OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE for COORDINATED ASSESSMENTS in HUMANITARIAN CRISES

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IASC Inter-Agency Standing Committee

COORDINATED NEEDS ASSESSMENT

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Humanitarian Aid

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FOREWORD

Experience has shown that there are significant benefits to coordinating needs assessments and that doing so can help save more lives and restore more people's livelihoods. The Needs Assessment Task Force (NATF) was established by the IASC in March 2009, in order to improve coordinated assessment processes.

Along with emergency preparedness, the timeliness and quality of assessments help determine an effective humanitarian response. The credibility and accuracy of assessment results are the basis for needs based planning and can have long-lasting effects on everything from the quality of interagency coordination, to donor funding levels, to relationships with the national government, local NGOs, and disaster-affected populations.

The NATF commissioned this guidance to help realize the goal of better quality and more timely assessments through coordinated processes. This Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments was not developed due to a lack of assessment guidelines and tools, but rather to provide guidance for those seeking to make informed decisions on aspects of **coordinated assessments** (harmonized or joint). The Guidance has been developed based primarily on experiences during early phases of large-scale quick-onset natural disasters, but is also applicable to other types of crises. It provides guidance to coordinate assessments. Technical tools and guidance can be found in the annexes.

The NATF developed this guidance through a collaborative and consultative process, including consultations with UN agencies, other international organizations, NGOs and donors, at the global, regional and national levels. The guidance has been developed within the accountability framework generated by the humanitarian reform, and is fully in line with the coordination structures introduced through the cluster approach.

This Operational Guidance is divided in four sections:

» The **first section** provides background on the purpose, audience and scope of the document.

» The **second section** defines coordinated assessments, and describes the key actions to be taken, roles and responsibilities, and common principles to be considered when undertaking them.

» The **third section** provides recommendations on the types of coordinated assessments that can be carried out in different phases following an emergency, and proposes standard operating procedures for doing so.

» The **fourth section** outlines key preparedness measures to be taken to prepare for coordinated assessments.

The NATF would like to thank those who offered their experience and knowledge to contribute to this document.

A SHARED COMMITMENT TO COORDINATED ASSESSMENT

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee promotes the coordination of needs assessments to enhance the quality of humanitarian response. IASC members endeavor to prepare, lead and implement coordinated assessments, as described in the Operational Guidance.

The Guidance recommends that:

» The Humanitarian/Resident Coordinator establishes coordination mechanisms for cross-cluster/sector needs assessment and analysis.

» Country-level Cluster/Sector Leads ensure effective and coherent sectoral needs assessment.

» Operational agencies have the primary responsibility for undertaking assessments. They do so in a coordinated manner and adhere to the definitions, principles, methodologies and approaches set out in the Guidance.

» Plans for implementation of coordinated assessments are part of preparedness and contingency planning work.

» Coordinated assessments are part of ongoing processes guiding operational decision-making, and complement monitoring of the overall humanitarian situation and the performance of the humanitarian response.

» Coordination mechanisms applied to needs assessments differ depending on the phase and nature of a crisis. For example, multi cluster/sector initial and rapid assessments are applicable in the first two weeks following a crisis, and are followed by joint or harmonized intra cluster/sector in-depth assessments.

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SECTION I.
PURPOSE, AUDIENCE AND SCOPE OF THE OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE

Coordinated Assessment

In this document "coordinated assessment" means assessments which are planned and carried out in partnership by humanitarian actors, in order to document the impact of a particular crisis and identify the needs of the affected population, with the results shared with the broader humanitarian community. The assessments document the impact of a crisis and identify the needs of the affected populations. The term "coordinated assessments" includes both joint[1] and harmonized assessments (further details in section II)

1 Joint assessments are also referred to as common assessments.

1.1. Why Coordinate Assessments?

The Operational Guidance promotes a coordinated approach to assessments in emergencies. An issue in many emergencies is not an absence of assessment information but rather the capacity to validate and analyze the information necessary to determine priorities and guide planning of the humanitarian response. Unfortunately certain populations or situations are often over-assessed while others never at all. All too often, assessment data is insufficiently shared or used, and data sets from different assessments are not comparable. Also there is insufficient time to aggregate data from multiple assessments, information needs are not sufficiently prioritized and data collection processes are cumbersome.

The benefits are enormous if organizations coordinate assessments and use shared information management systems. In particular, the coordination of assessments is crucial to ensuring a solid inter-sectoral analysis of humanitarian crises, which leads to better decision-making and planning.

By coordinating assessments, organizations can:

- promote a shared vision of needs and priorities
- establish an understanding of priority needs from an integrated perspective
- increase coverage
- use resources more efficiently
- better guide donor funding
- obtain a more comprehensive picture of needs
- allow clusters and agencies to analyze and make decisions on strategies, support actions, and assistance to the affected country
- serve as a foundation for planning
- reduce duplication of effort
- promote inter-agency learning
- minimize beneficiary "assessment fatigue"
- identify gaps with greater precision
- support shared monitoring processes
- consistency between and within cluster/sectors
- support assessment preparedness at the country-level
- encourage coordination during response

1.2. Why the Operational Guidance?

The Operational Guidance focuses on how to enhance preparedness and how to coordinate assessments. It is designed to help users:

- Facilitate intra- and inter-cluster consensus on a common assessment approach, including roles and responsibilities of stakeholders;
- Understand the importance of adequate preparedness for good quality and timely coordinated assessments;
- Achieve a common understanding of underlying standards and principles that apply to coordinated assessments;
- Anticipate common obstacles associated with coordinating assessments by highlighting key actions required to that end.

1.3. Who should use this Operational Guidance and when?

This guidance supports humanitarian actors involved in coordinated assessments.

Specifically, this Operational Guidance is targeted at:

Decision makers …

- Humanitarian Coordinators/Resident Coordinators
- Humanitarian Country Team
- Humanitarian organizations/management deciding on coordinated assessments
- Policy staff
- Donors
- National /Local authorities

Humanitarian Implementing Partners …

- Cluster Lead Agencies
- Cluster coordinators
- Cluster member organizations
- OCHA
- National /Local authorities
- Local NGOs

This Guidance should be used during inter-agency preparedness and response. The Guidance focuses on sudden onset emergencies, although many of the principles are applicable in protracted crises.

SECTION II.
AN OVERVIEW OF COORDINATED ASSESSMENTS

2.1. Defining Coordinated Assessments

Assessments can be defined as "the set of activities necessary to understand a given situation". They include "the collection, up-dating and analysis of data pertaining to the population of concern (needs, capacities, resources, etc.), as well as the state of infrastructure and general socio-economic conditions in a given location/area"[1]

Coordinated assessments are those which are planned and carried out in partnership with other humanitarian actors, with the results shared for the benefit of the broader humanitarian community to identify the needs of the affected population of a humanitarian crisis.

Such assessments range from inter and intra cluster/sector joint assessments to single agency assessments that are harmonized.

Harmonized Assessment: Data collection processing and analysis is undertaken separately, however the data is sufficiently comparable (due to the use of common operational datasets, key indicators, and geographical and temporal synchronisation) to be compiled into a single database, and to serve as the subject of a shared analysis.

Joint Assessment: Data collection, processing and analysis form one single process among agencies within and between clusters/sectors. This leads to a single report. This is sometimes also referred to as a 'common assessment'.

In contrast **uncoordinated assessments** are those in which data sets are not interoperable, and the results can not be used to inform the overall analysis.

2.2. Key Actions for Coordinating Assessments

The following actions are key when undertaking coordinated assessments (whether harmonized or joint) and should be promoted by the main actors within the humanitarian response:

- Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams
- Cluster/Sector Coordinators, OCHA and Inter-Cluster Coordination Mechanisms[2]
- Cluster/Sector Members

» **Establish an assessment coordination structure.** The establishment of an assessment coordination structure is recommended at the int er-Cluster/Sector level, and the Cluster/Sector level, throughout the duration of a crisis, particularly when it is a large emergency with a high number of actors. At the inter-Cluster/Sector level, the Inter-Cluster Coordination Mechanism[3] will typically serve as the assessment coordination structure, though it may also establish a specific Assessment Working Group, depending on the nature and magnitude of the crisis, as well as on the preparedness level of the humanitarian community. The coordination structure will serve as a forum for sharing secondary data from the field, for initiating the planning and implementation of joint assessments, and for coordinating analysis. It will serve as a forum for promoting the adoption of tools and methodologies to support single agencies to conduct harmonized assessments. The structure will also help build wide ownership for coordinated assessments. Also, Clusters/Sectors should each establish an assessment coordination structure to help organize the sectoral assessments undertaken by their members.

The creation of an **Assessment Working Group** may be recommended by the Inter Cluster Coordination Mechanism, depending on the nature and magnitude of the crisis, as well as the assessment preparedness level of the humanitarian community beforehand. The Working Group can be established on a temporary or long term basis, and is normally chaired by OCHA on behalf of the Inter-Cluster Coordination Mechanism. Depending on the context, it may be appropriate that the Working Group is led by government counter-parts.

Participation in the Working Group should be open to all IASC members, and includes the Cluster Coordinators (or a focal point appointed by the Clusters) as representatives of Clusters/Sectors, as well as other relevant actors depending on the situation.

The Working Group is responsible for:

» Designing, planning and managing, when required, a joint multi-cluster initial or rapid assessment.

» Supporting the coordination of needs assessments across Clusters/Sectors, in line with this Operational Guidance.

» Promoting the harmonization of assessments, including through the use of common operational datasets and sectoral indicators.

» Sharing results from needs assessments undertaken, as well as information on needs assessments being undertaken/ planned.

» Promoting partnerships with national authorities around needs information.

» Serving as a forum for open analysis of the humanitarian situation.

1 UNHCR, Master Glossary of Terms

2 In this document, "Inter-Cluster Coordination Mechanisms" refers to the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group when it is set up, or any other cross-sectoral coordinating body established by Clusters/Sectors to perform similar functions.

3 In this document, "Inter-Cluster Coordination Mechanisms" refers to the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group when it is set up, or any other cross-sectoral coordinating body established by Clusters/Sectors to perform similar functions.

» **Establish a process for collating data from multiple assessments.** The collation of assessment data should include, as much as possible, the integration of primary and secondary data. This is facilitated by the use of Common Operational Datasets. Cluster/Sector members are encouraged to collect data on the agreed-upon indicators (for agreed **Key Humanitarian Indicators** *please see Annex 1*), and to use the sectoral pages of the Humanitarian Dashboard to present results on needs, gaps and coverage within their sector. Decisions about how the data will be processed should be based on the intended audience, the quantity of information, and the type of information needed for decision-makers. All data should be sex and age desegregated to the extent possible.

The **Humanitarian Dashboard** is a tool used to consolidate and present needs assessment and other core humanitarian information in an easily accessible format, to facilitate analysis and evidence-based decision-making. It includes sectoral pages outlining needs, coverage and gaps at the sectoral level, as evidenced by indicators. It also includes two overview pages, presenting a cross-sectoral depiction of the humanitarian situation, and the strategic objectives of the Humanitarian Country Team. *For more, see Annex 2.*

» **Establish a process for conducting an intra- and inter-cluster analysis of assessment data.** The value of coordinated assessments lies largely in the development of a shared analysis of the situation. Individual Clusters/ Sectors are responsible for effective and coherent sectoral analysis. Without strong sectoral analysis, there cannot be strong inter-sectoral analysis. Once sectoral analysis has been undertaken, inter-sectoral analysis can be initially performed by the ICCM, and supplemented by the Humanitarian Country Team. This can be done on the basis of a compiled Humanitarian Dashboard. The Needs Analysis Framework[4] also provides a useful reference to undertaking analysis.

