COORDINATION

KEY MESSAGES

▶ Coordination is a core task for Camp Management Agencies. Through it gaps are identified, duplication avoided, participation ensured, standards raised and rights upheld.

▶ Developing and maintaining a network of effective partnerships with the various actors involved in the camp setting can facilitate coordination which will lead to the provision of protection and assistance for all camp residents.

▶ Effective coordination is underpinned by reliable, up-to-date cross-sector information which enables all actors involved to assess the needs of all groups within the camp, and plan interventions to meet them.

▶ Coordination can involve information sharing, collaboration or joint programming with partners. This will mean looking for ways that the diversity of mandates, capacities and programming objectives among partners can achieve complementary interventions.

▶ Successful partnerships, and hence successful coordination, is in part dependent upon attitudes, skills and competences including active listening, good leadership, clear and transparent communication and an ability to establish consensus.

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS COORDINATION?

The aim of coordination for a Camp Management Agency is to ensure that humanitarian services and assistance are delivered in a cohesive and effective way to the camp population, such that the standard of living in the camp is maintained, and full and equal access to basic human rights is ensured for camp residents. In order to achieve this aim, the following activities are undertaken by a Camp Management Agency coordinating at the camp level:

- strategic planning
- gathering data and managing information
- mobilising resources and ensuring accountability
- facilitating a clear and agreed division of tasks
- developing and maintaining a network of partnerships with key stakeholders inside and outside the camp
- providing leadership.

Whilst many recognise the importance of coordination in a camp response, effective coordination can be challenging to achieve on the ground. This is especially true in situations of conflict and disaster, where there is, by definition, chaos and confusion and where a competitive agenda between stakeholders may undermine cooperation. An effective coordinator believes in the principle that more is achieved when people work together and that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. A coordinator works in ways that promote and develop positive and effective relationships between stakeholders.

> **❗ Levels of Coordination**
> In the management of a camp response for refugees or IDPs, coordination can happen at many levels between different stakeholders. From the perspective of camp management, and for the purposes of this chapter, the focus will be on the role of a Camp Management Agency and its responsibilities for ensuring effective coordination between stakeholders inside a single camp, and working at the camp level – or intra camp.
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Coordination also takes place between camps, or inter-camp. In IDP situations where the CCCM (Camp Coordination and Camp Management) cluster has been activated, this role is undertaken by the Camp Coordination Agency. In other situations, a Sector Lead Agency, (UNHCR or another UN or International Organisation) coordinates between camps, and ensures the provision of assistance and protection through liaising with a network of local, national and international actors, all of whom have a vested interest in the overall camp response.

▶▶ *For more information on the role of the Camp Coordination Agency or the Sector Lead, see chapter 1.*

COORDINATION – THE CAMP MANAGEMENT AGENCY'S ROLE

As discussed in chapters 1 and 2, one of the Camp Management Agency's main tasks is to ensure delivery of assistance and services to the camp population in line with international law and standards. This requires a process of coordinating and facilitating all those involved, (including service providers, on-site government actors and the camp community) in their activities and interventions. The Camp Management Agency, as coordinator at the camp level, is responsible both for facilitating initial agreements and monitoring service delivery, ensuring maintenance of standards and advocating for any adaptation of assistance required by changing needs on the ground. Coordination is an ongoing process. It must be dynamic and responsive, reflecting and responding to the often unpredictable shifts in circumstance throughout the life cycle of the camp.

It is invariably complex to achieve a level of agreement and compromise amongst a diverse group of stakeholders on how to define mutually acceptable common goals which uphold the rights of the displaced population and which are in line with agreed standards and international legal instruments. When faced by challenges the Camp Management must look for innovative solutions, establish clear and diplomatic communication whatever the extent of conflicting agendas and engage all those involved in dialogue to identify priorities and appropriate actions. They need to ensure that all interventions are made in the best interests of the camp population with due regard for the principles of participation, and the protection of people with specific needs. In order to ensure that standards

and activities in the camp are in accordance with the broader camp response strategy, a Camp Management Agency will also liaise closely with the Cluster or Sector Lead, who monitors and coordinates between different camps.

> ⚠ **Coordination in a Situation of Protracted Displacement – A Voice from the Field, Kenya**
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> "In situations of protracted displacement, like the refugee camps in Kenya, there can be a lack of shared vision between stakeholders. Co-ordination meetings become a routine exercise to simply update each other and there is an absence of joint planning or sharing experiences. One of the main challenges can be that of deep-rooted or long-standing disputes, political issues, deep-seated personality clashes and conflicts of interest. Additionally in some cases there is a high turnover of agency personnel, and especially expatriate staff. This can undermine the de-velopment or strengthening of coordination mechanisms. It is essential for a Camp Management Agency to identify weaknesses and to build on strengths in an inclusive and transparent manner. Being innovative, and prepared to modify coordination mechanisms that need revision, can make a difference."

How is Coordination Achieved?

The Camp Management Agency acts as an overall organising body, bringing people together and encouraging team work and contributing to planning, im-plementation and monitoring of humanitarian services and camp activities. The coordination forums – the mechanisms and meetings to achieve coordination in a specific context – engage actors at different levels both inside and outside the camp. Mapping coordination forums and mechanisms, and keeping eve-ryone informed and engaged in the process is an important part of the Camp Management Agency's role. If key players fail to commit to agreed systems for coordination – for example, by not turning up to meetings – and instead choose to work independently and in isolation, it becomes increasingly hard for a Camp Management Agency to ensure consistent provision of assistance and protection. For coordination to work, the Camp Management Agency needs to ensure the 'buy-in' of all those involved, and ensure that stakeholders inside and outside the camp are communicating.

