure (e.g. you could use the census data for that particular geographic area to know the sex and age breakdown pre-crisis: 48% of children 0-18 are female; 4% of population 3-5, 6% of population 6-11, etc.).[36]
Inclusion issues	Data is a critical tool for an inclusive education response. While often not possible to access detailed disaggregated data relating to particular vulnerable groups (e.g. children and youth with disabilities, particular religious, language, ethnic or caste groups), if you do have approximate data available, this can be referenced in the narrative accompanying your PiN calculations. This then serves as a placeholder so that the Response Framework considers the different needs of these often hard-to-reach children. Ideally at least some of these information gaps can be addressed as part of the response.
Proxies	Education PiN usually entails calculating numbers of learners and education personnel in-need, but sometimes these numbers of *people* in need will need to be derived from other data sources, such as the number of classrooms impacted. After the Nepal earthquake in 2015, for example, the number of classrooms damaged and destroyed combined with pupil/classroom ratios was used initially to estimate the PiN.
Returnees	Defining a returnee-in-need may be difficult as this can often be dependent on several contextual factors (e.g. duration of displacement, time since resettlement, etc.). Be sure to coordinate with OCHA on this issue, as defining returnee as well as determining whether to include returnees in overall PiN should be an inter-sectoral decision. When calculating returnees-in-need you will also need to decide (and justify) if all (i.e. 100%) returnees within your defined age-range/school level (e.g. 3-17) will be considered in-need or if you will apply a pre-crisis net-enrollment rate (NER).[36]
IDPs	When calculating PiN for IDPs you most likely will want to disaggregate by those in sites/camps from those in host communities. Typically, 100% of IDPs within your defined age-range/school level categories will be considered in-need.
Host Communities	Some contexts have large number of IDPs living with Host Communities which can cause a strain on often already burdened education systems. This can also sometimes cause tension between IDPs and their hosts. Most responses will therefore also include 'host communities' as a category of 'in-need.' Contextual creativity may be required for calculating PiN for host communities as it may not always be as straight-forward as calculating IDPs in-need, for example. Current global practice suggests a ratio of 1:1; for every IDP counted within the education PiN, one member of the host community is also considered in-need. Your data may suggest that some host communities in particular geographic areas are being more affected by IDPs than others, in which case you may choose a different ratio (e.g. 1:2, 1:3, etc.). Again, calculating PiN is sometimes an art: use your data to make a logical decision and then justify it!
Non-displaced Non-hosting	Often there will be individuals who were not displaced and who are not hosting IDPs, but who nevertheless are no longer able to access quality learning opportunities because of the crisis (e.g. school was damaged/destroyed, etc.). Use your data and evidence to estimate the PiN for this category while being careful not to double count with figures from Returnees, IDPs or Host Communities. This category is usually where you may want to use apply the pre-crisis NER (as pre-crisis out-of-school children who have not been displaced may not technically be in need of *humanitarian* assistance.
Refugees	Refugees here is referring only to those refugees who have come *into* your country from another country (not those who have left). While they should certainly be counted as PiN, whether they are considered in the HRP or an UNHCR response strategy will be determined contextually, in-country. Either way, your Strategy should address this issue and make clear how/if refugees needs will be considered.

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[36] Be sure to ask IOM, OCHA IMWG, etc. if they already have sex and age estimation breakdown chart; ideally this should also be standardized across sectors.

[36] The justification for applying an NER is that 'humanitarian response' is about helping the country return to its pre-crisis status; as the NER will show, not 100% of children were in school pre-crisis and are therefore not in-need of humanitarian assistance. However, due to the often difficult and highly traumatic nature of displacement many contexts will consider 100% of returnees as being 'in-need.' This same rationale also applies to IDPs.

Education personnel	Typically, the PiN for education personnel can be calculated by applying a teacher-to-learner ratio to the calculated PiN for each of the categories. Globally, a ratio of 1:40 is often used (e.g. divide your total number of identified PiN learners by 40). However, you may need to contextualize this ratio (e.g. 1:30, 1:50, etc.). Remember to factor in other education personnel, such as head teachers, inspectors, or SMC/PTA members as relevant. Consideration of the gender balance of the education workforce should be reflected if data is available, to then be addressed as part of the response if relevant.
Projections	In addition to those currently in-need, some contexts may need to include projections for *future* PiN. Multi-year Cluster Strategies as well as predictable spikes in the emergency (e.g. annual flooding) are two examples when this may be necessary. Ideally, adding projected figures to PiN will be an inter-sector decision.

2.4.4.   Draft and share a PiN Rationale document

As you calculate your PiN you will probably have a collection of Excel spreadsheets and scribbles on paper, white boards, and napkins. Once you are confident with your numbers, draft a PiN Rationale document that not only compiles your calculations and summarizes your key figures, but also allows you to cite your sources and clearly state your assumptions and limitations. You may also want to create a simplified PowerPoint presentation on the figures and methodologies. Before finalization, you can then share the PiN Rationale and presentation with relevant Cluster partners, MoE, OCHA and the GEC who may be able to provide better sources/data as well as technical advice for improving your calculations. As these PiN figures will be used for the entire education sector, it is crucial to have partner and MoE buy-in and agreement on finalized figures. Not only does the PiN Rationale increase transparency, but as the crisis evolves and more information becomes available, needs change and staff turns over, this document and the key PiN figures will serve as a solid starting point for all updates. As mentioned above, having a rigorous PiN Rationale document that transparently shows your work will also allow you to share with the humanitarian leadership and key decision makers, thus elevating education by setting a high standard and providing concrete evidence.

As mentioned above, the Strategy Package contains examples as well as a PiN Rationale Template that helps walk you step-by-step through the process.

2.5.   Draft an Education Cluster Needs Overview

At this stage you probably have data, analyses, findings, reports and key figures everywhere! It is important, therefore, to consolidate all your evidence into a single Education Cluster Needs Overview. This document should:

- Present PiN and key figures (including projected figures if appropriate)
- Summarize the activities and methodologies used to assess needs
- Provide an overview and breakdown of people in need, including vulnerability and severity ranking (geographic as well as demographic)
- Describe and summarize the EiE needs and priorities of the population
- Highlight existing informational, programmatic and geographic coverage gaps
- Present a capacity analysis including a description of Cluster's current partner capacity as well as capacity gaps in terms of programmatic focus, population groups targeted and geographic coverage
- Include a brief summary of the methodological and analytical limitations of the evidence and analysis.
- Whenever possible, include a summary of what affected people themselves view as priorities, especially in terms of education. It can also be effective to include direct quotes in boxes throughout the text to highlight key needs and give a "voice" to affected children, youth and education personnel.

Once drafted, share the Education Cluster Needs Overview with relevant stakeholders for feedback. Your Needs Overview will serve as the foundation and primary guiding document for planning an evidence- and needs-based response. Remember to both share relevant elements of your Needs Overview with OCHA for the HNO process and to also participate in and allow findings from the HNO's inter-sectoral analysis to inform your Needs Overview. An Education Cluster Needs Overview Template can be found in the Strategy Package.
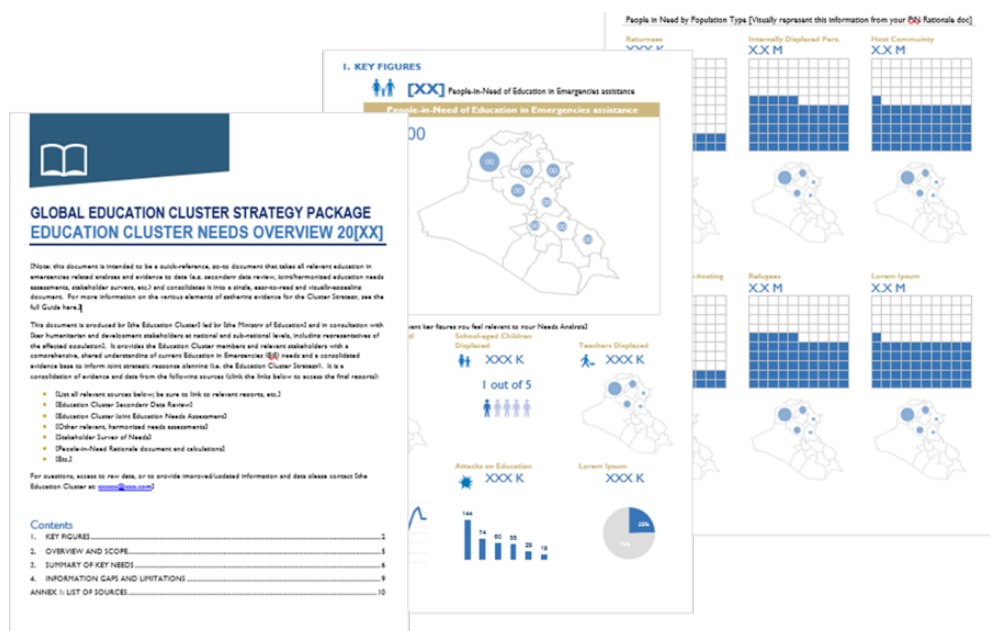
2.6.   Develop plans for ongoing needs analysis and evidence generation

As humanitarian needs have a tendency to change over time, your Education Cluster Needs Overview should be ongoing and kept up-to-date (through ongoing SDRs, assessments, etc.) and continue to inform key decisions. The Strategy, therefore, should briefly outline how the Cluster plans on collecting, maintaining and updating this information. You may want to include information such as:

•   Process for ongoing SDR and assessment harmonization,[37] focal points responsible (e.g. Cluster Team), engagement of Cluster partners and relevant stakeholders (including information flow and/or methods for sharing secondary and harmonized assessments with respective focal points) and schedule for updated SDR and harmonized assessment reports to be shared with stakeholders

•   Brief Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) if a Joint Education Needs Assessment (JENA) becomes necessary: how necessity is determined, how will it be triggered, Assessment Working Group status/role, who will lead and coordinate (e.g. Education Cluster), who will be involved, etc.