Key Actions for Harmonized Assessments

To support the harmonization of assessments, the following measures should be put into place:

Key actions for harmonized assessments…

- Ensure geographical and temporal synchronization of assessments
- Use a consistent set of common operational datasets
- Use a consistent set of agreed sectoral indicators
- Establish a process for collating data from multiple assessments
- Establish a process for conducting a shared analysis of data.

» **Ensure geographical and temporal synchronization of assessments.** This means that while data collection, processing and analysis maybe undertaken separately, there is coordination regarding the timing and location in which the assessment is carried out. When assessments tackle similar topics or themes, geographic coverage should be complementary. In the case of assessments with different topics or themes, they should be done in the same locations. This will generate complete data sets for a set of locations rather than partial data sets from many locations. The same applies to timing. When covering different topics or themes in a single geographic location, assessments should be done more or less at the same time to allow inter-sectoral analysis. The compilation of a survey of surveys can help plan assessments with consideration of other assessments being undertaken or planned.

» **Use a consistent set of Common Operational Datasets.** The use of the Common Operational Datasets[5] is central to the aggregation and comparison of assessment information throughout the emergency cycle[6] By using Common Operational Datasets, agencies can ensure their ability to correctly interpret and compare data that crosses from one information source to another (i.e. from one cluster to another, from an agency to another).

To support this process, the IASC Information Management Task Force has developed a Policy on **Common Operational Datasets**, which includes the following:

- Humanitarian Profile
- Population Statistics
- Administrative Boundaries
- Populated Places

» **Use a consistent set of agreed sectoral Indicators.** Key to harmonizing assessments is the consistent use a commonly-agreed set of indicators[7]. The use of both quantitative and qualitative indicators is vital in all phases of an assessment, as is the disaggregation of data (by age, sex and diversity). The selection of indicators should be prioritized by who needs the information and for what purposes. Information managers must understand what information is needed, the scope of the assessment, and what an appropriate data collection methodology might be. They can also advise on the format of the indicators, geographic and demographic disaggregation, population figures (including estimation techniques), data collection methodology, and the analysis plan for the data.

4 The **NAF Model** shows the inter-linkages of different factors in a typical humanitarian crisis. It aims to provide a systematic structure for the information collated in the NAF. It can be used as a starting point for causal analysis. The NAF should result in a clear picture of needs and their causes – leading to the best possible decisions about prioritizing resources for effective humanitarian action. (IASC Consolidated Appeals Process Guidelines)

5 Predictable, core sets of data needed to support operations and made available within 48 hours of an emergency and needed by all actors in response

6 Included reference to IASC note on the CODs

7 Indicators are defined as "a characteristic of a population or environment which is subject to measurement (directly or indirectly) and can be used to describe one or more aspects of a humanitarian emergency."

To support this process, the IASC Needs Assessment Task Force has worked with Clusters/Sectors to develop a package of **Key Humanitarian Indicators** to capture the core elements of a crisis. These indicators, developed at the global level, can be adapted at the country level as needed. Cluster coordinators should lead and agree with their members on a set of sectoral indicators to be measured, as well as collection methodologies to be used. *For more, see Annex 1.*

Key Actions for Joint Assessments

To support a joint assessment, the following measures should be put into place:

Key actions for joint assessments…

- Agree on collaborative arrangements when conducting a joint assessment, including roles and responsibilities
- Jointly design and plan the assessment
- Jointly collect, analyze and interpret assessment data
- Ensure the clearing of assessment results, and a shared communication strategy.

» **Agree on collaborative arrangements when conducting a joint assessment[8].** Clear and agreed roles and responsibilities of those involved in joint assessments are central to their success, and help build broad ownership for its success. Collaborative arrangements should cover the process for preparing, launching, organizing, managing and disseminating the results of a joint assessment. For this reason, those responsible for organizing a joint assessment should bring not only programming and technical skills – but also "people" and "representational" skills so as to be able to negotiate different positions, and coordinate complex processes. Government counterparts at central/ local level should be consulted.

» **Jointly design and plan the assessment.** This should include agreement on the primary data collection methodology, including defining the purpose of the assessment, developing an analysis plan, selecting a sampling method (and subsequent geographic coverage), choosing appropriate data collection instruments, and identifying the questions for inclusion in the questionnaire. It is recommended that, where possible generic assessment forms are adapted to the context. Planning the assessment should include agreeing on geographic coverage, timeframe, training of data collectors, required resources, and logistics.

» **Jointly collect, analyze and interpret assessment data[9].** Enumerators need to be identified, organized and trained prior to going to field locations to collect the data. It is important to agree on the process for cleaning, analyzing and interpreting assessment data. Procedures for conducting a sectoral and multi-sectoral analysis of assessment data should be well defined.

» **Ensure the clearing of assessment results, and a shared communication strategy.** The accuracy of an assessment report should be verified with participants, and cleared prior to its dissemination. The report must remain strictly confidential until cleared by the assessment team, and its findings will not be negotiated outside of the team. Assessment results should be communicated incrementally when relevant information becomes available to inform decision makers. Final results will need to be communicated rapidly and in an easy-to-understand manner, and must describe any significant gaps and/ or limitations of the assessment data. When possible, assessments should be translated into a common or local language, and distributed widely, to an array of different stakeholders, through a variety of distribution channels (verbal, online, physical data, media). The sharing/ dissemination of the raw data should always be envisaged, to increase transparency and allow for more in-depth cluster/sector specific analysis.

2.3. Roles and Responsibilities in Coordinated Assessments

The Operational Guidance proposes roles and responsibilities in line with the coordination structures introduced through the cluster approach[10]. It recognizes the overall responsibility of National Authorities, which it seeks to support by promoting coordinated assessments[11].

» **The Humanitarian Coordinator, supported by OCHA, is responsible for coordinating emergency assessments across clusters/sectors at the country level[12].** The HC ascertains that sufficient buy in exists from principal stakeholders, including government, to support coordinated assessments. Clusters/Sectors at the country level are responsible for engaging in all relevant aspects of inter-cluster/sector assessment coordination. OCHA should ensure that Clusters/Sectors are provided with the necessary common services and tools for effective inter-sector collaboration, including in the area of inter-agency needs assessments.

» **Cluster/Sector Lead Agencies at the country level are responsible for coordinating needs assessment and analysis within individual clusters/sectors[13].** Clusters/ sectors need to establish an internal mechanism for intra-cluster/sector assessment planning, implementation, analysis and coordination. Cluster/Sector Lead Agencies

8 An accountability table can be a useful tool in mapping out the involvement of various actors and should be completed as part of preparedness activities (and rapidly reviewed to reflect the disaster event).

9 Ideally only the data that is not currently available through reliable secondary sources should be collected.

10 Detailed guidance on the cluster approach is provided in *IASC Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response*, 24 November 2006

11 In situations concerning refugees and other persons under UNHCR's mandate, UNHCR is responsible for coordinating all aspects of humanitarian response, including needs assessments, including coordinated multi-sectoral assessments or sector specific ones.

12 As described in the *IASC Terms of Reference for the Humanitarian Coordinator*, the Humanitarian Coordinator at the country level is responsible for establishing and maintaining comprehensive coordination mechanisms, in collaboration with the National Authorities

13 As defined in the *IASC Generic Terms of Reference for Cluster/Sector Leads at the Country Level.* Cluster/Sector leads at the country level are accountable to the Humanitarian Coordinator for ensuring effective and coherent sectoral needs assessment and analysis, involving all relevant partners.

are also responsible for engaging in inter-Cluster/Sector assessment coordination. Cluster Lead Agencies also have a responsibility to ensure cross-cutting issues are integrated, particularly gender, HIV, age and disability.

» **Individual organizations are responsible to support joint assessment and/or harmonize their individual assessments.** Such organizations should proactively engage in the coordination undertaken by the Clusters (at cluster/sector level), including by participating in joint assessments when appropriate, and by adhering to agreed definitions, methodologies, and data sharing[14] as set out by Clusters/Sectors. This also includes temporal and geographical synchronization.

14 Sensitive data should remain anonymous and confidential

In order to meet these responsibilities, Cluster/Sector Leads and OCHA may request deployments of individuals from within the **Coordinated Assessment Pool and Roster (CASPAR)**. The CASPAR provides individuals trained in NATF guidance and tools to support Cluster/Sector Lead Agencies and OCHA in carrying out coordinated assessments, as well as coordinated assessment preparedness, in the field.

It is also recognized that agencies will continue to conduct independent assessments. If so, agencies should do so in a harmonized manner with relevant Cluster/Sector leads, by harmonizing data collection methodologies and synchronizing their timing and location.

Humanitarian Coordinator	Coordinate inter cluster/ sector assessments	» Appoint assessment focal point for initial assessment » Coordinate assessments undertaken by Clusters/Sectors » Promote the use of tools for harmonized assessments » Promote joint assessments between Clusters/Sectors » Share assessment data across Clusters/Sectors » Support inter-Cluster/Sector analysis » Prioritize needs and deciding on strategic priorities
Cluster/Sector Coordinator	» Support Inter cluster/ sector assessment » Coordinate intra -cluster/ sector assessments	» Support inter-Cluster/Sector assessments » Coordinate assessments of Cluster/Sector members » Promote the use of tools for harmonized assessments » Set out standards for Cluster/Sector assessments » Promote joint assessments within the Cluster/Sector » Share assessment data within Cluster/Sector » Support cluster/sector analysis
Cluster/Sector Member	Support and/or implement coordinated assessments	» Share information on assessments with Cluster/Sector » Use tools for harmonized assessments » Participate in joint assessments at the Cluster/Sector level » Contribute to Cluster/Sector analysis » Use key humanitarian indicators & Common Operational Datasets

2.4. Principles for Coordinated Assessments

Following are a set of principles for coordinated assessments that can support the attainment of inter-agency agreement on a common approach. Please note that these may also apply to individual assessments.

» **Assessments address the needs and capacities of affected people, and take into account the ability of relevant authorities to respond.** A key objective of assessments is to identify immediate humanitarian priorities – as identified through an analysis of the **needs** of affected communities, local coping mechanisms and through an understanding of the **capacities** (incl. response capacities) of the authorities[15], to respond. Humanitarian organizations will seek to focus on the gaps that exist between these needs, capacities and gaps, as stated in SPHERE Assessment Standard[16].

15 This will include the capacities of those who have a legal responsibility to protect and assist affected populations.

16 http://www.sphereproject.org/

The Assessment Standard

The Assessment Standard acknowledges the critical importance of understanding need in relation to the political, social, economic and environmental context in which the disaster has occurred. The design of an effective response addresses the unmet needs of disaster-affected people and is based on a continual re-appraisal of the vulnerability and capacity of different groups of people in an often changing context.

> *"The priority needs of all people affected by disaster are identified through a systematic assessment of the context, risks to life with dignity and the capacity of the affected people and relevant authorities to respond."*

» **Assessments are led by National governments when possible, as they have a prime responsibility to lead humanitarian efforts.** Assessments should be designed to promote ownership or at the least, engagement, by national and local authorities, including the national disaster management agency, line ministries and other capacities (e.g. NGOs).

» **Planning for coordinated assessments is treated as an integral part of inter-agency emergency preparedness and contingency planning.** Coordinated assessments are best undertaken when preparedness measures have been implemented in advance. When preparing for coordinated assessments, tools and frameworks developed should be in line with those agreed at the global level, and adapted to the local context, taking into account what is used by national authorities.

» **Each assessment activity builds on existing data.** New assessment data expands the previous analysis and adds value to assessments and information systems in a "rolling assessment" process.

» **Ensure links between assessment and monitoring.** Needs assessments should also be designed with situation and performance monitoring in mind. Initial needs can be used as baseline data for comparison with subsequent monitoring data that includes data on progress of interventions to respond to identified needs.

» **Assessments collect exactly the data that is required for decision making.** This includes both quantitative and qualitative data17. Collecting too much information can slow down the implementation of the assessment, create fatigue among communities assessed, and delay the processing of the data. Key sets of humanitarian indicators can be used in order to facilitate timely processing and decision-making.

