A8: Checklist of Functions, Tasks, and Responsibilities for Technical Coordination Units and Working Groups

- Who is this tool for? This tool links to the organizational dimension of the institutional coordination maturity matrix in the implementation toolbox. It is intended to support a critical examination of existing coordination structures between health and non-health institutions working on population targeting, with a view to strengthening these where appropriate. It may alternatively serve as a guide to setting up such structures from scratch. It offers a checklist of desirable features of technical coordination units or working groups, and a separate checklist of the tasks and responsibilities they may undertake.
- How was it produced? These checklists are based on a careful examination of present practice in some of the countries participating in the learning collaborative on population targeting, case studies offered by countries such as Brazil and The Philippines, a wider literature on coordination which has been assembled in the learning collaborative's eLibrary, and technical facilitation team's experience in other countries.

For many countries, the primary means of coordination between agencies working on population targeting will be a high level political committee - e.g. Cabinet level or a Ministerial social protection group. These are helpful at providing strategic direction, but very often they leave a major gap beneath them at the operational, technical and management layers of these ministries and agencies. This often means that decisions to coordinate are never carried out into the detail of planning and administration between, for example, a health ministry and its social protection counterpart. Many countries have found that 'technical coordination units' (TCUs) can be essential in carrying out the more detailed technical work required to make a reality of coordination between ministries, departments and agencies.

There are many different possible approaches to the establishment of these operational coordination mechanisms. They may take the form of a dedicated technical coordination unit, set up either within a lead ministry, or in a centre of government formation such as the Office of the President or Vice President so as to provide greater convening power and the ability to overrule competing ministerial interests. A survey of successful examples within the collaborative's member countries and others revealed **many different variations in how they were set up**:

- Their legal basis varied significantly, with some enshrined in law and others by much simpler 'good faith' agreements or MoUs between the agencies involved.
- Their goals varied but typically included objectives that made clear there were benefits for each of the agencies involved.
- Their terms of reference could be more task oriented (e.g. "coordinate implementation of social protection programmes and apply advanced targeting techniques" as in Indonesia) or more goal oriented (e.g. "facilitate sharing of data, reduce inclusion/exclusion errors, ensure cost-efficiency of the system" as in Philippines) but tended to be flexible and often only agreed once the unit/committee had been created and meeting for some time.

- Some had a range of sub-groups (e.g. Community empowerment, Data and IT, Monitoring and Evaluation, Communications, Statistics), while others were just a single group
- Group size varied between 3 and 6 core agencies involved in the groups, and most had named representatives who must attend and in some cases named deputies who were responsible for attending if the main official could not come. Some countries had external or independent people in the groups, others kept them purely inside the government.

These differences show that there is no single 'perfect' format for these operational coordination mechanisms, but rather countries should adapt their scope, composition and structure to their circumstances. **To guide this process of thinking about 'what will work best for you' the checklists below goes through a list of different features and decisions that our collaborative found was important in building better operational coordination for population targeting**, and asks you to consider what is relevant in your country context. Even if the answer to some questions is 'no' it will be worthwhile reflecting on why that is the case and whether change would be desirable. For each feature, the checklist asks whether the feature concerned is present or task is being carried out, and invites comment, especially on areas where improvement would be beneficial. The first checklist, in **Table 1, presents some features which international experience suggests are positive assets for coordination mechanisms of this kind. Table 2 provides a checklist of the actions and responsibilities with which the units or groups concerned may be tasked.**

Table 1: Checklist of desirable features

The following are key features of successful Technical Working Groups for interagency coordination of population targeting functions.

Feature	Relevant/ applicable?	Present?	Comments
1. The scope of the unit's or group's work has been clearly defined (e.g. increased collaboration between social protection and other programs, convergence or consolidation in the management of these programs, or integration of programs)	Yes/No	Yes/No	
2. A clearly-defined short to medium term objective has been set (e.g. the sharing of health and social protection population targeting data).	Yes/No	Yes/No	
3. The scope and objective of the work has been established in a Memorandum of Understanding or similar which reflects the interests of all participants and provides clear Terms of Reference for the unit or group.	Yes/No	Yes/No	

4. All of the organizations with a practical interest in the outcome (and only those organizations) are represented in the unit or group.	Yes/No	Yes/No	
5. The organizations concerned are represented at an appropriate level of technical expertise and seniority. There are named, nominated delegates for each of the key participants in case of absence.	Yes/No	Yes/No	
6. The staff concerned have adequate delegated authority to take operational and technical decisions on behalf of their organizations.	Yes/No	Yes/No	
7. The unit is adequately staffed and resourced, or the group is supported by an adequately staffed and resourced secretariat.	Yes/No	Yes/No	

Table 2: Checklist of tasks and responsibilities

The following are key tasks, responsibilities and powers found to be commonly designated to Technical Working Groups for interagency coordination of population targeting.

Task	Relevant/ applicable?	Carried out?	Comments
1. To carry out the necessary analysis and identify any obstacles to achievement of the defined objective.	Yes/No	Yes/No	
2. To develop solutions to overcome the obstacles identified.	Yes/No	Yes/No	
3. To take decisions on the implementation of solutions, within the delegated authority of the unit or members of the group.	Yes/No	Yes/No	
4. To refer issues with significant revenue or policy implications to a higher-level coordinating body or decision-making authority, with clear recommendations on how to proceed.	Yes/No	Yes/No	

5. To coordinate and monitor implementation of agreed solutions, and identify and resolve any problems arising.	Yes/No	Yes/No	
6. To provide a model for collaboration across organizational boundaries, and to encourage similar behaviors among staff at all levels.	Yes/No	Yes/No	
7. To provide a forum for discussion of ideas for improving coordination across sectors.	Yes/No	Yes/No	
8. To propose amendments to its own structure and Terms of Reference if necessary.	Yes/No	Yes/No	