•   Process for updating Education Cluster Needs Overview and key figures, focal points responsible and schedule for updating, aligned (or at least mindful of) OCHA and other relevant processes for updating needs overviews

These plans can be pasted into the Strategy Template and at the end of your Education Cluster Needs Overview, for example.

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[37] For more information on how to harmonize assessments see Chapter 4 in the "Guide to Education in Emergencies Needs Assessments"

3.   PLAN A HARMONIZED RESPONSE

The primary role of the Education Cluster is to coordinate an evidence-based response. Once the Cluster has collectively generated adequate evidence and shared understanding of needs, it can then strategically, transparently and inclusively plan how to best meet those needs.

3.1.   Prioritize: Determine the geographic and operational scope of the response

Using the geographic severity ranking[38] from the Education Cluster Needs Overview, the Strategy should outline and justify which of the affected areas will be considered and prioritized in the Cluster's response.[39] As this can be a highly political decision, it should be made based on evidence and in consultation with relevant stakeholders. If you have generated evidence collaboratively and have a shared understanding of need, as discussed in Chapter 2, reaching consensus on geographic priority will be much easier.

In addition to geographic priorities, you should also define programmatic prioritization and other boundaries that clarify what falls outside the operational scope of this humanitarian response. This should also be based on your Education Cluster Needs Overview which offers a vulnerability and severity ranking as well as operational gap analysis. This is where harmonization and alignment processes converge; as the Cluster defines what is and is not in scope, it will be necessary to note relationships and synergies with other plans and strategies (e.g. the Education Sector Plan or National Recovery Plan). Consultatively determining the scope of the response will allow the Cluster to simultaneously differentiate and align the Cluster Strategy with these other plans, allowing for clear articulation of their complementarities.[40]

Some activities will be better placed in other planning modalities while humanitarian activities need to be established with a view not only to temporary stop-gaps, but ways of ensuring continuous, uninterrupted learning. Remember: just because a category or activity falls outside of the humanitarian scope, does not mean it is not important. Rather, it means it may simply fall into the scope of another plan (such as a development or recovery plan). For example, retrofitting of school buildings may not be included as part of humanitarian response, but could be included in a wider sectoral recovery plan. It is the responsibility of the Cluster Team to communicate this to partners and coordinating bodies of other plans and strategies.

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[38] Depending on your context, this ranking may also consider projected scenarios or historic trends if relevant (e.g. drought-prone areas, conflict hot-spots, etc.).

[39] Note: If, during the geographic prioritization process, it is decided that a particular affected area(s) should be excluded from the response, this will impact your PiN as there will now be an overall PiN (regardless of geographic prioritization) as well as a PiN exclusively for the defined area of response. This not problematic per se, however, you should be mindful when presenting PiN figures as to which makes the most sense to use.

[40] See Chapter 4 for more on alignment

Geographic and operational prioritization will also need to align inter-sectorally, so it is essential to refer to the HNO and consult with OCHA and the national government for any guidance during this process.

3.2.   Draft a Response Framework

The heart of the Strategy and the blueprint for the entire response is the Response Framework. This framework outlines the Cluster's objectives and prioritized activities with accompanying indicators and contextualized standards. It will serve as a set 'menu' from which Cluster partners can select pre-defined and costed interventions. The image below defines the components and logical flow of a Cluster Response Framework:

Needs
As outlined in the Needs Analysis and determined through SDR, assessment findings and consultations (e.g. stakeholder surveys)

↓

Strategic Objectives
Inter-sectoral objectives, typically outlined in the HRP, representing overall, humanitarian aims

↓

Cluster Objectives
Represents the change that the Cluster aims to achieve through its activities in responding to the established need

→ **Outcome Indicators**
Measure the short and medium term effects of activities/outputs as well as the Cluster's progress towards achieving success against the Cluster Objective.

↓

Standards and Costing
Contextualized definitions for standardizing activity inputs

←

Activities
Actions taken through which inputs are mobilized to produce specific outputs

→ **Output Indicators**
A measure of the delivery of goods and services to a targeted population resulting from the completion of planned activities.

The Strategy Template will help you translate this flow into a functional Response Framework:
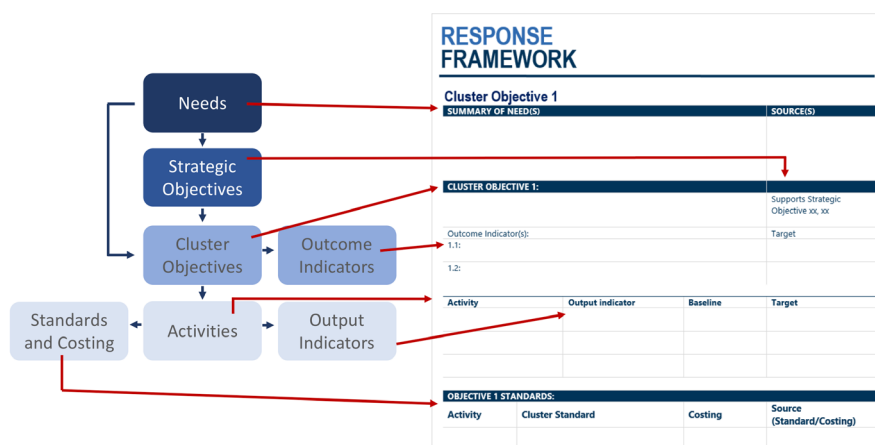
The table below provides additional guidance for each element of the Response Framework:[41]

Summary of Needs	As the Strategy will already contain a summary of your comprehensive Education Cluster Needs Overview, this should be very brief. Use this space to clearly summarize the evidence of needs for that objectives and related activities. It emphasizes that the entire Cluster response is based directly on need.
Strategic Objectives	If inter-sectoral Strategic Objectives (like those typically found in an HRP) have already been developed, it is important that your Cluster Objectives support and align with these broader objectives (see Section 4.1.). In this section, simply indicate which Strategic Objective(s) that Cluster Objective supports.
Cluster Objectives	Statement of the change the Cluster is aiming to achieve through its activities. 2-3 Cluster Objectives are usually sufficient.
Outcome Indicators	Measure the intended or achieved short- and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs and the progress against the stated Cluster Objectives. Typically, the outputs of several interventions will contribute to one outcome. Outcome indicators therefore need to be designed so they can measure the collective change that happens as the result of several outputs.
Activities	Provide a list of prioritized actions to be taken that will address the identified needs. Be sure to group your activities according to its corresponding objective under which it falls.
Output Indicators	Measure the delivery of goods and services to a targeted population. Activities may have multiple output indicators, depending on what you will want to measure/ monitor. Typically, one of these output will be *material* based (e.g. classrooms, kits, etc.) and the other will be *person* based (e.g. children benefiting from..., teachers trained in…, etc.). So if "Provision of learning supplies to emergency affected learners" is an activity, you may have two output indicators: "# of learning supply kits distributed" and "# of *children* benefitting from supplies"
Standards and Costing	Each activity will need to be contextually defined through standardization and costing. The standards will help ensure all partners understand the minimum level of service delivery quality for each activity and knowing the cost per activity and cost per beneficiary for each activity will help partners when developing harmonized project proposals. It will also help when calculating the Cluster's overall financial requirements when calculating the caseload (see Section 3.6.) Often, a single, exact cost will be impossible to determine, so you may choose to aim for a costing *range*. In the example of "Provision of learning supply kits" developing standards for this activity will can entail: contextually defining the minimum required materials (# and size of exercise books, pens/pencils, size of bag, ruler, etc.), potential sourcing for materials and the costed average/range, replenishment schedule/period recommendation, etc. Consultations are especially necessary for this process. Be sure to also make use of global resources such as the INEE Minimum Standards and the Sphere Handbook as well as any contextual standards from the MoE.

[41] Targets will be discussed in Section 3.6..

Remember: do not start from scratch! The Response Framework Design Tool in the Strategy Package has been developed to help you draft a Response Framework. It provides suggested and pre-populated, but modifiable, Cluster Objectives, Activities, Indicators (Outcome and Output), as well as guiding questions to consider for Standards and Costing. It also contains links to recent HRP country examples of Response Frameworks.
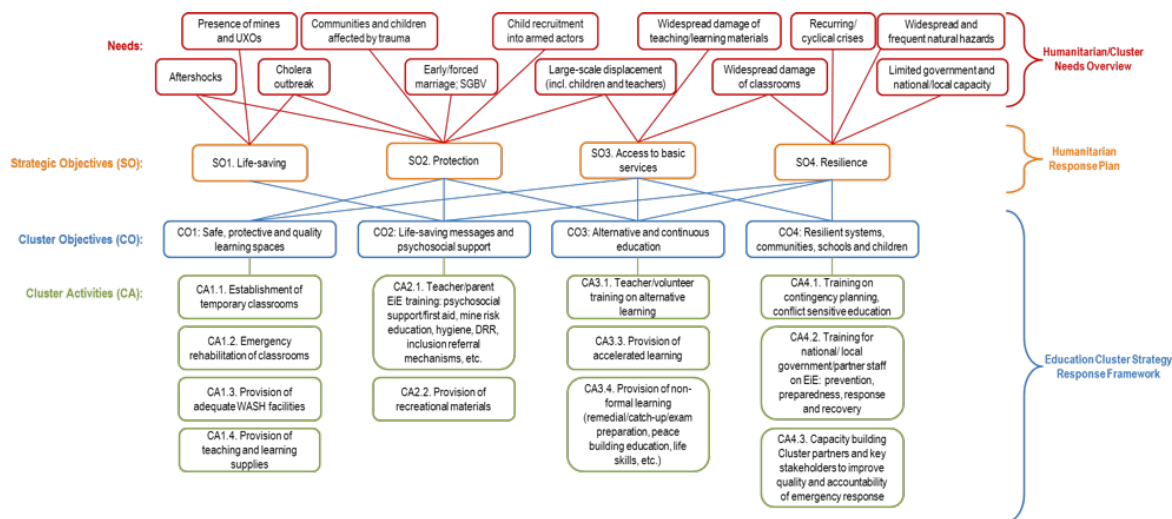
Cluster Objective 1: Safe, protective and quality learning spaces

This Cluster Objective focuses on the safe and protective nature of the physical space of the classroom as well as getting school-aged children and youth into those spaces for quality learning. It lends itself well to supporting inter-sectoral Strategic Objectives related to: Protection and Access to basic services.