> ## 🔺 Clarity and Inclusiveness – A Voice from the Field
> ### – Democratic Republic of Congo
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> "In DRC the Camp Management Agency has worked closely with UN-HCR to set up the CCCM Cluster working group, write the CCCM cluster strategy, get agreement on the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Camp Management Agency and provide training. The consequence is that the CCCM Cluster has been put in place in line with global CCCM definitions of roles and responsibilities and reflecting the MoUs between partners. This thorough and inclusive approach has had a positive consequence on coordination. As the coordination aspect of camp management touches on the 'independence' of other organisations, it is of crucial importance that there is a clear understanding by everyone involved of the roles and responsibilities of a Camp Management Agency."

What does Coordination Need?

Coordination consists of a process of gathering and sharing information, and planning together in pursuit of shared and agreed goals. The success of this process is underpinned by and involves developing and maintaining transparent and effective partnerships with a diversity of stakeholders, including the Cluster/Sector Lead, on-site authorities, service providers, the camp population and the host community.

Attitudes for Partnership

Some of the preconditions for successful partnerships, and hence for successful coordination include:

- a commitment to coordinate
- an inclusive and proactive attitude
- active listening skills
- an appreciation of diversity and interpersonal skills and styles
- a commitment to process as well as product
- the ability to trust
- a willingness and ability to establish consensus
- leadership capacity and the acceptance of leadership
- cultural sensitivity

Whilst these attributes may often be either assumed or dismissed, without them, coordination cannot be fully effective.

> ❗ Coordination involves a process of collecting data and disseminating information about life in the camp, and planning agreed and effective action to meet the needs and uphold the rights of the population. If this is done well the displaced can be protected and the delivery of assistance can be both appropriate and timely.

Collecting Data and Information Management

Coordination depends on having access to the most reliable and up-to-date information possible. This includes recent cross-sector data about the situation in the camp and demographic data on the camp population. This data is processed and analysed to give clear indications about gaps and duplications in assistance and protection, and changes in the circumstances and needs of the camp population. Data needs to be accurate, well-collated and archived in clear and accessible ways if relevant information is to be extracted.

⚠ Data Collection – Voice from the Field

"However simple a question may seem to be on a data collection sheet, it is remarkably easy for it to be interpreted differently. An example of this was in a monitoring project where the Camp Management Agency was collecting data on the number of functioning latrines in a camp. The question sheet read:

1. How many latrines are there in the camp?
2. How many latrines are functioning?
3. How many latrines are not functioning?

Question 1 was answered accurately – counting the number of cubicles. But this figure told the Camp Management Agency relatively little. Answers to question 2 and question 3 which would inform a repair project, were however, invariably inaccurate. This was clear to see because responses to questions 2 and 3 should have equalled the answer to question 1 when added together, but did not. ▶▶

Discussions with the staff revealed that the problem lay in different interpretations of what 'functioning' actually meant. Did it mean 'in use', or did it mean 'up to standard'? When a latrine was clearly not being used, then the answer was self evident – it was not functioning. But what about when the latrine was still being used, despite its dysfunction? When for example the door was broken off? Or when it had no roof, but was still being used? How should they be counted? Because monitoring staff worked in pairs, their discussions and disagreements on this issue were reflected in the data collected.

Lessons learned from this informed better definitions, better training on terminology in data collection forms and greater staff awareness of how to check the numerical possibility of the answers they filled in."

Information Sharing and Joint Planning

The Camp Management Agency's role and responsibility is to set up a diversity of effective coordination forums and mechanisms in the camp where information can be shared between stakeholders; these mechanisms are discussed in more detail later in the chapter. The aim of coordination, may in some instances entail the dissemination and sharing of information with a diversity of stakeholders. In these forums gaps or overlaps may be identified in assistance or protection, and roles and responsibilities may be clarified. Coordination may also extend to a process of collaboration or joint planning, whereby sector needs are jointly assessed between service providers in the camp, and plans are made together for technical activities. If feasible, joint training of agency staff may also be undertaken. Agencies may also decide to share personnel and operational resources as part of their coordination activities.

> **⚠ Language Needs**
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> Ensuring effective communication in information sharing and planning forums requires an assessment of the language needs of the group and provision for translation as appropriate. Native speakers should be aware that the speed at which they speak, their accents and the use of idioms and slang can make it very challenging for others to understand and participate in a meaningful way. In many cultures it is considered impolite to interrupt to ask for translation or clarification. Participants at a meeting may in some cases rather remain silent rather than request that their language needs are met. Inadequate translation provision can significantly undermine the contributions of some stakeholders in a coordination forum.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Consistent monitoring of the impact of programmes undertaken, and assessment of the effectiveness of the coordination mechanisms in filling gaps and providing appropriate and timely assistance, is central to best practice for a Camp Management Agency. Evaluating sector-specific interventions enables projects to be adapted and lessons learned to be integrated into future project planning.