» **Assessments are designed/conducted using participatory approaches and communicated in a transparent manner.** Assessment results should accurately reflect the different views of the affected populations. Special arrangements should be made to ensure that information collection is sensitive to the vulnerabilities of specific individuals. Members of assessment teams should have local knowledge of the context, and the ability to utilize the most appropriate participatory approaches.

» **Assessments adequately address priority cross-cutting issues, including gender, age, HIV/AIDS and the environment.** Priority vulnerable groups and target populations should be addressed during contingency planning and initial assessments. This requires carrying out systematic dialogue with women, men, boys, girls (including adolescent girls and boys) and other vulnerable groups; collecting and storing data in a disaggregated form (by sex, age, and diversity); and forming assessment teams that are gender balanced and that can capture the perspectives of men, women, boys and girls, and that can also access different vulnerable groups.

» **Information management considerations are integrated throughout the assessment process.** Information management specialists need to be consulted immediately in the planning of an assessment to ensure that data collection methodologies are technically sound, and linkages are made between assessment and performance monitoring, that the collation of data from multiple assessments is possible, and that information systems are reliable, easily accessible and build on local data systems. Information managers also help ensure that the Principles of Humanitarian Information Management and Exchange are followed[18]. For further details on information management considerations in assessment design, see Annex 3. For further details on roles and responsibilities, please refer to IASC Operational Guidance on Information Management.

» **Contextual analysis is undertaken when interpreting assessment findings.** Contextual considerations will allow for a clearer understanding of priority needs and a better targeted assistance. This will be supported through open ended questions, which allow beneficiaries to identify their priority needs.

» **Early recovery[19] begins within the timeframe of emergency response and occurs in parallel to relief activities.** It is an effective and indispensible component of a response to a crisis, as it can stabilize a situation, prevent further deterioration of local and national capacities as well as shorten the need for humanitarian assistance. For example, following the initial assessment, start-up requirements addressing time-critical needs and rapid-impact interventions within an integrated early recovery approach can be identified for inclusion in the initial flash appeal. Core criteria for early recovery projects which appear in initial and revised flash appeals are contained in approved IASC guidance notes.[20]

17 According to UNFPA's Guidelines on Data Issues in Humanitarian Crisis Situations, "qualitative data collection is equally important and viewed as complementary to quantitative data systems. Issues of concern that cannot easily be measured, captured, or appraised using quantitative survey approaches can be addressed using focus group discussions, key informant interviews and participant observation" Such issues include reproductive health, gender based violence, violation of rights, absence of protection, abductions, trafficking, etc.

18 Principles of Humanitarian Information Management and Exchange include: Accessibility, Inclusiveness, Interoperability, Accountability, Verifiability, Relevance, Impartiality, Humanity, Timeliness, Sustainability, Reliability, Reciprocity, and Confidentiality. [Global Symposium +5, Final Report]

19 Early Recovery is defined as 'the application of actions and approaches to crisis response guided by principles of sustainability and local ownership to the delivery of humanitarian assistance as early as possible" (IASC).

20 IASC Guidance on Early Recovery in Flash Appeals: A Phased Approach; IASC Humanitarian Financing Group – Improving the Predictability of Financing Early Recovery Activities

SECTION III.
APPROACHES AND PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATED ASSESSMENTS

The Operational Guidance recognizes that humanitarian assessments are carried out by a variety of partners, and in different contexts. If assessments are carried out with due attention to coordination, this diversity can be of great benefit to the overall humanitarian response.

This section offers recommended **approaches and standard operating procedures** for undertaking coordinated assessments in the first month following a crisis. Included are also references to key tools, which can be found in the online **Coordinated Assessment Toolkit** (**http://oneresponse.info/resources/NeedsAssessment**), and which humanitarian actors are recommended to consult when implementing these procedures.

3.1. Approaches to Coordinated Assessments

The **approach** to coordinated assessments will depend on the phase in which an assessment is conducted. This commonly determines:

» **how time-critical assessment results are.** The success of an assessment depends in part on the timeliness of its findings, so it is important to seek an appropriate balance between the quality of data, the level of detail, and the timeliness of results. During the initial phase, gathering purposive[22] data quickly is more important than collecting "statistically representative" data[23].

» **the quantity and type of information required to support decisions.** Initial assessments mainly inform strategic decisions and preliminary emergency funding allocations in the early phases, while in later phases they inform programming and monitoring as well as the revision for the Flash Appeal.

» **the human and financial resources that can be allocated to the assessment, relative to the delivery relief assistance.** There is a need to balance resources allocated to assessment with people and funding devoted to delivering relief assistance.

The Assessment Framework (figure 1) distinguishes between assessments carried out in:

» **Phase 1, the initial 72 hours:** Initial assessments
» **Phase 2, weeks 1-2:** Rapid assessments
» **Phase 3, weeks 3-4:** In-depth assessments
» **Phase 4, week 5 onwards:** In-depth assessments, including recovery needs

The Assessment Framework presents the approach to be undertaken in each of the four phases including the recommended types of assessment and their purpose, the methodology for data collection, the link to funding proposals, and key out puts.

The Assessment Framework highlights that the **MIRA** (**Multi-cluster Initial and Rapid Assessment**) approach should be used for the initial assessments carried out during the first 72 hours (Phase 1) and for the multi-cluster assessment carried out during the first two weeks (Phase 2).

In practice, the separation between different phases is not always clear, and timeframes will vary according to context. The proposed phases are only indicative, and provided as a frame of reference. In complex emergencies the timeline may differ, periods for types of assessments may be longer if insecurity persists, and sometimes revert back to initial rapid assessment types if the security situation deteriorates. Inter-Cluster/Sector coordination of assessments needs to be continued throughout the phases.

The figure on Data Sources in Assessments (figure 2) illustrates the relative and evolving importance of the various sources of data/information that feed into assessments in the different phases of an emergency. It also details the recommended levels of coordination (J: Joint / H: Harmonized) based on the:

» type of data/information source
» phase of the emergency
» phase of the information management cycle considered (collection/collation; analysis/reporting)

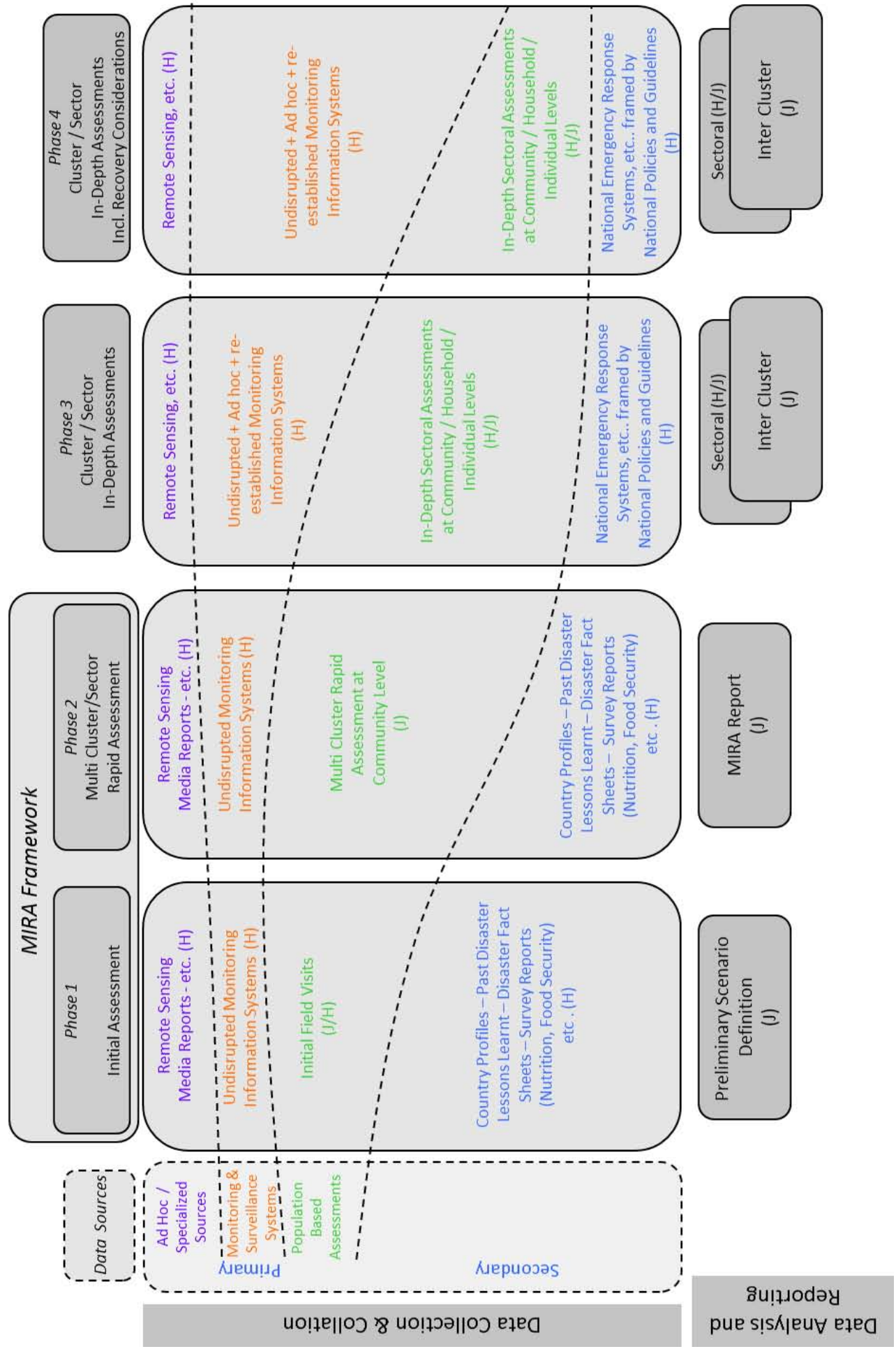
22 Purposive sampling uses data gathered from the population living in selected sites affected by the disaster. It cannot by definition represent the whole disaster affected population (i.e. results cannot be generalized beyond the study population). Its purpose is to identify the most pressing issues/concerns/needs in order to set up priorities for immediate action in a much quicker and less complicated fashion than 'representative' sampling.