Country	Examples of Cluster Objective 1	Source
Yemen	All crisis affected girls and boys (3-18) have equitable access to safe, inclusive and equipped learning spaces	Yemen Education Cluster Strategy 2016-2017
South Sudan	Crisis-affected girls and boys (3-18) have access to safe, healing and inclusive learning spaces	South Sudan HRP 2017
Nepal	Girls and boys access early childhood, primary and secondary education in safe and protective learning spaces	Nepal Education Cluster Strategy 2015
Liberia	All school-going children have access to safe, sufficient and appropriate learning spaces inclusive of adequate WASH facilities so as to safeguard student-health and contribute to improved learning outcomes	Liberia Education Cluster Strategic Recovery Plan 2015

Suggested outcome indicator(s):

1.1. # of (and/or % of targeted) crisis affected [children and youth/girls and boys 3-18] with access to repaired and established safe, protective and quality learning spaces with adequate WASH facilities
1.2. # of (and/or % of targeted) crisis affected [children and youth/girls and boys 3-18] provided with adequate school supplies

#	Activity	Suggested output indicators	Standards and costing: questions to consider (see also the stakeholder survey template)
CA1.1.	Establishment of temporary classrooms	# of temporary classrooms established # of children[1] with access to temporary classrooms with adequate WASH facilities	- Size of temporary classroom (square meters as well as # of learners per) - Materials to be used/prohibited for walls and roof (tent/tarpaulins, wood, metal, brick, concrete, etc.) - Timeframe and phases (e.g. tents within first XX months then semi-permanent) - Unit costs for various models/materials - WASH standards (see below) - Protection standards: fencing, first aid kit, etc.
CA1.2.	Emergency rehabilitation of classrooms	# of classrooms repaired # of children with access to repaired classrooms with adequate WASH facilities	- What constitutes 'emergency rehabilitation': timeframe (e.g. within XX number of days of incident), cost (less than $500), type of repair, etc. - WASH standards (see below); Protection standards: fencing, first aid kit, etc.
CA1.3.	Provision of adequate WASH facilities	# of latrines established # of handwashing stations established and provided with adequate water	- Should this activity be incorporated into the standard for CA1.1 and CA1.2 as a sort of standardized 'package'? Or a separate activity and monitored individually? - How many girls per latrine? Boys? Type of latrine/materials to be used? Unit costs? - How many litres of water per learner per day for drinking and handwashing?
CA1.4.	Provision of teaching and learning supplies[2]	# of learning supply kits distributed # of learners benefitting from distributed learning supply kits # of teacher kits distributed # of teachers/volunteers benefitting from distributed teacher kits	- Minimum contents for learning supply kits (e.g. carrier bag/backpack, # and size of exercise/note books and/or XX pages per learner per school year, ruler, pens/pencils, etc.) - Minimum contents for teaching supply kit (e.g. logbook/notebooks and size/page count, pens, chalk, - Unit costs - NOTE: As learning and teaching supply kits will most likely vary between school levels, each type of kit will need its own standards

Be sure to share drafted and final versions of the Response Framework with OCHA in-country and the GEC as both will be able to provide technical support and insights. The GEC is well-positioned to reflect global trends and best practices for this process.

3.3. Conduct a stakeholder survey: Response Framework

It will probably be easiest to develop the first draft of the Response Framework with the Cluster Team and Strategy Task Team. Once drafted, however, it is essential to widen the consultative process to ensure 1) it accurately addresses the needs of affected population and your context and 2) greater ownership and buy-in from relevant stakeholders. The process and sampling for this survey will most likely mirror that of your stakeholder survey of needs and capacity (see Section 2.3.).[42]

In the Response Framework survey you can present your draft objectives with accompanying activities, standards and costs[43] and receive quantitative and qualitative information pertaining to:

- the extent to which stakeholders feel a particular objective or activity is priority
- plans of partners to implement a particular activity
- which (if any) activities they are planning to implement outside of the drafted framework
- definitions and standards and costing for particular activities, etc.

You can also use qualitative text boxes to ask for narrative feedback on the objectives, activities and standards. As with the survey of needs and capacity in Section 2.3 you may need to develop multiple surveys, nuanced differently for each target group. A Stakeholder Survey of Response Framework Template can be found in the Strategy Package.

As you and the Strategy Task Team analyze the survey results, it will most likely:

1. Confirm elements that can remain as they are
2. Highlight edits that need to be made
3. Raise key questions that will need further consultation and discussion

It is a good idea to convert your analysis into a report (including rationale for edits and elements that have remained as they were) and/or PowerPoint to share with those surveyed and with other relevant stakeholders.

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[42] In some cases where time may be particularly tight, it may be appropriate to combine the Response Framework survey with the survey of needs and capacity discussed above.

[43] Note: 'indicators' has been purposively excluded here; it is typically more effective and efficient to consult heavily on objectives, activities and standards rather than using valuable time and resources debating indicator language than can easily be determined by an Information Management Officer (IMO) based on the agreed upon list of activities.

3.4.   Conduct Response Framework workshops

After revising the Response Framework based on the survey findings, conduct a Response Framework workshop to discuss its finalization. Experience has shown that having a drafted Response Framework that has already undergone one round of consultations through a stakeholder survey is much more efficient and effective than trying to draft the Response Framework or even conduct the first round of consultation in workshop format. The survey will allow you to come prepared with the key questions that still need to be answered and key decisions that still need to be made regarding the Response Framework and then you can structure the workshop accordingly.

One format that has proven effective is to divide workshop participants into groups with hard copies of the Response Framework and then provide the groups with specific and concrete questions to consider and give feedback on. It is advisable to conduct these workshops first at major sub-national hubs to receive crucial local-level inputs and then consolidate those inputs for a national-level workshop. Communicate with participants what will happen to their suggestions after the workshop; also manage expectations by clarifying that while all feedback is useful for informing the process, some feedback may not be included in the Response Framework.

As with the Response Framework survey, participants will most likely include individuals from the groups outlined in the survey list in Section 2.3:

- Cluster partners (international, national and local; see 'Strategic Pillar: Partnership' in the Introduction)
- MoE officials
- Representatives from affected populations (e.g. Parent Teacher Associations, student bodies, teachers' professional networks or unions)
- Donors
- Development actors
- OCHA and inter-sector representatives (e.g. other Cluster teams)
- Technical experts in relevant cross-cutting issues (e.g. gender advisors, inclusion specialists)

Following the workshops, compile and integrate the relevant feedback and finalize the Response Framework with the Strategy Task Team.[44] Remember: conducting Response Framework workshops and surveys will take time (approximately one to three weeks, depending on context), so be sure to schedule accordingly in your Strategy Workplan (see Section 1.3.). The Strategy Package has several tools and resources to help you plan and conduct a Response Framework Workshop including:

- Checklist and Agenda Template
- PowerPoint Presentation Template
- Breakout Group Handout Template

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[44] You may want to receive initial endorsement from the MoE, CLAs, and OCHA as well as share with the GEC.w

3.5.   Harmonize partner projects

As partners plan their projects, help and encourage them to follow the defined geographic and operational scope as well as the activities, indicators, standards and costings in the Response Framework. In most situations partners (and donors) will rejoice at having such an evidence-based, consultatively developed structure from which they can copy and paste directly into project sheets and proposals! If your partners select their geographic areas and activities from pre-defined Cluster lists, a harmonized response is almost guaranteed.

This harmonization process, often involving drafting of Online Project System (OPS) forms, can be a critical moment to ensure full engagement of all partners in the response. It is essential that Cluster partners, especially local and national partners, are provided with support during this process. Using experienced individuals (e.g. Cluster Lead Agency staff, members of the Strategic Advisory Group or even staff from other Cluster member organizations) who are familiar with OPS and the Cluster's drafted Response Framework, organize an "OPS or Project Planning Clinic" to help walk partners through this process. Additionally, you can facilitate one-on-one mentorship relationships between Cluster partners for this purpose.