KEY ISSUES

The way in which a Camp Management Agency approaches coordination and the outcomes that are achieved will directly impact on the protection and services provided to a camp population. Whilst coordination is a topic frequently discussed in relation to a camp response, its practical and effective implementation can be difficult. Some of the challenges include:

Coordination is Over-Dependent on an Individual

Whilst the majority say they want to coordinate with others, and recognise its value, it is another matter to be 'coordinated by' somebody. There is much current debate on the extent to which effective coordination should depend on somebody's personality. It is not enough to simply consider the coordinating capabilities of a particular, skilled and charismatic individual with ability to

inspire trust and get people to work together. Values, systems, mechanisms and tools need to be combined in ways which enable a Camp Management Agency to empower people to benefit from working together.

Investing Time and Money

One of the key challenges for agencies in coordinating humanitarian response is that they are often expected to achieve productive partnerships without having sufficient time or budgets to do so. Often they have limited prior knowledge of other agencies or of their staff. When operating in the midst of crisis, this can make effective coordination extremely difficult.

Establishing Legitimacy and Support

Central to achieving good coordination is a Camp Management Agency's ability to foster a spirit of effective partnership. Coordination is therefore as much an attitude – a set of values and a commitment to inclusivity – as it is about information collection and dissemination or joint planning. Relationship building is central, not only with those who have the will and capacity to participate, but just as importantly with those who do not – people who have limited or no resources to commit or whose political agenda may be to disrupt, avert, intervene or dismantle the capacity of the Camp Management Agency to ensure the rights of camp residents are upheld.

Establishing the credibility to take a lead in coordination is a major challenge for Camp Management Agencies – even in the most ideal of settings. The Camp Management Agency is not mandated by law nor does it have any sanctions at its disposal to enforce coordination, or directly penalise those who refuse to be accountable or fail to deliver. In such cases a Camp Management Agency may seek the support of the authorities, and/or the Camp Coordination Agency who may take action and advocate for better coordination. Complaints procedures and advocacy strategies need to be decided as part of the Camp Management Agency's strategic plan.

Developing Procedures and Achieving Results

Planning and establishing clear, inclusive and manageable coordination systems and mechanisms and tools for effective communication, is an integral part of best practice and success. Once useful and supportive procedures are in place, the function of camp management optimally begins to establish credibility and achieve tangible results. Coordination works when people can see the benefits of coordinating and the process of coordination itself earns respect. This happens

when people begin to rely on effective information sharing and joint planning and they invest in relationship building because it produces a dividend in terms of the efficiency and/or effectiveness of their programmes. It is then that a Camp Management Agency is seen to be really making a difference.

COORDINATION MECHANISMS

How is coordination achieved? The term 'coordination mechanisms' simply means the methods we employ to coordinate, a vehicle for sharing information or a platform for joint planning. Coordination mechanisms are the way in which coordination results are achieved. In any camp response a variety of coordination mechanisms should be used to coordinate with different stakeholders.

The method most commonly used – and arguably also misused – is the meeting. A meeting may be used to achieve a variety of results. It may simply be used as a forum to share information. It may also be used to take decisions. Listed below are some coordination mechanisms commonly in use:

- meetings (including distributed agendas and minutes)
- teleconferences (involving more stakeholders)
- cluster/sector group (facilitated by the camp coordinator)
- camp-level representative groups (a diversity of key stakeholders such as service providers at camp level)
- camp committees (representation of camp residents in camp governance)
- informal chats and exchanges (planned and/or ad hoc general relationship building)
- task forces (often used to target a specific issue needing urgent, technical/expert attention and provide feedback and recommendations)
- working groups (a sub-group tasked with researching a specific issue or producing a specific deliverable, and feeding back).
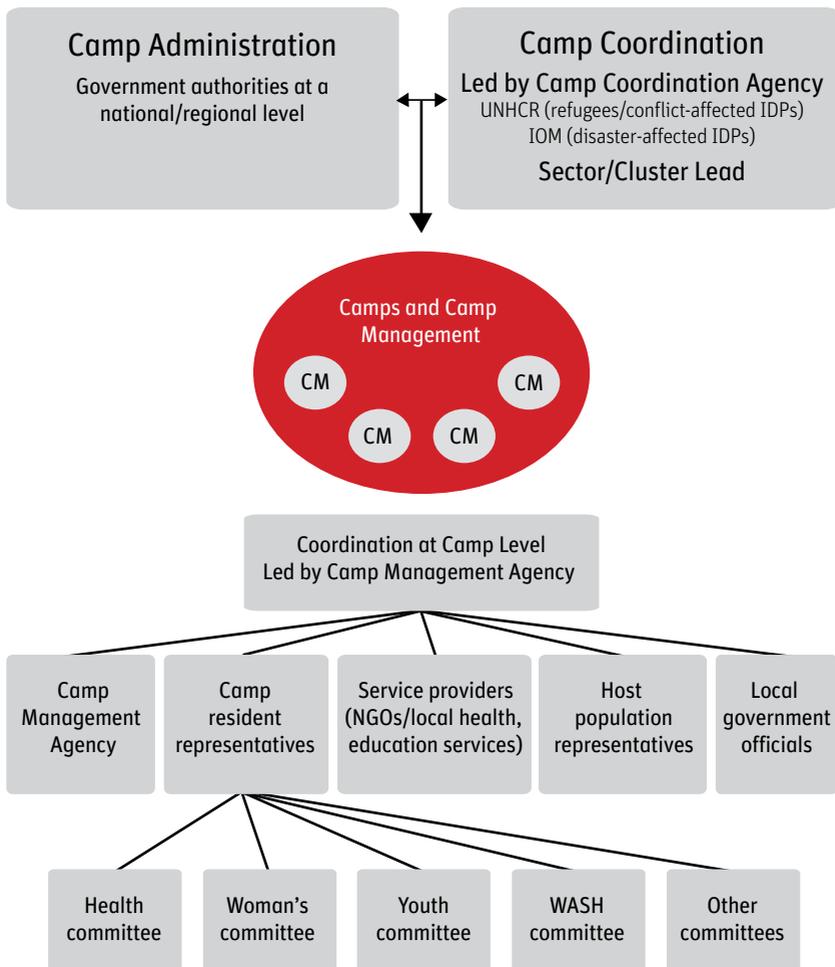
Coordination Inside and Outside the Camp

