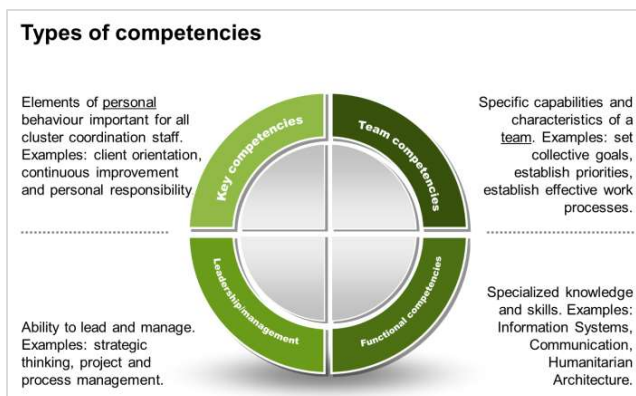### 3.2 Types of competencies

Successful competency-based strategies for selection and development include four types of competencies that in combination can effectively leverage individual, team, and organizational performance.

These types of competencies are:

Types of competencies

Elements of personal behaviour important for all cluster coordination staff. Examples: client orientation, continuous improvement and personal responsibility.

Specific capabilities and characteristics of a team. Examples: set collective goals, establish priorities, establish effective work processes.

Ability to lead and manage. Examples: strategic thinking, project and process management.

Specialized knowledge and skills. Examples: Information Systems, Communication, Humanitarian Architecture.

1. **Key competencies**. These competencies describe the elements of personal behaviour that are important for all cluster coordination staff. They support cluster coordination values, desired culture and performance expectations in areas such as client orientation, continuous improvement and personal responsibility and ideally are used as selection criteria in the recruitment process.

2. **Team competencies**. These competencies describe specific capabilities and characteristics required for cluster coordination staff in facilitating clusters in operating as a team. Competencies include the capability to set collective goals, establish priorities, define roles, identify and solve problems, establish work processes, manage conflict constructively and sustain an environment of trust and collaboration. These competencies are key in influencing and creating the enabling environment for cluster coordination, and are important for cluster coordination staff and partners.

3. **Functional competencies** should describe specialized knowledge and skills required for cluster coordination staff. The descriptions may be differentiated, for example for cluster coordinators and information managers, or by level to detail the attributes associated with starters to more senior levels.

4. **Leadership and management competencies.** These competencies describe the capabilities required to lead and manage such as strategic thinking, and project and process management. Like the key competencies these are important for all cluster coordination staff but have more emphasis for cluster coordinators than for information managers.

3.3 Competencies essential for cluster coordination staff

The below matrix lists the 8 competency domains and 38 competencies identified in the first phase of the project as essential for cluster coordination performance, with an indication of the respective type(s) of competency.

Competencies			Types of competency			
Ser	Competency domain	Competency	Key	Team	Functional	Leadership/Mgt
1	Coping with pressure and adapting to change	Coping with personal stress	x			
		Helping others manage (minimize) stress	x	x		
		Adapting in situations of rapid change	x			
2	Respect for diversity	Working effectively with people from all backgrounds	x			
		Understanding and considering diverse opinions and points of view	x			
3	Maintaining a service oriented approach	Considering all to whom services are provided as clients	x			
		Collecting, analysing and disseminating relevant information to colleagues and partners		x	x	
		Collaborating with stakeholders to avoid duplication and maximize resources		x		
		Identifying partners' needs and matching them with appropriate solutions		x		
4	Applying humanitarian principles, norms, mechanisms and subject matter	Participating in cluster coordination based on clear understanding of humanitarian systems & principles			x	
		Creating strategic vision and shared goals based on humanitarian principles and norms			x	x
		Understanding the phases of humanitarian response			x	
		Applying professional competence and mastery of general subject matter (e.g. M&E, Funds Management)			x	
5	Personal commitment to achieving team results	Leading and influencing partners and stakeholders				x
		Making decisions and standing by them, even if they are unpopular				x
		Delivering outputs within prescribed time, cost and quality standards		x		x
		Seeking feedback to learn and improve	x			
		Supporting cluster partners and providing oversight	x	x		x
		Taking responsibility of delegated assignment	x			x
6	Communicating effectively	Tailoring language, tone, style and format to match audiences	x		x	
		Actively listening to perspectives of stakeholders and team members	x			
		Interpreting messages and responding appropriately	x		x	
		Speaking and writing clearly and effectively	x		x	
		Making presentations and undertaking public speaking with confidence	x		x	x
7	Planning and organizing	Analysing data and translating to useful information			x	
		Setting realistic deadlines and goals		x		x
		Meeting timelines for delivery of products and services		x		x
		Identifying and organising resources to accomplish tasks		x		
		Managing data capture and storage			x	
8	Effective coordination of teams (leadership)	Building effective networks with key stakeholders		x		x
		Effective meeting organization and management		x	x	x
		Contributing to learning of colleagues and partners		x		
		Building consensus for direction	x	x	x	x
		Ensuring full participation of partners		x		x
		Promoting a climate of teamwork and harmony	x			x
		Facilitating a team approach		x		
		Providing and receiving feedback	x			
		Fostering dialogue		x		x

In Phase 2 of the competency development strategy creation these competencies were validated and their importance was widely endorsed. It was also confirmed that most competencies are cross cutting over all cluster coordination functions (IASC Cluster Reference Module).

Cluster coordination competencies are similarly required for cluster coordinators and information managers, with exception of (i) leadership/management competencies that are relevant for all cluster coordination staff but essential for cluster coordinators and (ii) technical information management competencies that are important for all but key for information management roles.

3.4 Specific competencies essential for cluster coordinators

Cluster coordination staff should have a good level of leadership and management skills. It is however commonly agreed that cluster coordinators should excel at certain competencies of this type and therefore require additional development. These competencies are mainly found in the competency domains 'personal commitment to achieving team results', 'planning and organizing' and 'effective coordination of teams' and include competencies such as:
- Leading and influencing partners and stakeholders,
- Creating strategic vision and shared goals,
- Making decisions and standing by them, even if they are unpopular,
- Supporting cluster partners and providing oversight,
- Taking responsibility of delegated assignment.

3.5 Specific competencies essential for information managers

The role of information managers can be described as 'to collect information and provide a time-critical evidence-base for strategic and operational decision-making, and for demonstrating results both at the intra- and inter-sectoral levels'. To perform this role well, information managers should be able to (i) describe the needs of the affected population, (ii) understand and quantify the capacity to respond and (iii) support the planning of a coordinated response, with a different focus for three phases: the onset, response and transition[5].

The broad spectrum of cluster coordination staff should have an understanding of IM, as specific IM personnel are not deployed for every operation, however information managers should be the technical experts and have a more in-depth understanding and a further developed skillset.

The specific core competencies with more emphasis for information managers are:
- Collecting, analysing and disseminating relevant information to colleagues and partners,
- Analysing data and translating to useful information,
- Managing data capture and storage ,
- Applying technical information management skills and understanding to provide data to support strategic decision making in appropriate formats,
- Knowledge, understanding and application of relevant tools such as databases, GIS, websites and other relevant products.

As with cluster coordinators, the assessment provided evidence that soft skills are key.

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[5] Presentation MSB meeting, Information Management Officer Seminar, Karlstad the 11th of December 2013.