Form a peer-review committee (with the Strategic Advisory Group or elected partner representation[45]) in order to democratically and transparently vet and approve project proposals (a review conducted by only the Cluster Coordinator or Cluster Team is not good practice, and is much harder work!). The Strategy Package contains a Partner Project Peer Review Template that offers both guidance as well as a template for specific, contextualizable project approval criteria. This will help ensure that partner projects will respond to identified and prioritized needs, support the Cluster Objectives, implement agreed-upon activities (with accompanying standards and costing range, and focus on prioritized geographic areas.
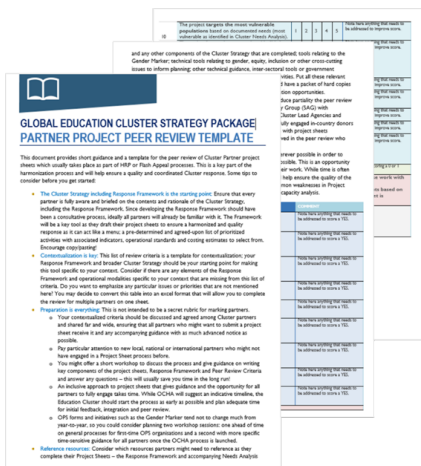
For projects that fail to meet contextualized criteria, it is the responsibility of the Cluster Team to work closely with these partners to try to improve the proposals and bring them into better alignment with the Cluster Strategy and Response Framework.

Once partner projects have been reviewed and vetted, another level of analysis and coordination is needed to determine if there are any gaps or overlaps in terms of geographic and thematic (i.e. activity) coverage. For example, partners may have respected the pre-defined, prioritized geographic area for intervening, however if *all* partners select the same specific area, there will be large duplication of efforts in one area and gaps in another. The Cluster Team will need to analyze this information and based on the results, may need to coordinate and advocate with partners to make potential modifications to their project plans to avoid this.

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[45] In some contexts, a blind vetting process has engaged in-country donors, which proved to be an excellent way to garner support for the coordinated response.

3.6.   Calculate the Cluster's caseload and financial requirement

The next step is to determine the Cluster's caseload (i.e. of the People-in-Need of education in emergencies assistance, how many will the Education Cluster target?) and the financial requirements to reach them.
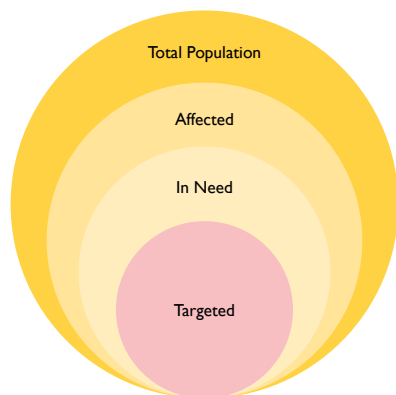
Current guidance on determining humanitarian population figures is found in the IASC Information Management Working Group's Humanitarian Profile Support Guidance (April 2016) which was intended to be a "first version" focusing "on estimating total populations, affected populations and populations in need of humanitarian assistance…Guidance on determining figures for planning and response monitoring (populations targeted, reached and covered) is planned for inclusion in the next version." At the time of writing, the "next version" has not yet been developed. Therefore, there is currently no inter-cluster, agreed-upon or standardized methodology for calculating a Cluster's caseload or targets. That said, current practices indicate two distinct approaches:

"Partner Capacity" Approach	"PiN-as-Target" Approach
Bottom-up approach using partner reports and project sheets to aggregate partner targets as overall Cluster target	Top-down approach using 100% of the PiN (minus sectorally or inter-sectorally agreed upon population categories (e.g. inaccessible geographic areas, refugees that fall under UNHCR mandate, etc.).
Sometimes supplemented with an 'optimistic bump' for potential new partner arrivals	
Advantages:	**Advantages:**
Target represents a realistic statement of Cluster's current partner capacity to respond[46]	Target represents Cluster's (and Cluster Lead Agencies') responsibility and aspirational goal
Highlights gap between institutional capacity and people-in-need	**Disadvantage:**
National and Global Cluster can advocate to partners to increase presence, targets (and financial requests), etc. (see Section 3.7.4.)	Not based on reality of partner capacity in-country to actually implement activities to reach those in-need.
Disadvantage:	
Aggregated target may be significantly less than PiN; Cluster partners appear to be failing in their responsibility to reach those in need	

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[46] Although in reality it is often a somewhat inflated figure since the local, national and even international organizations that are submitting separate project sheets (and therefore separate target figures) will often work together once funding arrives as implementing partners through partner agreements, thus double or even triple counting actual partner capacity.

You will need to determine which approach is most suitable for your context. When determining which approach your Cluster will use remember:

1.	Consult inter-sectorally with OCHA and other Clusters to determine if there is an agreed-upon, standard approach being used in your country.

2.	Consider using a combination of the two approaches; best practice would be for your Cluster Team to have both the "Partner Capacity" as well as the "PiN-as-Target" figures at hand to highlight both the grounded and realistic as well as the aspirational targets.

3.	BE TRANSPARENT! When sharing your target be very clear how you calculated the Cluster target and why that method was used.

Calculating the financial requirements will follow a similar approach as calculating the target. If the "Partner Capacity" approach was used you can simply aggregate partners' individual financial requirements (assuming you have first vetted the projects and make sure the activities fall within the standardized costing range outlined in your Response Framework). If the "PiN-as-Target" approach was used you can use an average cost per beneficiary as determined by the same standardized costing range in the Response Framework and multiply by the appropriate number targeted (Note: for more accurate figures, rather than using the total target, you can use your PiN Rationale document to multiply costing figures with more nuanced PiN figures by geographic and population categories (e.g. education personnel will have a different cost than learners; children in geographic area X may have less need and less financial requirement than children in area Y, etc.).

### 3.7.	Consider how to operationalize the Response Framework

Once the Response Framework is more or less finalized, consider how it will be operationalized, given the opportunities and constraints of your context. The Education Cluster Strategy Template contains a corresponding section "Operationalizing the Response Framework" where you should highlight:

1.	Some of the key challenges the sector may face and detail how these risks might be mitigated

2.	Opportunities, strengths and issues that should be considered and capitalized on

3.	Emerging trends or innovations that could improve collective action

Your Education Cluster Needs Overview as well as findings from your Response Framework surveys and workshops should indicate most of these key issues to consider, however, below is a non-comprehensive list of some of potential categories. Remember: If there are threats or constraints where you and your partners are unsure of best practice or how to strategically approach the issue, consider reaching out to the GEC's Helpdesk: help.edcluster@humanitarianresponse.info. The Helpdesk can then liaise with other relevant organizations, such as INEE, as needed. . For issues relating to Cluster functioning, cluster leadership and roles and responsibilities, capacity constraints or relations with national governments, HC or OCHA, the Global Education Cluster Helpdesk should be contacted.

3.7.1. Opportunities and threats

In each emergency context, there tend to be opportunities and threats to the planned response that need to be identified and explicitly drawn out. These are very contextual and can be hard to predict, but might include:

Opportunities	Threats
• Community prioritization of education • Government commitment to continuity of learning • Emerging local solutions to constraints e.g. community-based learning, volunteer teachers, self-learning.	• Access constraints • Seasonal limitations • Lack of political will or hostile policy environment for some or all affected populations • Attacks on education

In addition to brainstorming opportunities and threats with partners you should review your primary and secondary data for emerging or established trends. What are the issues being raised by affected populations relating to operational constraints and opportunities? You can also consider previous emergency scenarios in your country and look for themes or issues that surfaced as part of lesson learned, monitoring or evaluation exercises. Do not forget to review Contingency Plans also. Drawing on Cluster partners, government counterparts and representatives of affected populations to share their knowledge and experience around the likely challenges and opportunities is also invaluable. Please review the vetted country Strategy examples in the Strategy Package to see the kinds of issues other Clusters have highlighted in this section of their strategies.

3.7.2. Cross-cutting issues: Gender, equity, inclusion and the environment

Summarize evidence relating to the impact of the emergency on key groups and the environment and how the Cluster is addressing priority cross-cutting issues. Consider:

• **Gender:** The Gender Marker is used as part of funding appeal peer review processes to encourage analysis and programming that is not blind to the different needs of girls and boys, women and men.

• **Environment:** The Environment Marker aims to ensure environmental impact assessments are considered and risks of environmental damage are mitigated.

• **Equity and Inclusion:** A good practice from some countries has seen broader issues of equity and inclusion considered together with gender so that multiple dimensions of vulnerability are analyzed and addressed as part of the Gender Marker scoring process.

• **It's about accountability:** Cluster Coordinators should emphasize that considering all cross-cutting issues, particularly around gender and protection, are essential components of our collective accountability to affected people, and critical for ensuring the response generates effective results and protect their rights.

• **Share technical tools and guidance:** Mention of cross-cutting issues can be superficial if the Cluster Coordinator does not support partners to fully engage with the complexities of programming to reach even the most vulnerable. Provide partners with technical tools (many available on the INEE website), reference these in the Strategy document, and encourage partners to refer to them as they prepare their Project Sheets.

- **Engage experts in the process:** Identify local and international experts and make use of them. Invite a Gender Focal Point to give a briefing during a Cluster Meeting prior to Project Sheet submission, and invite a range of experts to your consultative Response Framework workshops.
- **In your Strategy document:** Highlight planned actions to address barriers faced by particular groups, including assessments that seek to capture information about children with disabilities or other excluded minorities. Planned capacity building efforts in this area, using local and international expertise where available should be noted.