The tree diagram below shows stakeholders inside and outside the camp. Ideally representatives from the authorities, the service providers, the camp residents and the Camp Management Agency are involved in coordination at camp level. In this example the cluster coordination system is in place, and the roles and responsibilities involved are clearly identified.

In reality, the stakeholders involved are always context specific, and the roles of specific actors both at camp level and externally will vary according to

need and to circumstances. In some cases camp management meetings within the camp may solely involve a group of camp residents if other actors are infrequently present in the camp or if the Camp Management Agency is operating through a mobile team.

Whether at camp level or through external forums, creating and maintaining regular opportunities for camp stakeholders to share information, agree and plan interventions and monitor progress, is central to best practice in camp management. Displaying an actor map such as the example shown below, can be a simple and effective way of making a coordination system more accessible and transparent for everyone involved.

Outside the camp, there will usually be a range of sector-specific, district-specific inter-agency and/or inter-camp coordination meetings. These are usually organised and/or chaired by either the authorities, UN agencies, or other Cluster/Sector Leads such as an international NGO. At such meetings a Camp Management Agency will report on the status of the camps it is working in. Their report may include recent activities, changes in circumstance, gaps and/or duplication in services and assistance and any burning issues which may require support from the authorities or the Camp Coordination Agency or Cluster/Sector lead. Well-chaired meetings, attended by those with decision-making authority, can identify specific issues, discuss and decide upon the best solution, and make an action plan. Minutes of the meeting should specify who is responsible for doing what and by when.

> ❗ Accurate, clear and timely minutes of coordination meetings distributed to all those involved which detail action points and provide contact details can contribute significantly to effective coordination and accountability.

At camp level the Camp Management Agency is responsible for the development and facilitation of various organisations and groups of persons present and active in the camp. This includes service providers and camp residents and representatives of groups with specific needs and those at heightened risk. It may also include government representatives and those from the host community. A representative group of stakeholders which meets regularly to discuss camp management issues and recent events, identifies priorities and takes action to meet needs may sometimes be known as the Camp Management 'Team'. This group may be at the centre of effective coordination and participation at camp level.

Coordination Tools

Coordination tools, (such as camp monitoring forms) fulfil a specific information function and are developed for a particular context. Whether a tool is used for intra or inter camp coordination purposes, specific tools need to be agreed and developed by the relevant stakeholders. One of the key challenges in setting up effective coordination is for parties to develop and use shared coordination tools, which meet common needs for information. This may sound easy, but it requires that stakeholders are able to trust information collected by other

parties and that all parties are committed to meeting the information needs of other stakeholders and see them reflected in shared tools. In situations where this doesn't happen there will often be gaps and duplications in data collection and information management.

▶▶ *For more information on information management, see chapter 5.*

No matter what mechanisms and tools are in place, facilitating effective coordination requires a Camp Management Agency to take an active, inclusive and flexible approach to developing solutions which aim to meet a wide diversity of needs. In establishing coordination mechanisms and tools a Camp Management Agency should:

- be familiar with the camp; including the people and the place. Get out of the office and away from emails! Talk to people and listen to their needs.
- involve people in discussions on the need to coordinate, enthuse them about its effectiveness and how to overcome challenges to effective coordination.
- map the actors involved in coordination at the camp level and include coordination with both international and national actors
- get clarity on information needs and advocate for sharing information and data collection systems and tools wherever possible
- brainstorm appropriate coordination forums and information sharing mechanisms for different stakeholders
- use the 'five factors coordination analysis' tool (see Tools section of this chapter) to evaluate existing coordination mechanisms and to improve them
- list coordination mechanisms in the camp such as meeting schedules and make them visible in a publicly accessible place
- use a variety of mechanisms that make information accessible to all, including those who are not literate
- advocate for shared coordination tools and train people how to use them
- establish committees to ensure that the camp residents are central to the coordination process
- ensure plans and coordination aims are clear, simple, agreed and known about
- hold regular and effective meetings and ensure minute-taking is good and minutes list action points and deadlines for follow up
- keep everyone informed, at every stage and monitor plans and progress
- be prepared to adapt plans, procedures and processes if things aren't working or situations change

- encourage a culture of respect, trust and inclusiveness, which goes beyond specific agency agendas and prioritises shared goals and upholds the rights of the displaced
- Engage camp and host community residents in voluntary or paid work where appropriate to build trust and professional relationships.

A Five-Factor Coordination Analysis Tool

It is easy to criticise poor coordination, and there is no shortage of anecdotal evidence to explain what happens when coordination mechanisms fail to work. What is more challenging perhaps is to go beyond critiques and find practical solutions – processes to follow and tools to use to make coordination more effective. Finding workable solutions can be testing, especially in situations of crisis, which are by definition complicated by chaos and contradiction.