23 Nevertheless the least compromises possible should be made on data quality and statistical representation.

	PREPAREDNESS	SAVING AND SUSTAINING LIVES AND RE-ESTABLISHING ESSENTIAL SERVICES		SAVING LIVELIHOODS AND RE-ESTABLISHING ESSENTIAL SERVICES	
TIMING	**PHASE 0** Before	**PHASE 1** 72 hours	**PHASE 2** Week 1-2	**PHASE 3** Week 3+	**PHASE 4** Second month +
RECOMMENDED TYPE OF COORDINATED ASSESSMENT	**Coordinated Assessment Preparedness**	**Initial Assessment for Preliminary Scenario Definition**	**Multi Cluster/Sector Rapid Assessment**	**Single Cluster/ Sector Coordinated In-depth Assessments**, harmonized across Clusters/Sectors (any single agency assessments should be coordinated by Cluster/Sector Coordinators)	**Continued Single Cluster/ Sector Coordinated In-depth Assessments, with (early) Recovery considerations**, harmonized across Clusters/Sectors (any single agency assessments are coordinated by Cluster/Sector Coordinators)
		MIRA (Multi-cluster Initial and Rapid Assessment)		**Continued Inter-Cluster/Sector Assessment Coordination**	
ASSESSMENT TYPE & PURPOSE	Coordinated assessment preparedness planning and gathering pre-crisis data	**Initial Assessment** to • Estimate scale & severity of the impact of the event • Locate affected populations • Inform initial response decisions • Inform Phase-2 rapid assessments	**Rapid assessment** to • Inform initial planning of humanitarian response, highlighting priority actions • Define focus for follow-on in-depth assessments • Establish the baseline for monitoring	**In-Depth Assessment** to: • Analyze situation and trends • Adjust ongoing response • Inform detailed planning for humanitarian relief/early recovery, • Establish baseline for operational and strategic / performance monitoring	**In-Depth Assessment** to: • Situation and trend analysis • Inform phasing out of the life sustaining activities • Inform detailed planning for humanitarian relief and (early) recovery • Feed into performance monitoring
METHODOLOGY FOR DATA COLLECTION	• Prepare and agree on assessment formats, indicators and tools • Organize preparedness trainings and if possible simulations • Establish procedures & responsibilities. • Prepare Common Operat'l Datasets (CODs), P-Codes, and Key Humanitarian Indicators • Gather Baseline data • Fact sheets and lessons learned disasters	• Mostly secondary data: pre-crisis information, surveys and reports prior to the event, fact sheets. • Primary data: initial reports from the field, media flyovers, satellite imagery. Direct observation from quick visits to field (if feasible). Information from still functioning monitoring and reporting systems • Use Initial CODs	• Secondary data; various sources • Primary data as in phase 1, complemented by site visits purposively selected, conducting community / key informant interviews • Unit of measurement for site visits is Community (e.g. village, camp or neighborhoods), or Institutions (e.g. schools, health facilities). • Use simple agreed form with key questions • Use Expanded CODs and Key Humanitarian Indicators	• Secondary data; various sources • Use harmonized sector/cluster specific tools • Primary data as in phase 2, but now site visits through purposive and representative sampling methods (using more detailed sectoral surveys questionnaires). • New data from (re)-established monitoring systems • Unit of measurement as in phase 2, but now also household & individual. • Use Comprehensive CODs, Key & comprehensive humanitarian indicators	• Sources and Methods as in Phase 3 • For recovery assessment use additional guidance for recovery assessment (Damage and Loss Assessment and sectoral PDNA guidance) • In case of complex emergencies; conflict analysis
INFORM FUNDING PROPOSALS	• Proposals for preparedness	• Allocation of preliminary emergency funding • Initial Flash Appeal • First response proposals	• Emergency response proposals • Revision of Flash Appeal (occurs within one month of Initial Flash Appeal)	• Revised emergency response proposals. • National Recovery and Reconstruction Plan	• Nat'l Recovery & Reconstruction Plan • Consolidated appeal. • Inputs for the Post Disaster Needs Assessment
OUTPUTS	• Assessment preparedness plan agreed by HCT • Compiled pre-crisis data • Humanitarian Dashboard	• Preliminary Scenario Definition (within 3 days) • Humanitarian Dashboard	• MIRA Report (within 14 days) • Humanitarian Dashboard	• Sector/Cluster Reports • Humanitarian Dashboard	• Sector/Cluster Reports • PDNA & Recovery Framework • Humanitarian Dashboard

Figure 1: The Assessment Framework

Figure 2: Data Sources in Assessments



3.2. Initial assessment for Preliminary Scenario Definition (Phase 1: first 72 hours)

INITIAL ASSESSMENT FOR PRELIMINARY SCENARIO DEFINITION

(FIRST 72 HOURS)

Focus	Scale & severity of impact, forecasting. Priority needs of vulnerable groups
Timeframe	3 days
Sources	Mostly secondary data sources with primary data from for example remote sensing and direct observation in a limited number of purposively selected sites
Resources	Mainly provided by national authorities, HC/RC office, UNDAC/OCHA and experienced staff from agencies/clusters/sectors
Reporting	Single report, Preliminary Scenario Definition

In the first 72 hours, an initial assessment is recommended. It will be undertaken collaboratively and provide an estimate of the scale and severity of a crisis, forecast the evolution of the emergency, locate the affected populations and identify key affected sectors. Its findings will be presented in the form of a **Preliminary Scenario Definition**, used to inform initial response decisions, to inform government authorities, to determine preliminary emergency funding needs, and to initiate the planning of Phase 2 assessments.

When time and access is limited, the assessment will be done mostly using **secondary data** such as pre-crisis information, national authorities, media reports, crowd sourcing, fact sheets and lessons learned from similar emergencies.

Primary data available is mainly **direct observation** and basic analysis from remote sensing data. Organizations that are able to conduct short field visits or aerial assessments should seek to undertake them together.

Primary and secondary data collected should be widely shared so that it can contribute to a **multi-sectoral analysis**. The analysis will be undertaken within an initial assessment team involving senior agency officials (or Cluster/Sector Lead Agencies, if Clusters/Sectors are already in place at the national level).

The **Preliminary Scenario Definition** should be disseminated by the RC/HC. Its results should be compressed and compiled into an initial **Humanitarian Dashboard**. It should be used for initial sitreps and key messages by the ERC. It should inform the required focus of phase 2 assessments.

More information on the MIRA is forthcoming.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
INITIAL ASSESSMENT FOR PRELIMINARY SCENARIO DEFINITION (FIRST 72 HOURS)

Activity	Responsible
Appoint an assessment focal point to ensure exchange of information on planned/initial assessments and form an initial assessment team	HC/RC[24]
Provide staff and/or sectoral information to the Initial Assessment.	Agencies (if possible with Cluster/Sector representation)
Request additional assessment support, as required, through the CASPAR	OCHA and if possible, Clusters/Sectors lead agencies
Update and disseminate Common Operational Datasets	OCHA
Coordinate information gathering (key informants, flyovers, etc)	UNDAC/OCHA
Collect data (particularly secondary data)	OCHA, UNDAC, and Agencies (if possible with Cluster/Sector representation)
Collate data from humanitarian partners and integrate with information from other sources (media, government, baseline).	UNDAC/OCHA
Maintain communication with the national disaster management unit	UNDAC/OCHA
Populate the Humanitarian Dashboard as possible	UNDAC, OCHA and Agencies (if possible with Cluster/Sector representation)
Undertake a common analysis	UNDAC, OCHA, Agencies (if possible with Cluster/Sector representation)
Compile the Preliminary Scenario Definition	UNDAC/OCHA
Ensure that the Preliminary Scenario Definition informs Flash Appeal, Situation Reports, and ERC key messages	UNDAC/OCHA

24 In refugee operations, UNHCR is responsible for assessments, coordinated or otherwise.

3.3. Multi Cluster/Sector Rapid Needs Assessment (Phase 2: first 2 weeks)

MULTI CLUSTER/SECTOR RAPID NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2 WEEKS

Focus	Identification of overall impact of the crisis and priority needs
Timeframe	14 days
Sources	A mix of secondary and primary data. Primary field data collected jointly from purposively selected locations, spread across affected area. Chosen based on access, timing, and resources and purpose of the assessment.
Resources	Managed by the NAWG. Resources mainly provided by national authorities, HC/RC office, UNDAC/OCHA and Experienced staff from agencies/clusters/sectors
Reporting	Single report with cross-cluster/sectoral conclusions

In the first two weeks, a Multi-Cluster/Sector Rapid Needs Assessment is recommended. The assessment will be undertaken "jointly", bringing together clusters/sectors around one agreed methodology so that the data collection, collation, processing, and analysis are aligned into a single process. The Inter-Cluster Coordination Mechanism[25] will be responsible for leading this assessment, and may form a Needs Assessment Working Group to manage it. The assessment will result in a single **Multi-Cluster/sector Rapid Assessment Report**, which will be of wide use for the broader humanitarian community. The report will inform high-level planning of the humanitarian response including 'time critical' early recovery interventions, feed into the first response proposals, determine the focus for further in-depth sectoral assessments, establish the baseline for monitoring, and support the revision of funding appeals.

» **Assessment Design and Planning:** The Inter-Cluster Coordination Mechanism promotes harmonization of assessments by ensuring the use of common operational datasets, key indicators, and geographical and temporal synchronization by all clusters/sectors. The ICCM also initiates the joint collection of primary data.

25 In this document, "Inter-Cluster Coordination Mechanisms" refers to the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group when it is set up, or any other cross-sectoral coordinating body established by Clusters/Sectors to perform similar functions.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
MULTI SECTOR/CLUSTER RAPID NEEDS ASSESSMENT (FIRST TWO WEEKS)

Activity	Responsible
Decides to undertake a multi-cluster rapid assessment and to commission the ICCM (supported by OCHA) to implement it. The ICCM may set up a Needs Assessment Working Group to this end.	HC/RC
Request additional assessment support from the CASPAR as required.	Clusters/Sector Coordinators and OCHA
Ensure that the Preliminary Scenario Definition informs further assessments in Phase 2.	ICCM (supported by OCHA)
Promote harmonization of assessments by ensuring the use of common operational datasets, key indicators, and geographical and temporal synchronization by all clusters/sectors.	ICCM (supported by OCHA)
Collect and perform the analysis of secondary data to complement primary data collection.	ICCM (supported by OCHA)
Coordinate the design and implementation of primary data collection though joint assessment.[26]	ICCM (supported by OCHA)
Coordinate and consolidate on-going information collection, including, when possible, from monitoring systems.	ICCM (supported by OCHA)
Prepare Survey of Surveys and update regularly.	OCHA
Populate Humanitarian Dashboard using key humanitarian indicators.	Clusters/Sector Coordinators and OCHA
Undertake sectoral analysis.	Clusters/Sectors
Undertake inter-sectoral analysis.	Initially ICCM (supported by OCHA), followed by the HCT
Disseminate analysis report and share data.	OCHA
Ensure results are used to inform operational planning and revision of the Flash Appeal.	ICCM, supported by OCHA

26 A joint assessment should be managed by a full-time coordinator until completion (typically three weeks).

» **Data Collection, Collation and Processing:** The assessment will collect primary data, and use secondary data as appropriate, including estimations how the crisis may have affected pre-crisis baselines. Primary data collection, using multiple sources and informants, will be managed jointly by Cluster/Sectors, on the basis of a pre-agreed form. The unit of measurement is at the community and institutional level. The form will structure the collection of information that is deemed most relevant to the context. Primary data collected, using the pre-agreed form, will be processed in a single database. When possible, results from other single-agency harmonized assessments will be collated (using the Survey of Surveys as a reference).

» **Data Analysis and Interpretation:** The ICCM will interpret cross Cluster/Sector data, combining all sources of information. The Humanitarian Dashboard can be used in support of this inter-Cluster/Sector analysis.

» **Reporting and Dissemination:** The report of the assessment should be shared as appropriate, on behalf of the HCT. It should be used to inform initial situation reports and key messages by the Emergency Relief Coordinator. The assessment data will be available to participating cluster/sectors for subsequent analysis and thematic reporting. The report will also inform further in-depth Cluster/Sectoral assessments.

Technical guidance on the MIRA is forthcoming.

3.4. Single Cluster/Sector Coordinated In-Depth Needs Assessment (Phase 3: week 3 and onwards)

SINGLE CLUSTER/SECTOR COORDINATED IN-DEPTH ASSESSMENT

WEEK 3 AND ONWARDS

Focus	Situation and trend analysis, and operational planning in each sector
Timeframe	30 days
Sources	Increasing primary data sources, including from monitoring systems and joint assessments. The latter will now also include representative sampling.
Resources	Mainly provided by Cluster/Sector

After the first two weeks, the need for detailed sectoral data becomes more pressing and each Cluster/Sector is recommended to coordinate Single-Cluster/Sector In-Depth Needs Assessments. This means that Clusters/Sectors should **at minimum** harmonize their assessments, and when possible, undertake them jointly.

Single Cluster/Sector Assessments are to be compiled into **Cluster/Sector In-Depth Assessment Reports**. Assessments will provide a detailed situation and trend analysis, of both the needs and the response, and will inform the ongoing response and early recovery planning, the revision of emergency response proposals

Assessments undertaken by each Cluster/Sector should also be, at minimum, sufficiently harmonized to allow inter-Cluster/Sector comparison. The results will be used in the inter Cluster/Sector analysis undertaken initially by the ICCM, and may also be used by the HCT.