3.7.3.   Conflict sensitivity[47]

In recognition that "aid given during conflict cannot remain separate from that conflict,"[48] it is crucial that the Education Cluster Strategy in a conflict-affected and fragile context aims to maximize positive impact and minimize negative impact. Do the education activities in the Response Framework aim to meet the needs of conflict-affected populations for inclusive and quality education in equitable ways that do not contribute to grievances, intergroup tensions or conflict? If the Strategy will not have national reach, it is critical that beneficiary selection is done in a conflict-sensitive way. Given the complex issues facing response planning in an active conflict context, the Education Cluster should consider undertaking a conflict analysis as part of the evidence generation process. A conflict analysis will explore and analyse the dynamics, stakeholders, and relationships between the conflict and the planned education programme or policy. Conflict analyses also serve as an opportunity to engage stakeholders to participate and develop a shared understanding of the context in order to inform education activities that maximize positive impacts and minimize negative impacts. A summary of relevant issues related to conflict-sensitive approaches to operationalizing the Response Framework, can be noted in this section of your Strategy.

Once a response is underway, due to the dynamic nature of conflict-affected and fragile contexts, education activities and their impact on and interaction with the environment must be continually and consistently monitored and evaluated to ensure they are on target towards planned results and are avoiding unintended consequences. This monitoring can form part of the Cluster monitoring plan, and should be noted in this section of your strategy document. Review of the strategy in light of conflict-sensitive monitoring data may well be necessary.

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[47] Guidance adapted from INEE Conflict Sensitive Education Guidance Note.

[48] Anderson, M. (1999). Do No Harm: How Aid can Support Peace - or War. Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

3.7.4.   Operational capacity

Operationalizing the Response Framework relies on partner capacity. Highlight what activities are possible given capacity constraints (see the capacity analysis from your Education Cluster Needs Overview, Section 2.5.) and outline any steps that are planned to enhance capacity where it is weak. Potential actions if operational capacity is lacking include:

• Identifying development education actors who could be encouraged to begin emergency programming to respond to identified needs
• Identifying emergency actors who are operational in targeted areas who could be encouraged to develop education programming as part of their emergency package
• Support networking between local, national and international organisations to match partners with resources but without capacity and vice versa
• Reach out to the Global Education Cluster to request for a call for additional capacity to global cluster partners

Include a partner mapping graphic in your Strategy to illustrate your analysis in this section.

3.7.5.   Inter-sectoral collaboration

Working cross-sectorally is an essential component of a quality education response in emergencies, and helps ensure you do not work in isolation, but approach the multiple needs and priorities of crisis affected people in a coordinated way. You will not list all the potential avenues for inter-sectoral collaboration, as they are numerous and documented elsewhere. However, building inter-sectoral links from the outset of a crisis is vital, as it reduces duplication and streamlines assessment, implementation and monitoring efforts. In this section of the strategy document you should highlight the key links that have been made between clusters, describe complementarity in approaches, and how roles and responsibilities for response efforts have been distributed if there is potential for duplication (see the Alignment Matrix tool in the Strategy Package for help in capturing inter-sectoral links). Inter-sectoral collaboration can also be a useful opportunity to highlight the entry-point that education can serve for a range of other vital services in an emergency response through to recovery and resilient development. Detailed guidance on key ways to engage other sectors in Strategy development is in the Inter-Sector Checklist in the Strategy Package.

3.7.6.   Innovation

Request examples of innovative approaches to operational constraints that your Cluster partners might be planning or efforts pioneered by affected communities in the initial aftermath of the crisis. Documenting these can help build on local knowledge, embed promising practice and encourage others to take (appropriate and safe) programming risks in challenging environments.

4.   ENSURE ALIGNMENT AND CONTINUITY
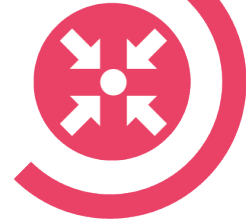
> 🎁 **STRATEGY PACKAGE TOOLS AND RESOURCES:**
>
> • Alignment Matrix

Alignment and continuity is a fundamental part of the Strategy development process and something that if considered early and done well, will help ensure continuity of educational provision for crisis-affected children, contribute to systems resilience and reduce inefficiency in the humanitarian response.

The Education Cluster Strategy must clearly articulate alignment with long-term educational development. This involves spelling out the way in which emergency education interventions support continuity of educational provision and contribute to the long-term vision of the national education system's development. The Strategy must also make clear how various plans (development, emergency, inter-sectoral) are complementary and do not duplicate each other. While it is the responsibility of the Cluster to ensure its Strategy is aligned with other emergency and development plans, this process should be two-way. Working with and through Cluster partner agencies, Cluster Teams should provide inputs to sector planning processes to ensure preparedness measures are included, and lessons resulting from humanitarian action are used to strengthen education system resilience. The Cluster Strategy must also consider continuity of the functions of emergency coordination for the education sector, so issues of transition and benchmarks for integration of Cluster functions into national systems and processes should be outlined.

4.1.   Align strategy with other plans

There are usually at least three types of plans with which the Strategy should actively seek alignment:[49]

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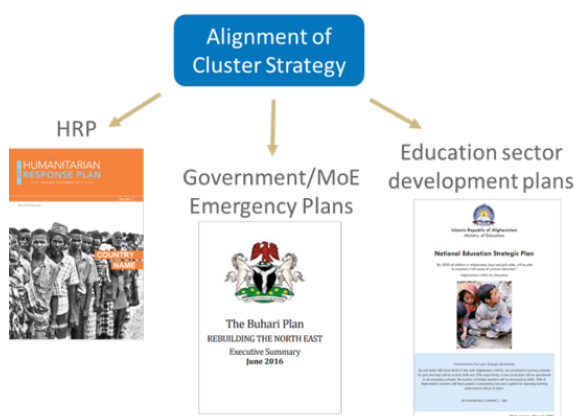
[49] As discussed in the Introduction, your Strategy – if it follows this Guide and the accompanying Template – will also align with the Global Education Cluster Strategy and other Country Cluster Strategies, thereby allowing for global- or regional-level analysis and action.

Humanitarian Response Plan[50]: As discussed in the introduction, the Education Cluster Strategy should seek to both align with and influence the Humanitarian Response Plan. Ideally, the Strategy will be close to finalization in advance of the HNO and HRP processes so that you are in a position to fully contribute to and inform the inter-sector strategic planning process. It may be prudent and preferable to delay formal sign-off of the Education Cluster Strategy until after the HRP is agreed so that you are able to ensure the Strategy is indeed in line with the HRP (specifically through alignment of Cluster Objectives with the inter-sectoral Strategic Objectives). As noted in Partnerships section above, the Strategy consultative process should engage humanitarian actors outside the education sector in order to support alignment and joint inter-sectoral planning. In an acute emergency, there can be critical moments when the HRP Strategic Objectives can be influenced; it is important that you represent the education perspective during these meetings. In protracted contexts the HRP Strategic Objectives may be relatively constant and alignment less complicated, or at least more predictable.

Government emergency plans: In some contexts, national authorities will have developed their own emergency response plans or have contingency plans that can be referenced (these plans could be authored by the Ministry of Education or by the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs or other government entity). Unless inappropriate due to conflict-sensitivity or other concerns relating to neutrality, this should be embraced, and strong efforts made to reinforce, support and complement government plans. Often this will involve articulating the role non-governmental organisations and the UN will play in supporting the national government response plan, perhaps through supplementing or gap-filling, depending on needs and activities. If there are issues relating to neutrality or inappropriate actions on the part of the government as part of the humanitarian response, opportunities can be found to carefully address or redress these issues as part of the Cluster strategy development process. Even where the government does not have an emergency plan, it is recommended to capture within the Education Cluster Strategy the significant contributions made by government staff and any aid that is provided through government plans and budgets to affected areas.

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[50] If a refugee response strategy also exists in your country, you will likewise need to align your Strategy with it.

Sector development plans: The Strategy development process should reference multi-year national policy instruments such as Education Sector Plans (ESPs)[51] or Transitional Education Plans (TEPs).[52] It is important to articulate within the Strategy how emergency education interventions support continuity of educational provision and contribute to the long-term vision for the national education system's development, while mitigating the loses threated by the crisis. A critical analysis of the Sector Plan may highlight issues or omissions that contribute to insecurity or increase risk, so care must be taken that the Education Cluster Strategy does not align with plans that are themselves problematic (the most recent Annual/Mid-term review of the ESP will often highlight areas of concern, such as excluded minority groups). These issues should be diplomatically addressed as appropriate – if not directly with MoE counterparts, then through the LEG or other influential allies (ideally as a follow-up action to a consultative conflict analysis process). This kind of constructive critical analysis can lead to Cluster Strategies that are progressive and exploit crises as windows of opportunity for positive change. Engaging Ministry officials and other development partners who are involved in the drafting, implementation and monitoring of ESPs in the Education Cluster Strategy consultative process can support alignment and coherence across plans. Like HRPs, influencing the shape and content of ESPs is also an important responsibility of the Cluster, an entire guidance document could be written on this alone. In brief, Clusters can and should be part of sector plan preparation and have an important role to play in influencing the reform agenda of the TEP or ESP to include emergency preparedness and measures to increase systems resilience. Preparedness is a key responsibility and core function of the Cluster; as such, working to ensure emergency preparedness is part of the sector plan is a hugely important part of alignment. The benchmarks for transition noted below are also key activities to advocate for in TEP/ESP preparation processes. The note that accompanies the Alignment Matrix in the Strategy Package gives some detailed guidance on how to navigate Education Sector Plans.