This five-factor analysis tool gives a starting point for thinking about why a specific coordination approach isn't working and opens up possibility for planned improvement. It allows the analysis of coordination according to five criteria – location, membership, decision-making, formality and resources. It is important to be aware that underpinning effective coordination is the commitment by those involved in the process of coordination itself and a belief in its benefits.

FIVE COORDINATION FACTORS

- Location
- Membership
- Decision-making   } Commitment
- Formality
- Resources

Taking some hypothetical examples of coordination mechanisms, can show the potential use of this simple tool;

Example 1: A regular meeting of a particular group, whilst being well-located and having inclusive and consistent membership, may have members with insufficient decision-making power present to allow commitments to be made or action points to be defined.

Example 2: An emailing address list which is intended to function as the central

mechanism for the dissemination of camp–level information does not have an accurate or well-updated membership list. The unreliable internet connection means that it isn't always accessible and too many agencies don't refer to it or know it exists.

A simple analysis of the mechanisms we use for coordination can tell us a great deal about why they work, or why they fail to live up to expectations. Sometimes the simplest changes can make the biggest difference.

Factors and actions which influence the effectiveness of a coordination mechanism include:
- the location of an information board in the camp
- the time of a meeting
- the language or quality of translation of a report
- the provision of resources like pens and paper to a camp committee
- the drafting of a ToR/job description for a committee secretary who needs to take minutes
- the prompt delivery of invitations with reminders issued
- transport to a meeting
- the training of inter-agency staff on using a joint monitoring tool
- the distribution of a database to smaller local NGOs
- the maintenance of meeting agendas and minutes which are simple and clear
- the consistent follow-up of specific and manageable action points
- the collaboration of agencies in the use of a joint data collection form
- support offered to the government who hosts a meeting, but has no capacity to process and distribute the minutes.

Coordination mechanisms and tools need to be planned, chosen and adapted in direct relation to what they are meant to achieve. When dealing with complex and often conflicting agendas, it is especially important to keep the end in mind: What needs to be achieved and what will make the difference in achieving it?

Meetings
Having too many meetings can be symptomatic of complex relief operations. Unless these meetings are well-planned and well-chaired, they often achieve relatively little, at least in relation to the amount of time they consume. When organising effective meetings it is important to ensure:

- relevant information is sent out beforehand
- the agenda is clear and agreed
- start and finish times are agreed and kept to
- ground rules are in place (guidelines for constructive behaviour)
- time is used to build trust and relationships within the group
- the agenda is adhered to
- agreed action points are recorded
- the meeting is evaluated at the end by participants: what could be done better next time?

It is useful to identify distinct meetings for different topics always considering whether a meeting:
- is necessary at all
- has clear objectives
- includes programme planning
- includes political developments and related security conditions
- involves training needs and staff concerns.

Is it meant to be organised for a larger and more inclusive group or for a smaller group only or even bilaterally? When chairing a meeting, or supporting someone who is, it may be challenging to stick to the objectives and time set, whilst facilitating contributions from the participants and allowing sufficient space for the sharing of expertise. However, specific clear and achievable goals need to be set which generate involvement and commitment in a spirit of trust.

> **❗ Effective coordination is not about more meetings, but better ones!**

The Camp Management Agency will be instrumental in guiding and monitoring the development of committee meetings in the camp. Here, participation and representation of the camp community is vital. Committees require more than just involving the relevant groups. It takes sufficient cultural and political understanding of the camp community to know who should be present at any one time. A committee must be small enough for decision-making to be possible, and include those who have authority. Committees must also be big enough to be inclusive, and not dominated only by the voices of leaders. The process

of organising effective committees must take into account culturally specific social structures, ideas about status and understandings of gender and power relations, whilst upholding the principles of equal participation, impartiality and representation. Who to include in committees, and how they are nominated or elected will vary from context to context. The process is as important as the product. Getting agreements on fundamentals like a ToR, a code of conduct and a complaints procedure can help to facilitate the committee.

COORDINATING WITH PARTNERS

Building effective working relationships with partners entails a clear and shared understanding of mutual roles, responsibilities and expectations. It is important that these are outlined and agreed early in the relationship. These agreements provide the foundation and the parameters of the partnership and of mutual accountability. Camp Management Agencies and other organisations should not assume that camp residents or the local administration necessarily know what they are doing in the camp. It is vital to clearly and explicitly communicate roles and responsibilities.

Coordinating with Governments and Local Authorities

In both IDP and refugee contexts, national and local authorities are central to camp activities and interventions. They have the primary responsibility for communities in camp settings, and it is on their invitation, or at least with their consent, that the Camp Management Agency is present. Best practice in camp management must therefore entail working to mobilise and support national authorities whenever possible in the provision of assistance and protection to the displaced population.

Depending on the context the local authorities may be more or less involved in the daily life of the camp, and may or may not be represented at camp management level.

The capacity of government or local authorities varies greatly as does their knowledge of humanitarian principles and the camp setting, willingness and ability to coordinate, assume responsibility and build effective partnerships.

Whilst some government representatives may have both the resources and the will to coordinate others may have neither. Indeed in some situations it may be that the government intentionally attacks, blocks, dominates or is an obstacle to effective coordination of camp activities. In these situations it is the job of the Camp Management Agency, on intra-camp level, respectively the

Camp Coordination Agency or Sector Lead Agency, on inter-camp level, to use appropriate advocacy to remind the authorities of their responsibilities and duties under international law.