» **Assessment design and planning:** At minimum, data collection needs to be harmonized (it can, as relevant be done jointly). Cluster/Sector members will agree on a set of Key Sectoral Indicators to be calculated, and will promote the use of Common Operational Datasets. This will allow the results of assessments to be collated within the Cluster/Sector.

» **Data Collection, Collation and Processing:** More and more primary data collection can take place in this phase. It is expected that much of this data will come from (re)-established information systems. Additional Community Level Assessments should be undertaken jointly to increase consistency and efficiency. The units of measurements may break down to household and individual level and the sampling evolve from purposive to representative. Information collected by various Cluster/Sector members will be compiled into a database, based on an agreed Key Indicator Table. This database can be routinely updated with data coming from various assessments undertaken within a Cluster/Sector, and can be used to understand sectoral needs, to support more detailed programming, and to establish sectoral monitoring.

» **Data Analysis and Interpretation at the Cluster Level:** The Cluster/Sector data analysis is undertaken by individual Clusters/Sectors. These analyze the sectoral data, under the leadership of the Cluster/Sector Coordinator. The Humanitarian Dashboard sectoral pages can be used in support of this analysis.

» **Inter-Cluster Data Analysis and Interpretation:** Based on this, multi-Cluster/Sector analysis is undertaken within the ICCM, to identify linkages and issues that cut across Clusters/Sectors. The Humanitarian Dashboard should be used in support of this analysis. Inter-Cluster/Sector analysis should help achieve a common understanding of priority interventions, geographies and vulnerable groups, as well as to establish a common basis for forecasting possible future trends and scenarios. The results should be used for decision making, including by OCHA, Clusters/Sectors, the ICCM and the HCT.

» **Assessment Reporting and Dissemination:** The report of the Cluster/Sector assessment and other assessment data should be shared widely, on behalf of the Cluster/Sector.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES SINGLE CLUSTER/SECTOR HARMONIZED IN-DEPTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT (WEEK 3 ONWARDS)	
Activity	**Responsible**
Continue to coordinate inter-cluster/sector assessments	ICCM
Cluster coordination of assessments and joint sectoral analysis.	Cluster/Sector coordinators and Cluster members
Collate, process and analyze data (including regular updates) into a standard database to facilitate sharing of results	Cluster/Sector coordinators, supported by Cluster/sector members
Coordinate the design and implementation of primary data collection through harmonized or joint assessments	Cluster/Sector coordinators, supported by Cluster/sector members
Coordinate and consolidate on-going information collection from monitoring systems	Cluster/Sector coordinators, supported by Cluster/sector members
Ensure assessment data is used to populate Key Humanitarian Indicators and maintain inter-Cluster database	Clusters/Sector Coordinators and OCHA
Maintain use of the Humanitarian Dashboard	Clusters/Sector Coordinators and OCHA
Cluster specific analysis of the humanitarian situation	Cluster/Sector coordinators
Multi Cluster analysis of the humanitarian situation supported by the Humanitarian Dashboard	Initially by ICCM, supported by OCHA; supplemented by the HCT
Circulate assessment reports in user-friendly formats to key stakeholders	ICCM, supported by OCHA

3.5. Addressing Recovery Needs

(PHASE 4: WEEK 4 AND ONWARDS)

This phase is essentially the continuation of Single Cluster/ Sector In-depth Coordinated Needs Assessments, and of the Inter-Cluster/sector analysis, coordinated under the ICCM. The main difference is that early recovery considerations will become more explicitly integrated in the Cluster/Sectoral assessments and as such will be taken into account in the inter-Cluster/Sector analysis. In some cases, formal Post Disaster or Post Conflict Needs Assessments[27] will be carried out, upon request by the government, during this phase.

As of the second month, the need for recovery–oriented data may increase, in particular on the part of the government. Assessments by the Clusters/Sectors should be forward-looking while maintaining focus on the emergency response at hand. Early recovery considerations are already part of the in-depth assessments under Phase 3. Phase 4 represents a more formal shift in attention to recovery assessment, in particular after sudden onset natural disasters.[28] There is no clear-cut boundary between the relief, and the recovery periods.[29]

In principle recovery considerations need to be integrated into humanitarian assessments and programming. When a government requests a formal PDNA/PCNA, this will lead to a stand alone PDNA/PCNA report that includes a recovery framework and plan (after a PDNA) or a Transition Result Framework (after a PCNA). Often such PDNA/PCNA reports are the basis for developing national plans and are used for resource mobilization in recovery oriented donor conferences.

27 The Post Disaster or Post Conflict Needs Assessment are triggered by an official request of the host government, who leads throughout the process supported by the World Bank, the United Nations (led by UNDP), and the European Commission, as per the Joint Declaration on Post Crisis Needs Assessment and Recovery Planning, UN, WB, EU. The PDNA combines the Damage and Loss Assessment as developed by the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) with an assessment of the impact of the disaster on human development, communities and the performance of national systems to deliver services and goods. The objective is to restore the situation as before the disaster, and use the recovery process for 'building back better' in support of the national reform and development policies.

28 Recovery is the process of 'restoration of the capacity of the government and communities to rebuild and recover from crisis and prevention of relapses'. Adapted from UNDP (DP/2001/14, Paragraph 48).

29 Early recovery in complex emergencies is usually placed within a transition phase. Such transitions to development are not linear processes, and often relapses of insecurity are observed. In addition to the above, such transition includes making explicit political choices towards peace- and state-building objectives and require a longer term engagement aimed at establishing sustainable peace and viable state structures, and working with local partners OECD/International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF) Guidance on Transition Financing: Building a Better Response DRAFT – Version: 27 October 2010

SECTION IV.
PREPARING FOR COORDINATED ASSESSMENTS

Preparedness is key to the success of a coordinated assessment. Humanitarian and development partners are strongly encouraged to prepare for coordinated assessments as part of their emergency preparedness efforts. A well designed common assessment prepared and agreed upon in advance can significantly improve the quality and timeliness of emergency assessment information.

Assessment preparedness should be part of a broader inter-agency contingency planning process. The *IASC Inter-Agency Contingency Planning Guidelines for Humanitarian Assistance* provides practical guidance for United Nations and Humanitarian Country Teams seeking to increase their level of preparedness and enhance their ability to respond to emergencies. When possible this should be done in support of the appropriate national authorities responsible for Disaster Management, and in a process that is inclusive of other relevant humanitarian and development partners.

Given the importance of assessment in defining the scope and nature of the humanitarian response, how initial assessments will be undertaken is an important component to include in the contingency planning process. Planning for initial assessments should include:

- Identification of agencies/organizations that will participate
- Agreement on specific rapid assessment tools
- Discussion of how sector/cluster assessment information will be collated and shared with others
- Define how sector/cluster members address needs assessment

If needed, support for preparing coordinated needs assessment can be requested by Cluster/Sector Lead Agencies and OCHA from the CASPAR. This can include training of staff that will be involved in the preparations and implementation of coordinated assessments.

It is recommended that the following be undertaken to prepare for coordinated assessments:

- **Raise awareness.** Use the preparedness phase to advocate for coordinated assessments. Target the cluster system and/or sector coordination mechanisms to increase the knowledge and understanding of coordinated assessments and how to carry out analysis together. Keep development and humanitarian donors informed of efforts undertaken.
- **Agree on assessment coordination structures.** Identify key stakeholders for the assessment preparedness processes and the support to be provided. Maximize use of existing coordination mechanisms, especially for inter-Cluster/Sectoral coordination for preparedness and contingency planning. This includes links to national disaster management bodies.
- **Review assessment planning already undertaken.** Review existing assessment planning particularly government contingency planning, assessment formats and approaches. Review technical guidelines that have been produced and used.
- **Set out collaborative arrangements relative to the assessment.** Agree on standard operating procedures for assessments including draft terms of reference for an Assessment Working Group, and/or assessment related tasks of the ICCM. Develop partnerships with national research institutions and other national capacity in data collection.
- **Prepare the Common Operational Datasets**
- **Identify the Key Humanitarian Indicators to be collected**
- **Compile baseline data and risk analyses.** Work with partners to collect baseline data, populate key indicator sets and compile common datasets. Based on vulnerability and risk mapping, adapt fact sheets and lessons learned to the national context and link them to the scenarios in the contingency plans. This baseline data should be consolidated and represented in a Humanitarian Dashboard.
- **Develop assessment tools and data collection methodology for Phases 1-4.** This will include adapting the standard operating procedures for assessments related to the four phases, the reporting formats, the information requirements, and the questionnaires to be used. When possible, adapt existing tools. Share draft assessment tools with stakeholders, field test, and revise them based on feedback.
- **Ensure the organization of logistics and human resources.** This includes securing agreements for the funding, transportation, required equipment (tools, computers, PDAs). Identify assessment team participants, ensuring a gender balance in the teams, and where needed, train capacity in country.
- **Define the parameters of the assessment design.** Clarify the purpose and audience of the assessments, the phases to be targeted, and the methodologies to be used. This also includes identifying how information will be collected (PDAs, mobile phones), how it will be processed (databases, spreadsheets) and how it will be analyzed. Agree on an outline of the technical and analytical assessment reports and who will be responsible for producing them.
- **Develop a process around communicating findings, and identify how the information from the assessment will be shared and disseminated broadly.**

ANNEX 1
KEY INDICATORS LIST AND GUIDANCE

Top Level Outcome	
TL1	Crude Mortality Rate
TL2	Under-5 Mortality Rate
TL3	Under-5 Global Acute Malnutrition
TL4	Under-5 Severe Acute Malnutrition
TL5	% of population in worst quintile of functioning, including those with severe or extreme difficulties in functioning
Camp Management	
C1	% of IDP population living in camps that have been registered at the household level
C2	% of IDP population living in camps that has been registered at the individual level
C3	% of displaced people living in camps or collective centres managed under the CCCM cluster
C4	% of IDP camps that have a dispute resolution mechanism
C5	% of IDP camps in which at least one NFI distribution has taken place in the last three months
C6	% of IDP camps in which people are able to move freely inside and outside the camp
C7	% of IDP camps where household registration services are available for camp residents
C8	% of IDP camps where individual registration services are available for camp residents
C9	% of IDP camps where programmes for disabled persons are offered to camp residents
C10	% of IDP camps where programmes for single heads of household are offered to camp residents
C11	% of camps where programmes for older persons are offered to camp residents
C12	% of camps where programmes for children are offered to camp residents
Early Recovery	
ER1	% of public sector employees unavailable because of crisis
ER2	% of localities with a local government-led recovery plan
ER3	% of households with no income sources provided with income support (transfer or generation)
ER4	% of households with no livelihood assets
ER5	% of eligible workforce who is employed on a) a short term/temporary basis; b) a long term/permanent basis
ER6	% of affected sites with problematic rubble/debris present
ER7	% of population with access to basic infrastructure
Education	
E1	% of school-age children and youth not currently attending school/learning
E2	% of existing school buildings (a) usable; (b) unusable
E3	% of schools/learning spaces with classes taking place in temporary facilities
E4	Number of school days disrupted or lost due to the emergency
E5	% of schools/learning spaces with life skill-based education on crisis-related issues
E6	% of schools/learning spaces that lost learning material as a result of the emergency
E7	% of teaching personnel unable to deliver classes due to the emergency
E8	% of schools/learning spaces offering psychosocial support for (a) children and youth; (b) teachers
E9	% of education authority officials not working due to the emergency
E10	% of government education offices/ facilities (a) usable; (b) unusable
Emergency Shelter	
S1	% of affected population who do not have either shelter or settlement to SPHERE minimum standards
S2	% of affected population who do not have non-food items to SPHERE minimum standards
S3	% of affected population by settlement type
S4	% of affected population by shelter solution