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[51] Information on ESP preparation can be found here: http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/guidelines-education-sector-plan-preparation
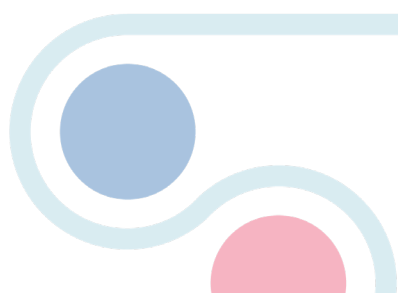
[52] A transitional education plan is a national policy instrument, developed under the leadership and responsibility of state authorities (national or regional). In situations where longer-term planning or the implementation of an existing ESP is compromised by contextual uncertainties, a TEP enables the state and its partners (development, humanitarian, and civil society) to develop a structured plan that will maintain progress towards ensuring the right to education and longer-term educational goals. Full Guidelines on TEP Preparation have been developed by GPE and UNESCO IIEP and are available here: http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/guidelines-transitional-education-plan-preparation

Other plans and strategies: Look for opportunities to align and reinforce other relevant development plans and strategies. For example, national plans for meeting the Sustainable Development Goals, national commitments relating to the Sendai Framework for Action or other resilience and climate change strategies can be referenced. This analysis helps show complementarity and the contributions made by risk-informed and resilience- driven emergency response activities to broader national development priorities.

The Strategy Package contains an Alignment Matrix to help map out the objectives and activities of the Education Cluster Response Framework against the objectives and activities of the plans with which you are seeking alignment. This can serve as a starting point for discussion if there are issues that are miss-aligned or omitted in external plans. For example, if a sector plan does not include emergency education activities, the Alignment Matrix can be used to demonstrate how there are shared priorities and complementarities between education in emergencies interventions and planned sectoral targets and performance indicators. Similarly, if – for example – the HRP Strategic Objectives are sectorally exclusive, a discussion on how the Education Cluster could contribute to more inclusive objectives should be initiated. If the Alignment Matrix demonstrates strong complementarity and coherence across plans, which is more than likely if you have been able to follow the guidance in this document regarding consultation, this is itself useful to document and a tool for advocacy and transition planning.

The image below shows a screenshot from an example Alignment Matrix from Yemen; you can see how Yemen's Cluster Objectives (column A) are shown aligning with the Yemen Education Sector Plan priorities in column B (the additional worksheets at the bottom do this same exercise for the MoE's Emergency Plan and the Yemen HRP).

Given the protracted nature of many of the large-scale crises around the world, there may be a rational for considering Education Cluster Strategies that span across multiple years, particularly in countries where there is a multi-year humanitarian response plan.[53] This has the potential to reduce the separation of humanitarian and development programming, encourage forward-thinking and preparedness and mitigation measures for cyclical crises and perhaps provide a structure for greater sustainability and predictability in funding and therefore response efforts. However, care should be taken that a multi-year Cluster Strategy does not suffer "mission creep" and become a *de facto* Education Sector Plan. Transitional Education Plans serve as an excellent tool to bridge the humanitarian-development planning divide, with a three-year timeframe and a requirement to strengthen national capacity towards preparations of a longer-term ESP. If a multi-year Strategy is to be successful, it should not feature long-term programmes that address chronic and structural factors (these should be part of TEP/ESPs). However, the Cluster and partners should actively collaborate with development actors on the analysis and development of multi-year Strategies, and ensure that there are "development counterpart" activities for planned humanitarian programming, allowing for earlier engagement of development and peacebuilding initiatives that address the root causes of protracted crises. Any multi-year Cluster Strategy should also have a very focused capacity building strategy and transition plan that gives a roadmap for eventual deactivation and handover.

4.2.   Plan for transition and recovery

It is never too early to have a Transition Plan.[54] As our Early Recovery Cluster colleagues will tell us, the need to look beyond the response stage in an emergency is immediate. Clusters are, by their design, intended to be temporary and as such you have a responsibility to work from the moment of our activation towards deactivation. Deactivation sounds like a short, sharp process that ends coordination. In fact, if planned well, deactivating a Cluster should imply a gradual transition where the functions the Cluster is responsible for are progressively handed over to counterparts who are better placed to carry on the work of coordination over a continuum. Clusters are activated in contexts were government capacity is constrained, therefore capacity development is part and parcel of all transition processes.

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[53] OCHA Humanitarian Programme Cycle: Multi-Year Humanitarian Planning: Tip Sheet for OCHA Country/Regional Offices

[54] A Transition Plan is a Cluster-focused document, not to be confused with the Transitional Education Plan, a sectoral policy document described above.
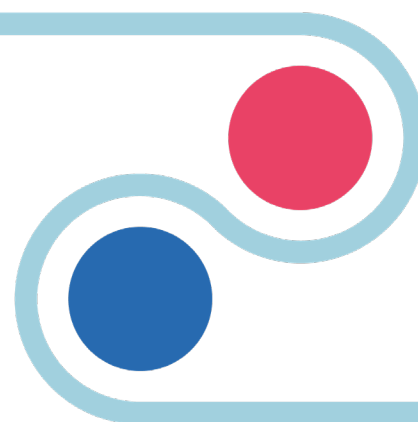
Transition planning is a separate process that will not be covered in detail here, but should be included in brief in your Education Cluster Strategy document. If you have a Transition Plan in place, this should be referenced and summarized. If you do not have one in place, plans for the preparation of one should be noted, with a tentative timeframe.

Some key elements of transition that could be contextualized and used as a placeholder in your Strategy if a full plan is yet to be developed might include:

- List of key functions the Cluster performs and identification of ongoing coordination tasks for handover to national institutions or other actors.
- Benchmarks for transition that need to be achieved as part of functional handover such as:
  - Education in emergencies focal point or department within the Ministry of Education or other government institution.
  - Education in Emergencies group formed as part of Local Education Group to coordinate partners and take forward contingency and preparedness activities
  - EMIS system and staff have integrated crisis data or have the capacity to manage a complementary database
  - Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring or other Cluster Review and lessons learned process is completed
  - Contingency Plan is updated based on Cluster Review and lessons learned
- Necessary capacity and resources required for handover
- Predicted timeframe for transition benchmarks and final deactivation

Recovery, and the extent of the Education Cluster's role in recovery activities and coordination, is very much context specific. Part of the analysis, planning and strategic thinking within your Transition Plan should address this issue directly. Demarcating the elements of the recovery process that can be handed over, and to whom, and providing a summary of the early recovery work set in motion within the emergency response should form part of your Transition Plan narrative.
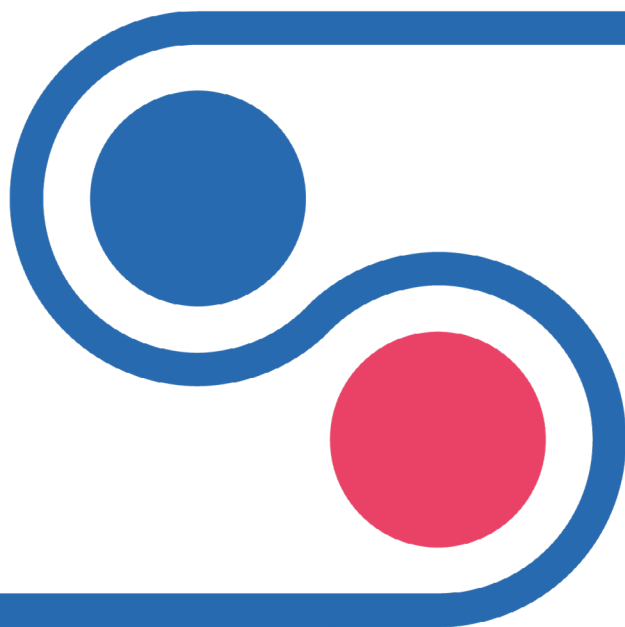
5. DEVELOP MONITORING TOOLS AND PLAN

> 📦 **STRATEGY PACKAGE TOOLS AND RESOURCES:**
>
> • Education Cluster Monitoring Tool (ECMT) in the GEC Toolkit
> • Monitoring Plan Table and Information Flowchart in the Education Cluster Strategy Template_Graphics file

As the Strategy and activities outlined are implemented, the Cluster will need to define gaps against identified needs by monitoring the response's progress against the various activities' indicators and targets outlined in the Strategy's Response Framework. Analysis based on monitoring data is essential for ensuring effective response at the local level, and also by extension, to generating evidence of trends critical for advocacy at country, regional and global levels.

While it is important to monitor the collective EiE response, it is also imperative that the reporting burden on partners be kept to the necessary minimum, so as not to impede or stall the implementation of the very activities you are trying to monitor. This is equally true for communities, who are often asked by multiple clusters and partners to engage in assessment and monitoring activities, placing an undue burden on them. Finding this balance can be difficult. For this reason, it is essential that every step of developing the monitoring tools and plan be done in consultation sectorally (with your Cluster partners, MoE, development actors, etc.) as well as inter-sectoraly (other Clusters, OCHA, etc.).
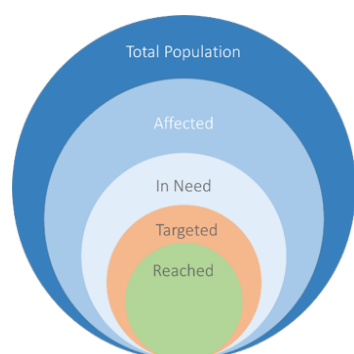
5.1. Develop monitoring tools

While monitoring can be challenging, it is much less challenging to monitor a response that has been coordinated around a single and agreed-upon Response Framework with a set list or 'menu' of activities with determined standards and indicators. With the framework in place, the Education Cluster Team (typically led by the IMO) can draft an Education Cluster Monitoring Tool (ECMT), also known as the 3/4/5 W (Who's doing What, Where, When and for Whom).[55] As the ECMT should be the primary tool used for monitoring the response outlined in the Strategy and Response Framework, it should be drafted with participation from the Strategy Task Team and finalized in consultation with the wider body of Cluster partners.[56] Ideally, the Strategy Response Framework and ECMT will be developed also with input from key EiE donors. Consultations with partners and donors will help to limit partners having to double or triple report using multiple tools and formats. In the past, for example, it was common to have a UNICEF partners reporting their EiE activities to the Education Cluster *and* to a UNICEF M&E specialist, thus doubling the reporting burden on already over-taxed organizations trying to implement EiE activities. Whenever possible, these redundancies should be avoided.