Wherever possible coordination structures in the camp should:
- support the government or local authorities
- seek to harness and develop their capacities
- build strong links between them and the humanitarian community, as well as the camp residents.

> **!** Where a Camp Coordination Agency is present, part of its role is to facilitate effective communication between the Camp Management Agency and the authorities. An official introduction to the authorities from the Camp Coordination Agency at the start of operations can greatly increase the credibility of a Camp Management Agency. Authorities play a particularly important role in ensuring security in the camp.

▶▶ *For more information on protection, see chapter 8.*
▶▶ *For more information on security, see chapter 12.*

Coordinating with the Camp Population

Developing effective coordination with members of the camp community is an integral part of ensuring participation and accountability. Community members and group representatives have a vital need not only to be consulted, but to actively participate in the assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of camp life.

Involving camp representatives in camp and sector coordination meetings can help to improve the collection of data, the dissemination of information and the development of reporting systems. This, in turn, may contribute to better assistance, protection and service provision. The Camp Management Agency should promote a transparent and participatory approach and encourage other service providers to do the same. Camp residents can be active subjects in the effective management of their own displacement, and a Camp Management Agency should adopt an approach which respects and capitalises upon on their capacities, including groups with specific needs and those at heightened risk.

⚠ **Voice from the Field**

"Camp residents, especially those who have been living in a camp for some time, may be suspicious of new agencies. As a Camp Management Agency coming in at a later stage, it is especially important to be clear about who you are and why you are there. A new presence in the camp is not always appreciated, especially if the community can't see any immediate value or material benefit out of your arrival."

Coordinating with a Host Community

Good coordination at both the camp level and with the neighbouring community can help to avoid conflicting messages and increase trust between the camp population and their host. Involving the host population in the developments of the camp, providing a forum for listening to issues and acting on grievances can have a positive impact on relationships and on the management of the camp itself.

Hosting a camp population can put considerable social, economic, environmental and cultural pressures on a host population who are themselves often poor and under-resourced. In some cases, the camp population may be enjoying a higher standard of living or better protection than they do. Tensions often develop around the sharing of common resources, making for a fractious relationship between the host and the displaced community. To mitigate tensions it is recommended to:

- Invite and involve representatives of the host community in forums for coordination on camp issues such as environmental care or larger employment opportunities. Doing so can increase mutual understanding and develop tolerance and acceptance between the local community and the camp population.
- Assess ways the host community may be able to benefit from camp life or services delivered, such as jobs, water points or joining socio-cultural events. Under certain circumstances the host community can be in more need of basic services than a camp population which is assisted.

Coordinating with Service Providers

Coordination with the Camp Management Agency needs to provide added value for service providers. Through their coordination, service providers need to be able to share and receive information, foster support for their programme and maximise their impact. Both service providers and Camp Management Agencies take part in the overall strategy for humanitarian assistance delivered to a camp, so transparency is required. Equally:

- The roles and responsibilities between agencies providing services in the camp should be identified, agreed and formalised early in the camp operation. This is the first step to addressing gaps and can help to avoid misunderstandings.
- Written agreements, such as ToRs on roles and responsibilities, should be formalised with the aim of improving coordination and ensuring accountability.
- Agreements should be used as an advocacy tool when services fall below standard.
- The aim of all parties should be to establish and maintain positive relations and provide regular updates to each other.
- Verbal agreements need to be followed up, and responsibility for commitments taken. Being accountable builds trust. If the Camp Management Agency supports and encourages agencies in their work, it is more likely to be reciprocated.
- It's important to provide mutual support. Accountability in service provision is more likely to be achieved through encouragement than through any attempts or perceptions of 'policing' the service providers in the camp.
- Even when programmes are carefully outlined in work plans, and roles and responsibilities are formalised in written agreements, progress still requires on-going facilitation.
- Jointly setting both clear and achievable short-term and long-term aims will motivate everybody involved and make it easier to monitor interventions and reach agreed targets.

> ❗ Camp Management Agencies should regularly receive copies of agency agreements and work plans for all partners working in the camp. They should likewise make their work plan transparent and accessible.

⚠ In Contact with the Camp — A Voice from the Field

"The Camp Management Agency should encourage agencies and service providers to decentralise their services, and presence wherever possible. In some situations, where camps have expanded but offices have not, it is easy for the camp residents and the service providers to lose touch, and have limited contact due to distance or inaccessibility. NGO compounds, where agencies locate their offices all together, often for security reasons, can lead to agency staff becoming very isolated from camp life, and camp residents having little contact with those who are there to assist them".

Coordinating with Camp Coordination Agencies

When working in an IDP context where the cluster coordination system has been activated, a Camp Management Agency is part of an overall camp response strategy led by the Camp Coordination Agency, in cooperation with the relevant local authorities.

In other IDP situations, where the cluster coordination system is not activated, there may be a Sector Lead agency, playing an inter-camp coordination role, with whom a Camp Management Agency works closely. In refugee contexts, the camp coordinating role falls under the mandate of UNHCR.

