

## 5. DEVELOP MONITORING TOOLS AND PLAN

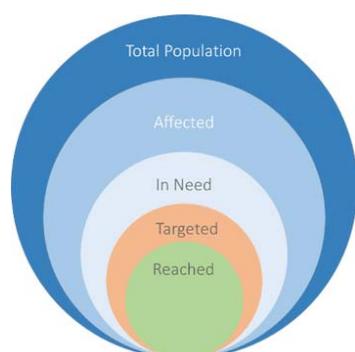


### STRATEGY PACKAGE TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

- [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-sectorally (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).<sup>55</sup> 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.<sup>56</sup> 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.

<sup>55</sup> 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.

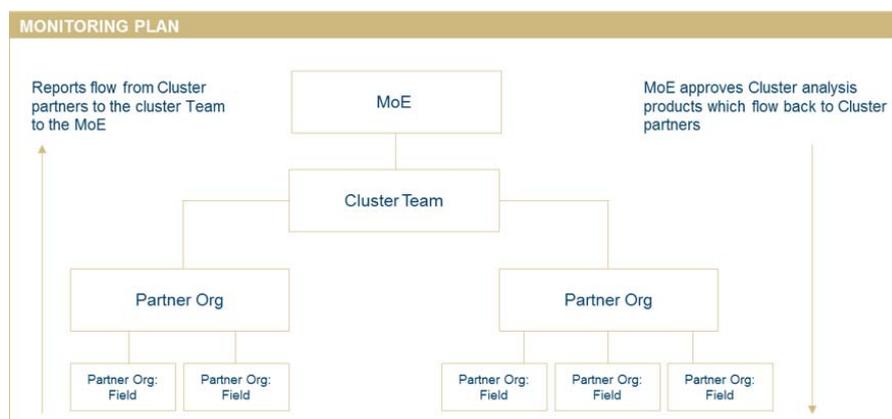
<sup>56</sup> This can often be combined with a 'monitoring training' in which Cluster partners are trained on the monitoring tools and plan (including reporting schedule)



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<sup>59</sup>

### 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.

<sup>59</sup>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.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, the CCPM could be used as an evidence base from which to launch a Strategy development process (or Strategy update process).

<sup>60</sup> A CCPM Guide can be found at: [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/guidance\\_note\\_14.02.14.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/guidance_note_14.02.14.pdf)