S5	% of homes / dwellings damaged or destroyed
S6	% of affected population with a covered living area of less that 3.5 m2 per person
S7	% of affected population targeted for shelter and settlement assistance who have not received any shelter and settlement assistance to date.
S8	% of affected population targeted for non-food items assistance who have not received any non-food item assistance to date
S9	% of affected population who do not have shelter and settlement to continuously meet SPHERE minimum standards until durable solutions are achieved.
S10	% of affected population whose shelter, settlement and non-food item needs to meet SPHERE Shelter, Settlement and Non-Food Items standards cannot be covered by committed funding.
Food Security	
F1	% HHs according to food consumption score (< 21 and 21-34, 35+)
F2	% HHs by duration of food stock
F3	% HHs according to coping strategy index
F4	% HHs by main source of staple food consumed
F5	% HHs with less than three daily meals for children < 5 years
F6	% HHs with less than two daily meals for adults
F7	% HHs without physical access to any market
F8	% markets by level of decreases in availability of main staple food
F9	% markets with price of main staple foods increased by at least 20%
F10	% HHs by main income source
F11	% HHs by main type of cash expenditure (e.g. food, health, transportation, housing)
F12	Average daily casual labour wage
F13	% HHs receiving food assistance, by type of assistance
F14	% of HHs receiving cash / voucher
Health	
H1	Average population per health facility
H2	Number of HF with Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric Care / 500,000 population
H3	% of HF providing selected relevant services
H4	Number of health workers (MD + nurse + midwife) per 10,000 population
H5	Number of CHW per 10,000 population
H6	Number of outpatients consultations
H7	Coverage of measles vaccination (6 mon - 15 y)
H8	% of expected deliveries by Cesarean section
H9	Number of cases or incidence rates for selected diseases relevant to the local context
H10	Number of reported cases of sexual violence
Nutrition	
N1	% children 6 - 59 months acutely malnourished a) pre-crisis, b) currently
N2	Number of children 6 - 59 months moderately acutely malnourished a) currently b) pre-crisis
N3	Number children 6 - 59 months severely acutely malnourished a) currently, b)pre-crisis
N4	% acutely severely acutely malnourished children 6-59 months enrolled in admitted to therapeutic feeding programmes
N5	% of moderately acutely malnourished 6-59 month enrolled supplementary feeding programmes
N6	% of infants aged 0-5 months who are: a) fed exclusively with breast milk, b) Formula fed, c) Particially breastfed
N7	% of infants 6-8 months of age who receive solid, semi-solid and soft food
N8	Proportion of children 6 - 23 months of age who receive food from 4 or more food groups currently and pre-crisis
N9	Proportion of children (breastfed and non-breastfed) 6 - 23 months of age who received solid, semi-solid and soft foods for the minimum number of times or more number of daily feeding episodes in children.
N10	Proportion of mother with children 0-23 months receiving IYCF counseling
N11	Proportion of children 6 - 59 months having received vitamin A in previous 6 months

Protection	
P1	Number of civilians injured in violence
P2	% of surveyed sites where there are reported attacks directed at the civilian population
P3	Number of civilians reported or estimated killed by violence
P4	% of surveyed sites where civilians are being deliberately killed by armed actors
P5	Number of community assets (e.g. bridge, school, hospital, place of worship) deliberately attacked
P6	% of surveyed sites where civilians are being coerced into assisting combatants or arms bearers
P7	% of affected population living in surveyed sites with indications that mines and explosive remnants of war, or unexploded munitions / devices are currently present
P8	Number of reports of disappearances / abductions
P9	% of surveyed sites reporting that disappearances / abductions are taking place
P10	% of surveyed sites where the civilian community is threatened by armed actors
P11	Number of reported cases of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
P12	% of surveyed sites where there are reports of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
P13	% of health facilities equipped to respond to GBV survivors (e.g. PEP kits)
P14	% of affected population with access to security services.
P15	% of surveyed sites with communal facilities with separate toilet and bathing facilities for males and females
P16	Number of reports of sexual violence per 10,000 people
P17	Is there a data system in place to systematically collect IDP population data? (Y/N)
P18	% of reporting surveyed sites where arbitrary restrictions on freedom of movement exist
P19	Number of separated children / unaccompanied children / orphaned children
P20	Number of children reported missing
P21	% of unaccompanied and separated children for whom family tracing has been successful
P22	Number of children in institutional care
P23	Number of reports of people arbitrarily detained
P24	Number of reported cases of trafficking for exploitation (labour or sex)
P25	% of reporting communities indicating recruitment of children
P26	Number of children newly reported to be associated with armed forces and groups
P27	Number of children newly released from armed forces and groups
P28	Number of children in worst forms of child labour
P29	% of surveyed sites with active denial or obstruction of adequate food
P30	% of children with safe access to community spaces for socializing, play, learning, etc.
P31	% of surveyed sites with active denial or obstruction of adequate justice mechanisms
P32	% of surveyed sites in which international and/or national humanitarian organizations' access to affected populations has been limited by duty bearers or armed actors
P33	Months since population data was updated
P34	% of the affected population lacking personal identity documents.
P35	% of surveyed sites where there is a functioning dispute resolution mechanism (judical or customary/informal) to address housing, land and property grievances
P36	% of affected population who may be at risk of eviction or unauthorized occupation / confiscation of their property
Water and Sanitation	
W1	Average population per toilet / latrine
W2	Average population per toilet / latrine with functioning handwashing facility
W3	Proportion of households possessing soap
W4	% of population with access to 15 litres of water per person per day
W5	% of population with access to bathing facilities (m/f separated, if communal)
W6	% of population with access to laundry facilities
W7	% of sites with solid waste in the open
W8	% of sites with stagnant water

ANNEX 2
HUMANITARIAN DASHBOARD

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Humanitarian Dashboard is to consolidate and present needs assessment and other core humanitarian information at crisis-level in an easily accessible format to facilitate analysis and evidence-based humanitarian decision-making. The Humanitarian Dashboard is intended to:

» Assists the Humanitarian Country Team in facilitating analysis, dialogue and **strategic programming** on needs, coverage, gaps and priorities.

» Assists Cluster Lead Agencies in **presenting consolidated assessment** information from within the Cluster, and in tracking/highlighting progress against their targets.

» Serves as the basis for a process of **inter-sectoral analysis**, including the discussion of needs, coverage, gaps and priorities across clusters.

» **Highlights information gaps**, and points out areas to be targeted for further needs assessment.

» **Supports advocacy** by illustrating key issues, bottlenecks, number of people in need, and coverage.

2. Users and scope

The principal intended **users** of the Humanitarian Dashboard are the Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs), cluster/sector partners at country-level, and Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs). In addition, its audience[30] could include senior decision-makers at regional and global levels such as Heads of Agencies, the Emergency Relief Coordinator, national governments, and donors.

The Humanitarian Dashboard can be implemented for any type of disaster requiring humanitarian response, including sudden-onset (e.g., earthquakes), slow-onset (e.g., drought), and protracted crises (e.g., conflicts). It is designed to be used for a whole country analysis, for a specific area of the country, or for a specific hazard in a country (which may be important for countries with multiple and non-overlapping hazards).

3. Process

» **Triggering Production of the Humanitarian Dashboard:** The Humanitarian Dashboard will be triggered when there is a current or imminent crisis, when assessments provide new information, and during preparedness, using baseline data. As a "real time tool", the Humanitarian Dashboard will be updated whenever the situation changes in significant ways, as decided by the Humanitarian Country Team.

» **Populating the Humanitarian Dashboard Sectoral Pages:** Dashboard Sectoral Pages will be the responsibility of the Cluster/Sector Coordinators.

- Cluster/Sector Leads will require the following information to complete them:
- How many people are in need of sectoral assistance
- How many people are covered with sectoral assistance
- What are these two estimates based on (needs-assessment information, indicators, standards, assumptions)

» **The Dashboard Overview Pages** will be compiled by OCHA in support of the HC, but will be validated by the Humanitarian Country Team, based on expert judgement. The current design of the Dashboard allows for additional strategic information to be included on the overview page, in particular on HCT priorities, overall gaps & analysis, capacities and constraints. This is to be decided by the HCT.

» **Analysing the Humanitarian Dashboard:** Discussions of the Humanitarian Dashboard findings will be lead by the Humanitarian Cooordinator. They will focus on inter-sectoral analysis and conclusions. Changes will be made to the Overview Page as needed to reflect the HCT's consensus around key issues.

A few tips on analysis…

When undertaking analysis, consider which topics should be addressed and which types of analysis would be most useful for decision-making.

Comparative analysis presents data and information in relation to a larger group or total, in relation to a norm or a standard or broken down by type or geography.

"Contextualization" is a form of comparative analysis which looks at how a particular number or piece of information relates to the whole

"Benchmarking" is a form of comparative analysis which compares different geographic locations within a country, or different countries.

When data is contextualized or benchmarked, it is then easier to engage in other types of analysis, such as trend analysis.

Trend analysis looks at changes in data series over time and can help determine what factors may be influencing a trend. Trend analysis can provide a good starting point for forecasting, but requires good historic datasets. Trend analysis can be useful in monitoring the development of a crisis, and in tracking the impact of humanitarian response.

» **Publishing the Humanitarian Dashboard:** The Humanitarian Dashboard will be issued in the name of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) who will have the overall responsibility and ownership of the Humanitarian Dashboard. The Dashboard will be distributed to HCT members, and posted on One Response Website. It can also be attached to Situation Reports and to the Flash/ Consolidated Appeal, as deemed useful.

30 Certain sections of the Humanitarian Dashboard with particularly sensitive information are envisioned to remain confidential. Ultimately it would be the responsibility of the HC to determine the level of sensitivity and which sections would be for public use or for limited access.

Humanitarian Dashboard - Pakistan Floods

Search this site

Overview | Agriculture | CCCM | Community Restoration | Education | Food | Health | Nutrition | Protection | Shelter & NFI | WASH | • World • | • Guidance •

Overview

Updated: 14 November 2010

Responsible for this page: OCHA. Contact: Marcus Elten (elten@un.org, tel. +1 917 367 9257).

Situation Overview

- 2010 monsoon season saw worst floods in history in Pakistan, affecting 10% of the population.
- More than 1 700 perished and at least 1.8 million homes destroyed.
- Over 2.4 million hectares of crops were lost and the primary means of livelihoods, agriculture, devastated.
- High pre-flood levels of mortality and morbidity adversely affect resilience and heighten fears over further deterioration.

HCT Strategic/Humanitarian Priorities

1. Ensure adequate public health of the flood-affected population through an integrated approach or "survival strategy" combining WASH, health and nutrition.
2. Provide food assistance and other social protection measures to offer a basic safety net, especially to the most vulnerable, until livelihoods are restored.
3. Support durable solutions through the provision of shelter assistance, prioritizing solutions that can span emergency, transitional and core shelter and housing needs.
4. Restore on- and off-farm livelihoods, with a focus on agriculture, livestock, and protection and restoration of productive assets.
5. Restore basic community services and support re-establishment of public administration, health and education systems.

Gap Analysis

- Only 40% of the Floods Appeal has been funded. There is a critical need for additional funding, particularly in the areas of Food, Shelter and NFIs, and early recovery efforts in every sector.
- A shortage of skilled staff, relief items, and information, particularly in the sub-regions, persists.
- A potential break in the food pipeline comes at a time when large swaths of the affected remain reliant upon distributions, and as winter arrives, bringing with it needs for higher caloric intake.
- Lack of proper winterized shelter and NFIs are anticipated to exacerbate the anticipated increase in ARIs associated with the change in seasons.
- Restoration of livelihoods and agricultural practices has been identified as the key priority by beneficiaries in most of the flood affected areas, particularly given the onset of the *rabi* planning
- A shortage of skilled staff, relief items, and information, particularly in the sub-regions, persists.
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- Lack of proper winterized shelter and NFIs are anticipated to exacerbate the anticipated increase in ARIs associated with the change in seasons.
- Restoration of livelihoods and agricultural practices has been identified as the key priority by beneficiaries in most of the flood affected areas, particularly given the onset of the *rabi* planning season. There is an absence, however, of funding dedicated to such early recovery activities.

