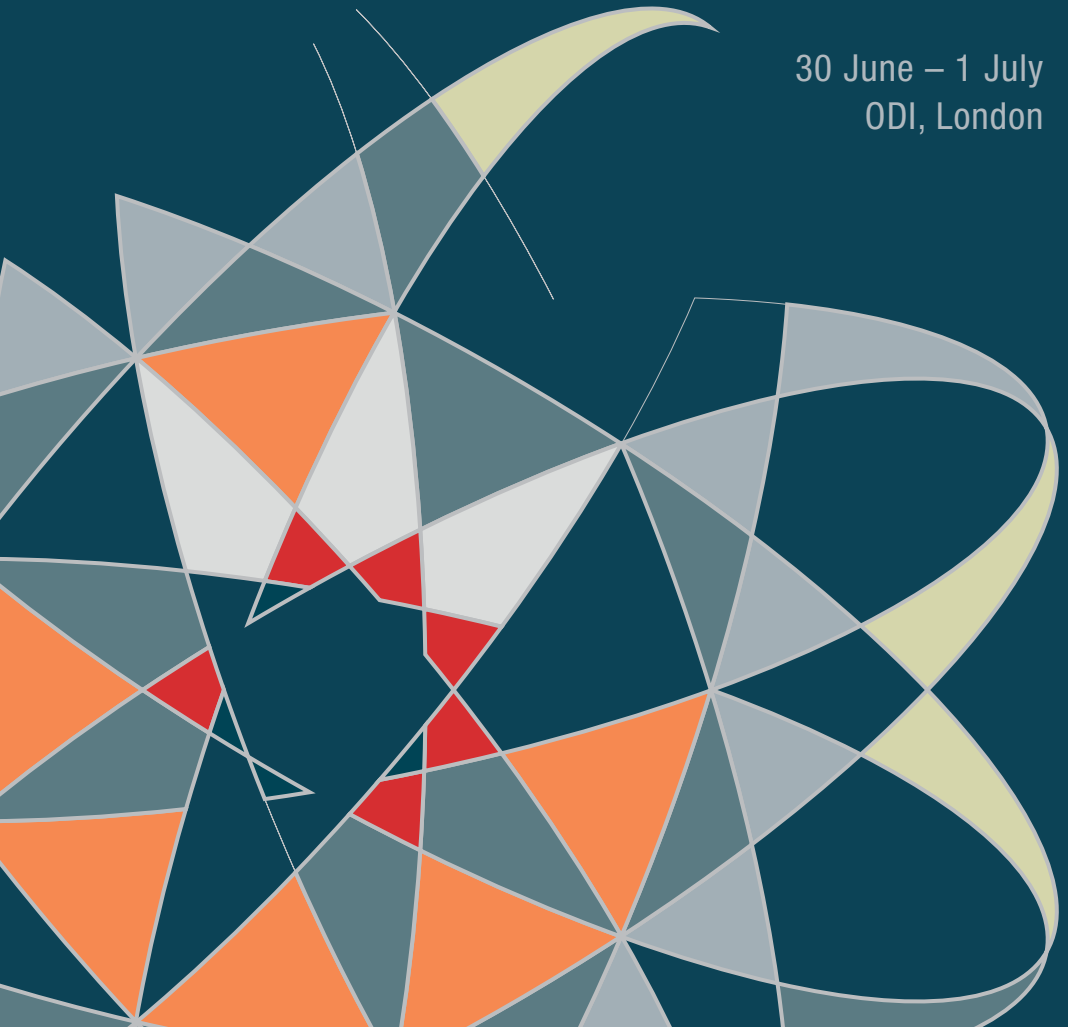


CONCEPT NOTE | ALNAP MEETING:

**Working together to improve
humanitarian coordination**

30 June – 1 July
ODI, London



Coordination is essential to the success of humanitarian and emergency response. In most crisis situations, a large number of organisations will be working to provide support in the same area. Under these circumstances, coordination allows all actors to get a better understanding of the situation and to share effective practices. It also prevents dangerous gaps in assistance, and helps avoid wasteful duplication.

Since 2013, ALNAP has been exploring the key challenges to humanitarian coordination and conditions for successful coordination, through research on the **Cluster system, humanitarian networks and coordination with NDMAs**. In 2014-2015 ALNAP held a webinar series exploring what humanitarians could learn from the emergency management sector and in the 2015 ALNAP Annual Meeting and Report, *Better Together?* looked at ways of working together in the field.

Building on this body of work, ALNAP is now focusing on four aspects of coordination, through a series of briefing papers, videos and webinars. The work will culminate with a meeting in June 2016 which will bring together coordination expertise from across the humanitarian sector (including HCTs, the Clusters, NGO consortiums, cash coordination groups) and beyond (emergency management, regional and developmental coordination bodies, academics). The aim of the meeting is to **address common coordination challenges**, share learning and **identify concrete recommendations** to improve humanitarian coordination. The meeting will have a particular focus on the IASC cluster-based coordination architecture.

For more information, please visit www.alnap.org/coord-meeting



COORDINATION CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED BY ALNAP'S RESEARCH

Our research will look into four challenges around coordination:

- 1. How can humanitarian actors better coordinate across a response?** One of the most difficult aspects of coordination is ensuring that different sectors (e.g. shelter, food security, WASH) and levels of coordination (e.g. national, sub-national) are connected across a response. Though there are examples where coordination has been effective across a response, these are hard to come by. ALNAP's research on the humanitarian Cluster system identified both sub-national/national and inter-cluster coordination to be areas requiring significant improvement. Roundtables conducted by ALNAP in October 2015 further emphasised the importance of addressing this crucial area of humanitarian response.
- 2. How can we better involve national actors in humanitarian coordination?** There is a growing recognition that the one-size-fits-all approach to humanitarian response – which often excludes or duplicates the role of national actors – is inappropriate and often damaging. The current level of effective participation of national NGOs and governments within humanitarian coordination mechanisms is insufficient, and more needs to be done to understand how national actors can effectively take part in humanitarian coordination.
- 3. How to make the most of information management in coordination?** Information management (IM) is both a critical input to coordination, and a key factor to its success. All too often, coordination mechanisms can get caught up in one aspect of IM, collecting information, often to the detriment of the effective planning, analysis and dissemination of information. When the full range of IM functions are not achieved, IM can appear as undervalued and an extractive burden.
- 4. How can we improve decision-making in humanitarian coordination?** Who makes decisions, when and how, is a consistent challenge within coordination mechanisms where autonomous organisations need to find ways of making decisions together, or going along with decisions made on their behalf. While research has identified the importance of having a clear and agreed process for decision-making within a coordination mechanism, there are often many obstacles to achieving this.



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