The quality of the relationship between a Camp Management Agency and a Camp Coordination Agency is central to the overall capacity of the camp response to provide protection and assistance. Tracking gaps and duplications in service provision is dependent upon the Camp Management Agency, the Camp Coordinator and/or Sector Lead developing and updating information management systems and tools. Coordination between them ideally begins with joint assessments and planning. In reality however, it may be that either the Camp Management Agency or the Camp Coordinator arrives first and that by the time both are established, coordination systems, mechanisms and tools are already partially in place. It is then a question of sharing what is already in use, and working together to ensure that the information needs of all stakeholders are met.

▶▶ *For more information on the role of the Camp Coordination Agency, see chapter 1.*
▶▶ *For further details on information management, see chapter 5.*

⚠ The Question of Leadership

Effective coordination needs leadership and management. Taking a leadership role in coordination at camp level includes holding each agency accountable and monitoring to ensure coordination systems in place are functioning properly.

The credibility of a Camp Management Agency depends on support from all partners. One of the biggest challenges of coordination is that whilst many support the idea in principle, in practice they prefer to work autonomously, and do not want to be told what to do or to open themselves to criticism.

For coordination to work the leader must therefore be authorised – requested/permitted to lead. This requires gaining and consistently renewing the trust of all partners, who permit themselves to be coordinated and participate according to the process and procedures set out in an agreed coordination agenda.

For leadership to remain legitimate and accountable, there must always be space for feedback, for complaint and for change. Effective coordination is by nature dynamic and flexible, and must meet the needs of those it seeks to coordinate.

⚠ Challenges and Needs in Coordination – Voice from the Field

"There are gradually fewer and fewer agencies functioning as key actors in the camps here. Where there are Camp Management Agencies, the issue is that they are not involving the IDPs and camp committees. As return progresses, so agencies are refocusing on return areas and there is generally less assistance in sites. Another challenge is that IDP leadership in camps is fearful, due to security risks. They are being targeted by paramilitary groups when they speak out. Community leaders are being questioned and held accountable for issues beyond their control. The challenge is to find actors with the willingness to take responsibility, make inclusive decisions, coordinate and take initiative in the camps."

THE COORDINATION PROCESS

The following suggestions can help in setting up good coordination systems when a Camp Management Agency takes over.
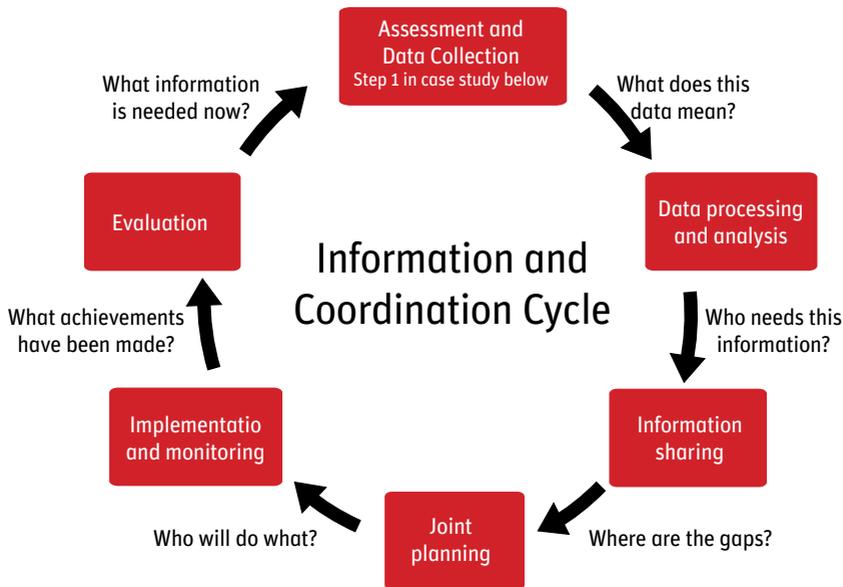
- Collecting data involves ensuring that regular reliable data and information about the camp is available and decisions are made about who collects data, why, about what, when and how. Everybody should be clear about the reason why data is collected and what response capacity is in place, so that the expectations of the camp populations can be effectively managed.

- Managing information requires the Camp Management Agency to coordinate with the Camp Coordination Agency, or Sector Lead, the authorities and other relevant stakeholders to establish who is responsible for the processing and analysis of what data, how it will be disseminated, how often and to whom. How will confidential and sensitive information be managed and how will groups with specific needs and those at risk be protected? What feedback and follow-up mechanisms are in place for the camp community, so that they are kept informed of developments?

- It is important to decide what information about life in the camp will be shared, with whom, and using which mechanisms. Delays in dealing with the many and often incompatible expectations and demands from different parties should be avoided. A Camp Management Agency's role means negotiating and reaching agreements.

- Dealing with complex messages is crucially important. Transparent and frank communication is needed to ensure complex information is understood, and to avoid sending contradictory messages. The messages communicated by the Camp Management Agency will have an impact, intended or not, on people's understandings and their behaviours. Access to information is a vital need and knowledge is power. In times of conflict, crisis and chaos information needs to be handled carefully, with the *Do No Harm* principle underpinning the chosen approach.

- Keeping a clear focus is essential. Amidst competing agendas, retaining focus on the roles and responsibilities of the Camp Management Agency and the aims of Camp Management is essential.

> ❗ A Camp Management Agency's interventions and targets should be SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound.

- Clarifying agreements is important. Time needs to be taken to ensure that there is a common understanding of the agreements that are reached. It is useful to remind each other of the process that led to the agreement and on the specific outcomes, responsibilities and time frames involved. Documentation such as minutes of meetings, MoUs, plans, indicators, guidelines and reports should be written and disseminated in such a way that agreements are clear, specific, manageable and useful for everyone.