In-Country Response Capacity

- A lack of human resources, skilled staff, and information is severely hampering the response at the sub-national level.
- Scaling up in Sindh is particularly difficult due to gaps in funding, operational partners and access to areas which remain flooded.
- Limited availability of, and limited national capacity to produce, relief items needed for shelter, nutrition and WASH is further hindering the response.

Constraints on International Response

Funding
Capacity
Access
- Security
- Infrastructure/ geographical
- Movement restriction

Map of Affected Area

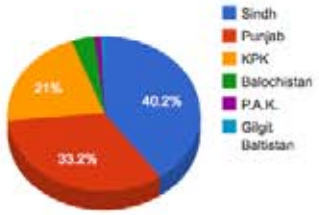
Breakdown of Affected Population

(click chart for details)

Breakdown of Affected Population

(click chart for details)

Breakdown by Province



Needs and Coverage

(Click bars on chart for details. Further details in sectoral pages.)

Humanitarian Dashboard - Pakistan Floods

Search this site

Overview | Agriculture | CCCM | Community Restoration | Education | Food | **Health** | Nutrition | Protection | Shelter & NFI | WASH | • World • | • Guidance •

Health

Updated: 16 November 2010

Cluster lead responsible for this page: WHO. Contact person: ...

Overview

- 14 million, including 3 million children under 5 years, and 3 million women, need access to health care.
- High pre-floods rates of malnutrition, maternal and <5 mortality.
- One-fifth of newborns are of low birthweight and 38% of <5 children are underweight.
- High rates of malaria, tuberculosis and acute watery diarrhea.

Sectoral Needs

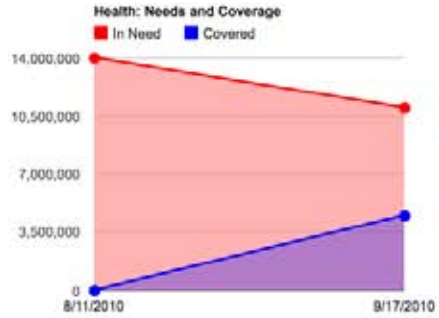
- Assessments undertaken in 4 provinces found 95% of health facilities damaged, most primary providers of basic health services and many in rural areas, severing the population's access to health care.
- Increased rates of disease deepened by lack of livelihoods, scarce food and shelter, and limited access to functional health facilities.
- High risk of communicable diseases due to levels of protracted displacement, standing water, and lack of electricity for refrigeration.
- Increased prevalence of malaria in Sindh and Balochistan (DEWS)

Priorities

- Restoration of non-functional health facilities through provision of temporary structures, supplies, medicines and human resource support, especially female medical staff.

Current Coverage

- Approximately 80 health cluster partners are providing support in the 4 affected provinces.
- Health Cluster has reached 4.95 million people and a total of 165 static and 1200 mobile health units are now operating in flood affected areas.
- Emergency immunization campaigns are ongoing with 445,000 children vaccinated against polio and 428,000 against measles.



Sector Dashboard Inputs - Pakistan : Health Table

Table 1: Overall Needs and Coverage

Indicator	Initial Appeal (8/11/2010)	Last Month (9/17/2010)	Latest (9/17/2010)
People in need	14,000,000	11,000,000	11,000,000
People covered	0	4,500,000	4,500,000
Percent covered	0%	40.91%	40.91%

Table 2: Standards, assumptions, and indicators used to estimate needs and coverage

Key standard used
no info provided
Key assumption used
no info provided

Population of concern (to be used as denominator for the indicators below)	Number
no info provided	

Key humanitarian indicators used	Baseline (8/11/2010)	Latest (9/17/2010)
no indicators provided		
no indicators provided		

HUMANITARIAN DASHBOARD - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Define 'Affected Area'.** 'Affected area' refers to the provinces or municipalities affected by the hazard. It must be noted that, not all people in those areas necessarily require humanitarian response – normally only a percentage of the people in the affected area require humanitarian assistance.
- **Define 'People in Need of Humanitarian Response'.** The number of 'people in need of humanitarian response' will vary from cluster/sector to the next. However, the overall number of people in need of humanitarian response should be an aggregate based on the estimated number of people in nee of humanitarian response per cluster/sector and should take into account the extent to which the targeted population per cluster/sector overlap. This figure will usually be as big as the cluster figure with the most number of people in need of humanitarian response - but could also be larger depending on the extent to which the cluster figures overlap.
- **Can additional sections be added to 'Demographics of People in Need of Humanitarian Response'?** The demographics of people in need of humanitarian response will very much depend on the context and type of hazard. It will be up to the HCT to determine the most relevant demographic information that they would like to highlight in the tool.
- **Does the 'needs' bar cover overall needs or the targeted coverage per cluster/sector?** The 'needs' bars in the 'Estimated Needs, Gaps & Coverage by Sector' chart should reflect the overall needs of the population regardless of the in-country response capacity.
- **Does 'coverage' include national and/or international coverage?** The 'coverage' component of the 'Estimated Needs Gaps & Coverage by Sector' should aim to reflect both national and international.
- **How will needs and coverage per sector be measured?** Each cluster will identify the cluster-specific indicators to measure needs and coverage bearing in mind that the 'unit' of measurement is the individual.
- **How can the overall level of 'In-Country Response Capacity' be determined?** This will be an overall judgment of the HCT based on the analysis of the capacity of the various humanitarian actors (national and international). Rating of 'in-country response capacity' should ultimately determine whether additional international humanitarian assistance is required to respond to the crisis or not.
- **How can the overall level of 'Constraints on International Response' be determined?** This will be an overall judgment of the HCT based on the analysis of the constraints faced by international humanitarian actors.
- **How can the overall 'Accountability of Response to the People Affected by the Disaster' be determined?** This will be an opportunity to provide a 'snapshot' view of the 'quality' of the humanitarian response and will be an overall judgment made by the HCT based on cluster-specific input. Some of the specific questions to determine the rating of the various components in this section could include: information provision to affected people, community participation, access to effective complaint handling mechanisms, gender mainstreaming and quality staffing.

ANNEX 3: KEY IM CONSIDERATIONS IN ASSESSMENT DESIGN

Data Volume in Needs Assessments

One common problem in needs assessments – and particularly in joint needs assessments – is that too much data is collected. With many stakeholders in a joint needs assessment, the amount of information requested can be overwhelming. When too much information is collected, the usability of the data collection form decreases, the needs assessment takes too long to implement, the population feels over-assessed, the data takes too long to compile and not all the data is actually analyzed and used in decision-making.

» An ideal needs assessment collects exactly what is required for decision-making, fundraising and advocacy, no less and no more.
» An Information Manager can help slim down thick needs assessment data collection forms by:
» Identifying proxy indicators and harmonizing related indicators so that they can be used by multiple actors
» Prioritizing the inclusion of data elements that multiple actors need on the data collection form
» Eliminating data elements from the data collection form that are problematic and difficult or expensive / time-consuming to collect
» Using sampling techniques to collect data on representative locations, rather than attempting to exhaustively collect data on all locations
» Choosing an appropriate unit of measurement (for example, not choosing household level data in an initial rapid assessment)

The volume of data received and the complexity of analysis required to make the information useful will determine if you need an automated or manual data analysis solution. Given the volume of data in most humanitarian crises, automated analysis of needs assessment data – particularly joint needs assessments – is often required. Decisions about how the data will be analyzed should be made during the needs assessment design phase and executed during the collation phase. Some of the questions that should be asked for this process include:

» Which parts, if any, of the data need to be mapped on a GIS (Geographic Information System)?
» What statistics need to be generated from the raw data?
» What format should the reports take?
» Who needs to receive the reports?
» If the needs assessment is an ongoing monitoring system and not just a one-off exercise, how often do the reports need to be produced?

Data Types:

Needs assessment data can be collected through primary data collection techniques (meaning that you are gathering new data) or secondary data collection techniques (secondary data is already-existing data that can be gathered from desk reviews, pre-crisis data, etc.). Data may be classified as primary or secondary based on who collected them.

Primary data are data gathered by the needs assessor directly from the respondent. They may be collected through household surveys, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and visual observation, e.g. flyovers, drive-bys, transect walks, etc.

Secondary data are data that are collected by others and reviewed and analyzed by the assessor. Secondary data sources include agency reports, risk assessments, survey data gathered and reported by others, census data, government reports, satellite images, facility use reports, etc.

Primary is not better than secondary. In most cases, it is helpful to review as much secondary data as possible before collecting primary data. Obviously, primary data collection is likely to be more expensive and time consuming than reviewing the data collected by others. When using secondary data isn't possible, either because it's unavailable or inaccurate, then a primary data collection system needs to be designed.

Data Collection Methods

Different primary data collection techniques will be used for needs assessment depending on the situation. For example, in a rapid needs assessment of a large area, closed question community-level data collection forms might be used. In contrast, for more detailed data at a household or individual level that is not needed as quickly, a survey might be used with representative sampling from the population. Surveillance is another technique used in ongoing needs assessment, which is a technique where the same data is collected repeatedly over a period of time, rather than just once.

» **Visual inspections:** Visual inspection of the disaster scene is a very effective assessment tool. This may include satellite imageries or a flyover if the disaster affects a wide area, a walk or inspection by auto by a team equipped with field data collection tools like camera with GPS, and situation assessment maps. A visual tour helps develop understanding of the physical, economic, cultural and social aspects of the disaster. A visual inspection should help the assessor to validate secondary data concerning the level of vulnerability and needs and verify statements of key informants. Basically, a visual inspection is a reality formulating experience. At the same time, it is inherently biased and requires expert and cultural interpretation and cross-checking, especially since it may often be geographically limited.

» **Use of Satellite Imagery:** In recent years Earth Observation (EO) satellites have demonstrated their utility in providing data for a wide range of applications. Timely access to satellite imagery and accurate geographic information is a key element for the efficient management of recovery planning activities including post-disaster need assessments. Satellite imagery acquired by Earth Observation satellites offers a unique view from above, including remote areas with difficult field access. This allows timely overviews of, for example, the overall area affected by a given disaster, its impact on population centers and damage to physical assets (infrastructure, buildings, installations, means of transportation and storage, farmland, irrigation works, environment, etc).

» **Key Informant Surveys:** A key informant survey is one of the most frequently used assessment techniques. It consists of in-depth interviews of selected people with first-hand knowledge about a topic of interest. It is useful when qualitative, descriptive information is sufficient for decision-making; when there is a need to understand motivation, behaviors and perspectives; as a tool to interpret quantitative data; to advocate for a program or get buy-in; to help in the design of quantitative surveys. The advantages of key informant approaches include the efficiency of getting information directly from knowledgeable people. The format provides flexibility to explore new ideas and issues not anticipated during planning the assessment or interview. It is a, relatively, inexpensive and simple process. On the other hand, it does not provide measurable, quantitative data. The findings are usually quite biased (see discussion on bias below). It is sometimes difficult to prove the validity (see discussion of validity below) of findings.

» **Focus Group Discussions:** A focus group takes the form of a group discussion that gathers people, usually sharing some knowledge or demographic characteristics, to discuss a specific topic of interest. For the most part Focus Groups are conducted in-person. In general, focus groups are useful in producing information about beliefs, opinions, practices, and reactions. A focus group will provide insight into a pre-determined area of inquiry and help identify the range of responses to a question or allow for an in depth parsing. It does not provide quantifiable information and the results obtained are not scientifically "generalizable" to the larger population from which the group is drawn, although the answers and discussions may very accurately describe the population's beliefs, opinion, practices, etc. Focus Groups are useful in creating questionnaires or other data collection methods. Focus Groups tend to generate a significant amount of information, are typically less costly than surveys and relatively fast to conduct. They are especially useful if the community's literacy is questionable and allow more flexibility than questionnaires. On the other hand, they are subject to significant bias if strong personalities dominate the discussion or if the groups are poorly composed, and need careful managing by a moderator.