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[55] The Education Cluster uses the title ECMT for the simple reason to not be confused with OCHA's 3/4/5 W. While similar in nature, the ECMT is typically much more detailed and comprehensive than an inter-sectoral 3/4/5 W.

[56] This can often be combined with a 'monitoring training' in which Cluster partners are trained on the monitoring tools and plan (including reporting schedule)

The ECMT is often Microsoft Excel-based, and a tried and tested template that can be easily contextualized can be found in the GEC Toolkit. An example of this tool is depicted below:

Who?	Where?		What?				for Whom?		When?
Reporting Organisation	Region	District	Activity	Unit	Target	Completed	TOTAL BENEFICIARIES TARGETED	TOTAL BENEFICIARIES REACHED	Status
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Glamyraefon	Establishment of Temporary Classrooms	# of TCs	10	6	1000	600	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Glamyraefon	Distribution of learning materials	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			1000	600	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Glamyraefon	Distribution of ECD kits	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			100	50	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Glamyraefon	Teacher training: Psychosocial Support (	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			20	20	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Norton	Establishment of Temporary Classrooms	# of TCs	10	8	1000	800	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Norton	Distribution of learning materials	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			1000	800	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Norton	Distribution of ECD kits	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			100	50	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Norton	Teacher training: Psychosocial Support (	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			20	20	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Ferncombe	Establishment of Temporary Classrooms	# of TCs	10	3	1000	300	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Ferncombe	Distribution of learning materials	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			1000	300	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Ferncombe	Distribution of ECD kits	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			100	50	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Ferncombe	Teacher training: Psychosocial Support (	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			20	20	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Sherfield	Establishment of Temporary Classrooms	# of TCs	10	7	1000	700	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Sherfield	Distribution of learning materials	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			1000	700	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Sherfield	Distribution of ECD kits	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			100	50	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Sherfield	Teacher training: Psychosocial Support (	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			20	20	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Aria	Establishment of Temporary Classrooms	# of TCs	10	9	1000	900	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Aria	Distribution of learning materials	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			1000	900	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Aria	Distribution of ECD kits	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			100	50	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Aria	Teacher training: Psychosocial Support (	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			20	20	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Deathfall	Establishment of Temporary Classrooms	# of TCs	10	10	1000	1000	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Deathfall	Distribution of learning materials	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			1000	1000	Ongoing
Finn Church Aid	Diston	Deathfall	Distribution of ECD kits	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			100	50	Ongoing

Some contexts, however, are using online software to monitor the Cluster response[57] and it is expected that this will become more common as software improvements are made.

In addition to a tool for monitoring the response, you will need to contextually determine what other areas need to be monitored and then develop the relevant tools. One common example for conflict settings is monitoring the instances of attacks on education.[58]

5.2.   Develop a monitoring plan

It is essential that the Strategy very clearly outlines the Cluster's monitoring protocols by answering such questions as:

•   Who should be submitting reports?
•   When and at what frequency should reports be submitted?
•   How should reports be submitted (what format and to whom)?
•   How are reports consolidated and shared (timeframe, what format and to whom)?

5.2.1.   Determine who should report

Consider the several levels of actors involved in a typical project implementation. For example, in the situation where USAID funds a UNICEF EiE project. UNICEF then signs a partnership agreement with Save the Children. Save the Children, in turn, contracts a local NGO to do the direct implementation.

Who should report in such a common scenario?! Since there is danger of confusion as well as double or even triple reporting and counting, it is highly advisable to standardize and make it clear to partners who should be reporting. Depending on your context, you will need to decide which organization/level should report to the Cluster to help ease the burden of reporting while ensuring there is no duplication in reporting. Regardless of the designated reporting agency, the data collected (and subsequently analyzed and presented in reports and information products), should reflect all organizations/levels involved (donor, project owner, reporting agency, implementing partner, etc.) with particular emphasis of visibility given to the implementing agency for the last-mile delivery[59]

5.2.2.   Determine reporting information flow

The structure of information flow will be key to monitoring, so this should also be clearly outlined in the Strategy. Depending on your context, you may choose to have partners report at the sub-national level to a sub-national Cluster and then have the sub-national Clusters submit to the national Cluster. Alternatively, it may be more effective in your context to have partners at the sub-national level submit to their national-level counterparts *within their organization* and then have a single focal point per organization submit a single report to the national Education Cluster. Again, there is not *one* right way to monitor, however, you will need to decide and clarify to partners. A modifiable flowchart, such as the example below, can be found in the Education Cluster Strategy Template_Graphics file in the Strategy Package.
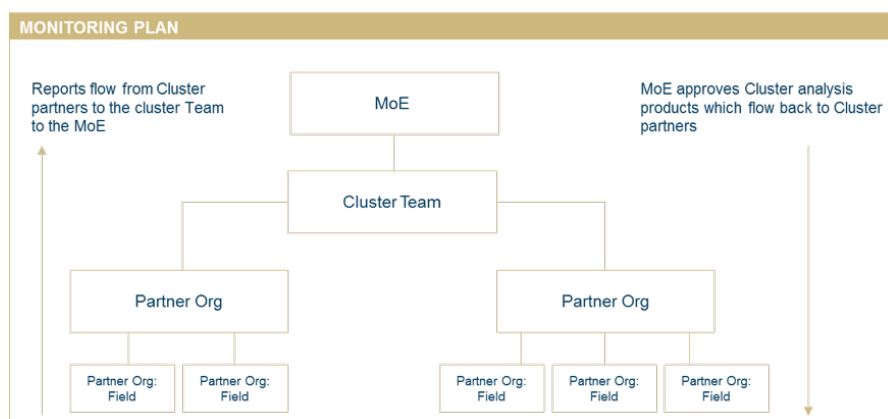
Note: As information should (when appropriate) flow up to the MoE, it is important to consider data inter-operability with the MoE's EMIS as the Cluster's data from partners may eventually feed into and be used to update various elements of a country's EMIS.

Whatever monitoring flow is decided, it is essential that the Cluster Team work with technical experts within Cluster partner agencies to provide monitoring and reporting capacity development support to the wider Cluster partner group, with particular emphasis on local and national partners. This is not only a key responsibility of the Cluster Team but it also will help ensure long-term success for monitoring the response, and therefore something Cluster Lead Agencies should actively support. Capacity support may involve a combination of workshops/ trainings, visits by the Cluster Team or specifically selected Cluster members to organizational offices requiring support. "Partners don't report" is not an acceptable excuse for a lack of monitoring data; Cluster Teams (with the backing of CLAs) should work closely with partners to ensure that the reporting tools and processes are understood and that individual staff are supported so that they have the capacity to fulfil this essential element of of quality and accountable programming.

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[59] Your monitoring plan should also consider how you will collect and monitor response data from 'traditional actors' such as the MoE, military, police force, political parties, community-based organizations, parent-teacher associations, etc. While perhaps not part of the HRP-defined, 'humanitarian response', you still need to collect and analyze this information in order to avoid duplication, fill gaps and coordinate the overall response. This can be difficult to collect, however, since these groups will most likely not report directly into your ECMT themselves. One method is to collect this information from the local MoE officials who may already be collecting this information or who at least tend to have a good idea of who is doing what where amongst the traditional actors.

5.2.3. Create a monitoring schedule

It is also a good idea to include a clear schedule for the entire monitoring process. This includes not only reporting frequency, but when the Cluster will be sharing analyses and tools that partners can use to inform their response. A modifiable schedule table, such as the example below, can be found in the Education Cluster Strategy Template_Graphics file in the Strategy Package.

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	DAY OF MONTH
Monitoring Tool updates submitted to the Cluster Team	Monitoring Tool focal point from each Cluster partner	4th
Data compiled and analysis products developed	Cluster team	8th
Updated analysis products shared during the national Cluster meetings	Cluster team	2nd Sunday of month
Updated Monitoring Tool analysis products shared during the sub-national Cluster meetings	Cluster team	2nd Thursday of month

Remember to consult regularly with Cluster partners and key stakeholders when determining the most appropriate frequency for reporting (which will change over time). This is often the moment when a mere 'desire to know' inappropriately replaces the 'need to know' and results in overloading partners with reporting burden. Ideally, the Cluster monitoring schedule should sync with inter-sector reporting requirements, remembering to leave sufficient time to collect, follow-up with partners, clean and analyze in advance of the inter-sector deadlines. There may be instances where inter-sector reporting is ad hoc or so frequent that there is not enough time to do another full round of data collection from partners. In these instances, it might be necessary to occasionally provide repeat data in order to keep the reporting manageable and avoid mistakes and partial updates that come when the reporting cycle is too condensed. This should be avoided, so if it happens regularly, it might be necessary to adjust the Cluster's reporting schedule to better align with inter-sector information needs and expand the Cluster's capacity to monitor through additional IMOs and providing training for partners so that the process becomes more streamlined and less burdensome.

