

## Principles of Coordination

The following principles should guide refugee coordination:

- 1. Government supervision, leadership, and coordination:** Given their primary responsibility for refugee protection, host states should supervise, lead, and coordinate refugee emergency responses. Action is required to facilitate and, where necessary, strengthen the role of authorities.
- 2. Refugee protection:** Protection of refugees and asylum-seekers should be at the center of, and embedded in, coordination structures and approaches. This includes age, gender, and diversity (AGDM), and community-based approaches.
- 3. Partnership, inclusivity and, transparency:** The principles underpinning good partnership are the foundation of inclusive coordination. Relevant international and national entities should be engaged systematically in the design and delivery of strategies, operational mechanisms, and resource mobilization.
- 4. Leadership:** International refugee coordination is grounded on a “lead-agency” model. Coordination policies, structures, and practical modalities should be clearly established and shared with all partners (see UNHCR mandate).
- 5. A quality response, a prioritised strategy, and results:** Process and form should not take precedent over substance. An effective operation is the single most important condition for (and result of) effective coordination.
- 6. Decentralized coordination:** Coordination should be based on the principle of “subsidiarity.” Central coordination should limit itself to whatever cannot be achieved at a local level.
- 7. Efficient coordination:** Coordination is frequently cumbersome and overly demanding of time, effort, and resources. Steps are necessary to ensure coordination efficiency. These include: non-meetings coordination, high-quality information-sharing, reduced numbers of coordination groups, management of partner numbers and responsibilities, and efficient meetings management.
- 8. Flexible and dynamic mechanisms:** Coordination needs to be adaptive. Template models should not be expected to work without adaptation and evolution over time. Avoid “one-size-fits-all” approaches. To be relevant, coordinators should review the number, type, location, leadership, and membership of coordination groups on a regular basis.
- 9. Professional coordination standards, quality assessment, and support:** A “state-of-the-art” refugee emergency coordination capacity requires appropriate procedures and tools, and human, material, and financial resources. Coordinators should integrate Quality Assessment should be into their processes. These can include consultations, peer-review, self-assessments, group assessments, etc. Senior coordinators should include mentoring and “help-desk” approaches should be provided to coordinators and coordination groups.