- Making progress requires taking decisions and advocating for agreements that allow things to move forward, even if the steps are small. Flexibility and open reflection are required, to accommodate the needs of others or changes in the circumstances. Progress that is inclusive and sustainable takes time, patience and creativity. Solutions and compromises are needed when processes get stuck.

- It is important to always see the bigger picture. When submerged in micro-level problem-solving and technical issues, the Camp Management Agency needs to maintain a holistic overview and an understanding of the big picture and how issues are connected and interdependent. For example, coordinating a solution for a water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) issue can often have implications for protection.

- Managing expertise matters. Being comfortable in the role of 'jack of all trades but a master of none' the Camp Management Agency usually develops a team that has enough sector-specific knowledge to understand the work of those agencies that are working in the camp and ideally can be seen as a forum for the sharing of cross-sector expertise. Local and international expertise needs to be harnessed for the benefit of all.

- Respecting diversity is essential. A Camp Management Agency's staff should always practise and advocate for respect and understanding of all groups and stakeholders involved.

- Monitoring, adapting and evaluating require change and process to be monitored, achievements in coordination evaluated and reflected upon and challenges identified. It is important to adopt new approaches and anticipate future needs.

> ⊘ In effective coordination the process is as important as the product.

The coordination process, can be understood using the kind of coordination cycle set out below. The cycle illustrates a process in which data collected within the camp is used to identify gaps, plan interventions and evaluate impact. The questions on each arrow in the diagram lead from one action to the next, through a cycle of data collection, processing and analysis, through information sharing and joint planning, to project implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This diagram can be used to inform the Camp Management Agency's approach to coordinating sector-specific activities.

Information and Coordination Cycle

Assessment and Data Collection — Step 1 in case study below

What information is needed now?

What does this data mean?

Data processing and analysis

Evaluation

What achievements have been made?

Who needs this information?

Implementatio and monitoring

Information sharing

Who will do what?

Joint planning

Where are the gaps?

Case Study (hypothetical) – Using the Information and Coordination Cycle

Step 1: In camps in country Y, it is observed that sanitation facilities are inadequate. In Camp X, data is collected related to the number and status of latrines in the camp, and how they are being used.

Step 2: This data is processed and analysed, and …

Step 3: disseminated to the Camp Coordinator, the authorities, and the Camp Management Agency. At the camp level there are two agencies implementing WASH programmes. There is also a WASH committee.

Step 4: The Camp Coordinator, as part of a plan to upgrade sanitation facilities across several camps, has begun to advocate for support from the authorities. Through sharing information in coordination forums both in and outside the camp … (to step 5)

Step 5: a joint plan is made, (in line with mandates and capacities, and using UNHCR WASH standards as a benchmark), which involves the repair of existing latrines and the construction of additional facilities. In addition, the authorities agree to use the municipal council services once a month, to pump out full septic tanks. Meanwhile, the Camp Management Agency in Camp X works closely with the WASH committee, and the representatives from the two WASH NGOs, and creates a 'cleanliness and hygiene' project. This involves establishing a roster for latrines to be regularly checked and cleaned, and for children to be educated in the correct use of facilities with an emphasis on washing their hands.

Step 6: Specific, measurable and achievable indicators are chosen for implementing these projects, in agreement with the Camp Coordinator, and it is agreed that progress will be monitored by the Camp Management Team for two months.

Step 7: At the end of this period, the situation is evaluated. Achievements are noted, challenges addressed and a new action plan is made, including what data is needed to inform future interventions.

CHECKLIST FOR A CAMP MANAGEMENT AGENCY

☐ The roles and responsibilities of the Camp Management Agency in relation to coordination are clear and well publicised.

☐ There is effective leadership, which is respected and legitimate, for the coordination of stakeholders in the camp response.

☐ The importance of coordination is agreed and there is 'buy in' and acknowledgement of its benefits.

☐ There is an inclusive and transparent attitude to partnership and a respect for diversity which the Camp Management Agency works to promote and maintain.

☐ It is clear who is doing what and where: roles, responsibilities and expectations are agreed.

☐ There are common, agreed coordination tools.

☐ Staff are trained to use these tools so that the information provided is trustworthy and valuable.

☐ Coordination mechanisms are well-planned, varied and fit for purpose.

☐ Coordination mechanisms are well-publicised.

☐ There is good participation. All key stakeholders are represented including groups with specific needs and those at heightened risk.

☐ Central/local government authorities play a central role in coordination.

☐ Coordination forums are reviewed and there are procedures for feedback and complaint.

☐ Language needs are catered for in mixed forums of expatriates and nationals.

☐ There is reliable, relevant and updated information available about life in the camp.

☐ There are forums for joint planning which seek complementarity in line with diverse mandates and capacities.

TOOLS

> **❗** Almost all the tools, publications and other documents referred to are available on the Toolkit CD attached to every hardcopy binder. Weblinks are provided for downloadable online resources.

- Checklist "How Accountable Are You?" Checking Public Information

- **Linda Richardson and Gill Price, 2007.** *All In Diary. A Practical Tool for Field Based Humanitarian Workers.* www.allindiary.org/uploads/final_All_in_Diary_cd.pdf

- The Five Factor Coordination Analysis (NRC training tool)

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