5.2.4. Consider inter-sector monitoring issues

You may also want to ensure your monitoring plan considers and addresses any relevant inter-sectoral issues. Many EiE activities may be inherently inter-sectoral in nature and may overlap with other sectors. In such cases, it is important to clarify (within the Education Cluster and also with the other relevant Cluster) who will be responsible for reporting on and monitoring these activities. Common activities may include:

- WASH in schools (WASH)
- Temporary classrooms vs. Child Friendly Spaces (Child Protection)
- School feeding (Food Security)

If it is decided that another Cluster will be responsible for reporting on an issue that intersects with the Education Cluster response, care should be taken to ensure that the information they collect will be relevant and usable for Education partners. For example, if the Food Security Cluster is responsible for collecting detailed school feeding response reporting, ensuring that they include the EMIS code in their reporting formats can be vital so that the MoE and other education partners can track progress within their own databases.

5.2.5. Plan for and develop affected population feedback mechanisms

It is essential that your plan also consider how and when it will collect, analyze and implement feedback from the affected population to help monitor the response. This type of monitoring is different than that discussed above. Rather than collecting reports on number of children reached through various activities (did Cluster partners do what they said they would do), affected populations can help inform you 1) if the activities being implemented are in fact what is needed, 2) that the standards for the activities are appropriate and 3) that the quality implementation are meeting those standards.

Obtaining this feedback from affected populations is primarily done in two ways. First, is through evaluative assessments. These assessments can be designed and conducted very much like the joint education needs assessments discussed above and in the GEC's Needs Assessment Package, except the emphasis is less on need and more on obtaining feedback on the response. If you are in a protracted crisis, these assessments could potentially be integrated with your cyclical needs assessments as they are particularly useful prior to updating your Strategy or revision of the HNO and HRP.

Second, is through developing 'real-time' feedback mechanisms so that the affected population can quickly and easily flag issues without having to wait for a formal assessment. Often, Cluster partners have their own organizational feedback mechanisms they activate at the sites where they have implemented activities. This may range from a simple 'Comments box' to a more high-tech SMS reporting platform. The Cluster, with the MoE, is well situated to both encourage partners and to harmonize the collection tools and processes as well as shared analysis of feedback from the affected population to inform adjustments to the collective response. A final point to consider is how these adjustments and decisions will be communicated back to affected communities – a key element of our accountability to them.

5.2.6. Plan for the Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring (CCPM) process

In addition to monitoring the response, you should also plan for monitoring the functional performance of the Cluster via the Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring Process (CCPM). This is an exercise in self-assessment of cluster performance against the six core cluster functions as well as the added area of accountability to affected populations. The purpose of CCPM is to assist clusters to coordinate and fulfil their core cluster functions more efficiently and effectively. The CCPM process could be tied to an Education Cluster Strategy Review or lessons-learned process (the CCPM does not have to be scheduled during Strategy development; see the suggested calendar cycle in the Introduction), as way of capturing both the functional performance of the cluster as well review of the humanitarian response, measuring the results achieved in terms of the objectives set out in the Education Cluster Strategy.[60] Furthermore, the CCPM could be used as an evidence base from which to launch a Strategy development process (or Strategy update process).

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[60] A CCPM Guide can be found at: https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/guidance_note._14.02.14.pdf
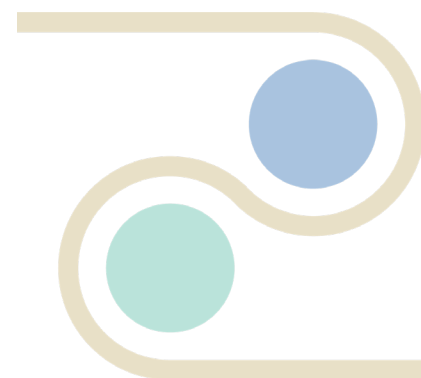
6. FINALIZE THE STRATEGY

> **STRATEGY PACKAGE TOOLS AND RESOURCES:**
> - Education Cluster Strategy Template
> - Education Cluster Strategy Template_Instructions
> - Education Cluster Strategy Template_Graphics
> - Education Cluster Strategy PowerPoint Presentation
> - GEC evaluation survey

6.1.   Draft the Strategy

Having completed all the steps above: consultatively generated evidence, developed a harmonized approach and aligned plans, you are in a position to plug your information and decisions into the Education Cluster Strategy Template. The Strategy Package contains the following tools to make this process as simple as possible:

- Education Cluster Strategy Template: This Microsoft Word-based template has been designed to make this process as simple and quick as possible, while giving you a professionally designed document.
- Education Cluster Strategy Template_Instructions: This PDF walks you through each element of the Word Document with practical tips and tricks for populating your Strategy document.
- Education Cluster Strategy Template_Graphics: While the content of what you write is important, it also needs to be presented clearly, concisely, and with a good selection of infographics to illustrate the urgent needs, response plan and funding requirements of the sector. This PPT gives you a style guide and infographic design elements that can be contextualized.

6.2.   Consult with stakeholders: finalization

Once you have a near final draft of the Strategy in the correct format, you should share it in a targeted way with the following key actors:

Ministry of Education: The document should be shared initially through the MoE representative on the Strategy Task Team, and then it would usually be appropriate to arrange a meeting to informally present the key parts of a strategy and discuss any issues the MoE want to raise. This can also be a good time to present the Alignment Matrix and highlight the complementarity of the Strategy with other key government plans. Try to ensure this process involves technical specialist from implementing government departments, not just policy makers. As suggested in the Strategy Template, it is desirable for the Ministry of Education to formally endorse the Strategy through signing a co-authored Foreword, together with Cluster Lead Agency Representatives. However, if the formal bureaucracy of such a request feels unrealistic or too costly in terms of time, you may wish inform the MoE of the finalized Strategy but omit the formal endorsement. In most cases where MoE is in a leadership role in the Cluster, if a high ranking MoE signature is hard to secure, it is usually best to cut the Foreword section entirely. All or nothing.

Cluster Lead Agencies: CLA representatives will not only have had an active role in drafting the document, but it is the CLAs that have the ultimate accountability for a well-functioning Cluster. Therefore, CLA senior management should have ownership of and final endorsement for the Strategy.. Since senior management will also be very busy, the Cluster Team should share regular updates, drafts and the final Strategy, soliciting feedback throughout the process. Follow-up meetings to discuss any concerns can also be held. The Foreword can be drafted and shared with CLA Communications and Representative/Country Directors for sign-off. Key issues to flag for CLAs might include any staffing requirements the Strategy entails.

Cluster Partners: You should share a near final draft Strategy document by email with all partners prior to finalization. It might be helpful to also share (perhaps through links to documents archived on your Cluster's website) the documentation of consultations and accompanying analysis to demonstrate the views and contributions that were considered in the preparation of the Strategy.

Affected population representatives and other expert contributors: If, as recommended in this guidance, you have been able to engage representatives of the affected populations in the preparation of the Strategy, it is important that the near final draft is shared. Meetings, perhaps facilitated by Cluster Partners, to talk through the Response Framework and other key elements could be useful. Other experts or inter-sectoral counterparts should also receive a draft for a final check.

Once all feedback has been received and incorporated, the Strategy document can be finalized. The same Education Cluster Strategy PowerPoint Presentation Template that was used to introduce the Strategy development process can also be contextualized and used to present the finalized Strategy to your government counterparts and Cluster Partners, perhaps during a Cluster Meeting or dedicated "launch" event. The final Strategy should be widely disseminated, posted on your country Cluster webpage and shared with the Global Education Cluster for their records.

6.3.   Consider communication and advocacy plans

Depending on the complexity of your context, the sensitivity of a planned response, and the funding situation for the sector, you may need to think strategically about how to share your Strategy beyond a wide mailout and a link on your website.

A Communication Plan, that simplifies the key messages and activities within the Strategy, translated into relevant languages to be shared with target audiences, is often a useful step to take. Not only will this ensure that all Partners, including local actors where language may be a barrier, are fully able to engage with the central parts of the document, it will also allow you to "return" findings and results from assessments and consultations to those involved. Work with Communication and Communication for Development colleagues within Cluster Partner agencies to map out a Plan. Consider using local print media, radio and any education-specific newspapers or media outlets. This form of outreach can also solicit feedback (call in shows, text message requests etc) and serve as part of an AAP Plan.

Creating an Advocacy Plan will depend again on context. If there are key issues, such as funding, or protection of education from attack, or deprioritization of the sector within the humanitarian response, it can be useful to map stakeholders and their relative power, identify target audiences, the right messages, and the right messenger to deliver the message; identify opportunities and entry points; set goals and interim outcomes, and monitor advocacy results. Brainstorming with advocacy specialists from Cluster partner agencies (in country or in headquarters), and be sure to share immediately with the GEC who can not only provide additional guidance for communication and advocacy plans but will also want to share your good work globally.

6.4.   Plan Strategy review/update

The Strategy should not be finalized without prior agreement on a review and update process. Depending on the Strategy duration, it is recommended that a review should generally be considered a minimum of three months and a maximum of a year into implementation, at which point you will likely be embarking on another round of HRP and HNO work whether you like it or not. You do not want to review so early that little work has been done, but you do not want to leave it so late that you may miss major implementation or coordination issues or not have time to do a thorough review process before an OCHA update deadline is looming. A light review and update after six months might be suggested as a happy medium. Your Monitoring Plan, any updated needs assessments and of course the information you gather from talking to Cluster Partners and other actors will determine your timing here.

6.5.   Complete GEC evaluation and lessons learned form

The Strategy Package also contains an Evaluation and Lessons Learned Survey. Please describe the good, the bad and the ugly about your Strategy preparation process. This will help to improve these tools and capture lessons learned for others. It would be very much appreciated if you would take the time to to complete this brief questionnaire. You could also request a debrief call with the GEC through the Helpdesk if you feel this would be useful.