» **Written or Orally-Administered Surveys:** A written or orally-administered survey is a routine expectation of consumers of assessment. Surveys lend themselves to quantification which is useful in establishing program scale and funding target levels. It is the only form of needs assessment that holds the promise of being able to allow a scientifically valid way to generalize from the population actually surveyed to the broader affected population, given some important caveats regarding instrumentation, measurement, and sampling (see below). Due to the requirement of analyzing a large number of surveys and the need, therefore, for machine assistance and coding of responses, surveys typically are closed-ended with a limited number of possible responses. In this regard surveys are a, relatively, inflexible tool as opposed to an open-ended interview, focus group or key informant approach. In constructing survey instruments, it is essential to pilot test the questionnaire, and to engage with IM technical advisors who can advise on coding responses, etc. Where the language of the respondents is different than the language of the assessor, translation of the questionnaire must be carefully undertaken.

Unit of Measurement

The four most common units of measurement used in humanitarian needs assessments, listed from largest to smallest, are:

» Communities (e.g. towns, settlements, camps, etc.)
» Institutions (e.g. schools, hospitals)
» Households
» Individuals

When designing a needs assessment, you will need to establish unit of measurement for different data elements. You should not combine different units of measurement on the same form (e.g. have household-level questions on a village level form).

Not only will the unit of measurement affect the type of information you get back from the needs assessment, but it will affect how long the needs assessment takes to complete, the amount of resources needed to conduct the needs assessment and the volume of data received as a result. The

Here is an example from the Health sector of how the unit of measurement will affect the needs analysis:

- Community: Does this village have a functional health clinic?
- Institution: How many trained nurses work at this health clinic?
- Household: What illnesses have your family members had during the last week?
- Individual: What illnesses have you had during the last week?

smaller the unit of measurement, the larger the data volume will be.

Social Research Considerations

A needs assessment is essentially social research. Engaging in social research in the form of creating a questionnaire, administering a household survey or any field-based research process is complicated and should not be undertaken lightly.

» **Validity**: Validity is the extent to which something is "true" and, therefore, generalizable. There are different types of validity. Assessors who fail to adequately attend to issues of validity open their assessment up to criticism that the assessment does not accurately measure the problem and that the results, therefore, are not useful. Many assessments fail the test of validity. External validity is described below and relates to the degree to which the results may be extrapolated to a larger group of affected persons or communities. Construct validity is the extent to which your assessment/survey design and measure(s), e.g., questions or indicators, accurately describe the concept to which they are being applied.

» **Reliability**: Reliability is related to the indicators and measures we choose as well as to the persons who conduct the assessment. There are many sophisticated formulas for estimating the reliability of an assessment. We will only discuss one aspect of reliability. The extent to which different assessors using the same tool to assess the same situation come up with similar results is known as inter-rater reliability or IRR. Achieving a reliable measure in this case is determined both by the quality of

the survey instrument (does it operationalize accurately) and the training provided to the assessors. In conducting post-disaster recovery assessments, the training of the interviewers is critical. Normally, you would train the assessors in the instrument, then you would have them independently assess the same situation and then compare their scores. If they consistently scored the same situation the same you would have established IRR. If they arrived at different scores it would be necessary to reexamine the measure, their training and their application of the measure. Reliability is increased by using the same instrument or measure over a number of different disaster events and situations.

» **Questionnaire Construction**: An interview is the period of time that the assessor engages a respondent and the time needs to be thought out in the same way that one would think about how to structure a meeting. For example, you'll need to ask opening questions that build a relationship, inspire commitment to the interview, and build trust. Some questions will be more difficult or more sensitive. These probably should not be asked first. At the same time you won't want to wait until the very end as you'll want to close the interview with "wrap-up" demographic or next steps questions. Questions that require more thought or are sensitive should not be asked until the survey or surveyor has established rapport. In addition to the order of the questions, the assessor also needs to think about the wording. All survey questions need to be piloted to ensure that questions are uniformly understood. Where surveys are translated into local languages or dialects this is especially the case. The assessor should make sure that each question asks only one question. It will also be necessary to think about the type of question, for example open or closed questions. For closed questions, response choices can be dichotomous, e.g., yes or no, or they could be based on scales and levels of measurement (see below)

» **Measurement and Scaling:** Measurement levels are commonly described as nominal, ordinal, and ratio. Each one tells us a type of information. The differences are, relatively, easy to explain. Nominal implies no relationship between the nominal values. It is a simple system in which numbers are labels for categories. In Ordinal measure, the items or responses can be rank ordered but the distance between the scores of ranks cannot be determined by manipulating the numbers. Ratio measures are rank-ordered. The distance between the values can be calculated by comparing them arithmetically and the distance has meaning, thereby, showing a direction and a magnitude Ratio measures are very important in disaster assessment and including nominal measure are the most frequently used. A special application of measurement is Scaling. Scales require a respondent to choose from several choices, e.g., does the respondent agree or disagree with a statement.

Sampling

A proper sample increases the likelihood that the assessors can legitimately generalize from those they visited and interviewed to all the affected. A poorly drawn sample means that, technically, assessors should not generalize and can, scientifically at least, only describe those areas visited and those individuals interviewed – a great impediment to drawing useful conclusions, indeed.

For a sample to be truly "generalizable", all possible respondents must have a known, non-zero chance to be selected. And, the selection of individuals must be by some random choice method, e.g., by registration number or house number. Of course, this adds a significant measure of complexity if there has been a sizable population displacement or if the population is not able to be found and/or "numbered".

In assessments the concept of "the ability to generalize the findings" is known as external validity. The better the sampling plan, the greater the likelihood of satisfactory external validity. Since it is rarely possible in a disaster recovery situation to choose a "simple" random sample, it is critical that the sampling methods chosen have been developed over time and tested for their ability to give "true" findings. It is also essential that assessors rigorously analyze the affected areas to ensure that there is a maximum of comparability of the sample chosen to the overall population, a concept known as "proximal similarity". It is further important that the assessor utilize triangulation and convergence of evidence (discussed below).

» One method chosen to deal with the problem of large geographical areas is to use a "**cluster**" **sample** selected with probability methods. In this case a rationale is developed for dividing the affected area into subsections, perhaps through a grid approach. Then the subsections are subjected to a random selection method. Once a subsection is selected, the subsections may be subdivided, other probability selections made, until at the lowest level, sample units (houses or people) can be listed and a selection made from among them. If appropriate information is available, e.g., the size of the clusters, estimates from a cluster sample can be weighted and used to make population estimates.

» A "**stratified**" **sample** may also be used to apply to different segments of the population, e.g., ethnic or religious groups, occupational strata, e.g., fishers or herders, etc. The principles are still the same. Using more than one sampling procedure, e.g., choosing a cluster, then stratifying within the cluster, and then randomly selecting respondents is known as multi-stage sampling. In general, one may conclude from this brief discussion that drawing a representative sample is critical. Further, there is no sampling plan that will work in every application.

» Non-random samples are often referred to as **purposive samples**. Purposive samples are often employed when using methods such as key informant and focus groups. A questionnaire may be used to assess the needs or opinions of a purposive sample. Purposive sampling plans are often used and as long as the findings are circumscribed by referencing methods for choosing the respondents, they are completely legitimate.

Cross Checking and Triangulation

In all needs assessments it is important to cross-check or triangulate findings. This process refers to the simple process of making sure that the finding is confirmed by another source. It is particularly important to cross-check or triangulate with key informants. Properly designed and administered surveys are already sensitive to this need. Cross-checking and triangulation are very useful in overcoming some of the problems identified with external validity (see sampling).

Bias

Bias describes intended and unintended interpretive deflections from the real situation/condition that a needs assessor encounters. Bias is present in every research endeavor. The needs assessor must seek to understand the sources of bias, how the bias is affecting the analysis and conclusions, and work to eliminate as much bias, as possible. Bias is introduced from three primary sources.

» First, shortcomings in the research methodology may introduce bias. The **sample**, itself, may bias the results, e.g., because more rural areas or more urban areas were selected; if the site visit included a visit to a water source and people went to the source in the early morning and the assessor went there in the early afternoon; or if the assessment occurred in a community with significant labor migration and the workers were gone when the assessment was made. A common mistake is the failure to adequately account for gender differences in the sample and interview methods.

» The second primary source of bias comes from the **assessors**. There may program, cultural, agency or expertise bias, e.g., a water/sanitation expert may be only looking for water/sanitation projects and skew the findings or the weight of the findings in a favored direction. A "westerner" may be insensitive to cultural aspects of the area assessed thereby affecting both what they are old and what they understand to have been said. The assessor may ask questions, intentionally or unintentionally, in a way that affects the type of response given. Language misinterpretation may also introduce bias.

» Thirdly, a major source of bias is introduced by the **respondents**. Again this may be intentional or unintentional. A village sheik may inflate the damage in his village in the hopes of getting more assistance. A husband might refuse to let his spouse be interviewed. An affected business may inflate its pre-disaster assets, productivity, or profits. These examples can be seen as intentional "spinning" of the data to influence the assessors' conclusions. A cultural inclination toward pleasing persons perceived as being of higher status may influence a respondent's answers to provide the answer the respondent thinks the assessor is looking for. The respondent is not trying to skew the results only to be culturally appropriate.

Training Data Collectors:

When there is no available capacity in country, measures should be taken to ramp up quickly. In a rapid needs assessment, there will be only a short time for training needs assessment data collectors, but it is a vital step or the resulting information will be non-standard across locations and of poor quality. Some topics on which needs assessment data collection teams may need to be trained prior to going to field locations include:

» Geographic data (GPS receivers, interpretation of maps and/or use of p-codes)
» Interview techniques
» Sector-specific specialist knowledge, if necessary
» Coding systems
» Data confidentiality
» Setting expectations of the assessed population appropriately

ANNEX 4: GLOSSARY

A

AGGREGATED

Data from different individuals or subgroups that is consolidated into a single group is referred to as 'aggregated'. In aggregated data, you can no longer see the records of individual people because they have been totaled into a single record. Please see disaggregated for further information. *Operation Data Management Learning Programme, Glossary of Technical Vocabulary, UNHCR*

ALERT

Advisory that hazard is approaching but is less imminent than implied by warning message. *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*

ANALYSIS PLAN

A framework providing details of the information that needs to be collected from primary and secondary sources. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

ARMED CONFLICTS

State of hostilities in which two or more organized armies are at war against each other. In modern warfare the attack may be with conventional weapons, chemical and/or biological weapons or nuclear weapons (Material V - Gunn, S.W.A. Multilingual Dictionary of Disaster Medicine and International Relief, 1990) *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*

ASSESSMENT (and RE-ASSESSMENT)

The set of activities necessary to understand a given situation, entails the collection, up-dating and analysis of data pertaining to the population of concern (needs, capacities, resources, etc.), as well as the state of infrastructure and general socio-economic conditions in a given location/area. *Master Glossary of Terms, UNHCR*

ASSISTANCE

Aid provided to address the physical, material and legal needs of persons of concern. This may include food items, medical supplies, clothing, shelter, seeds and tools, as well as the provision of infrastructure, such as schools and roads. "Humanitarian assistance" refers to assistance provided by humanitarian organizations for humanitarian purposes (i.e., non-political, non-commercial, and non-military purposes). In UNHCR practice, assistance supports and complements the achievement of protection objectives. *Master Glossary of Terms, UNHCR*

B

BASELINE

An interpretive tool comprised of statistics against which you can compare indicators from your selected population that are from a different period of time, a different place or a different population. Baseline data often describes a situation that existed before an event, which can be defined in many ways, depending on the operational context. An event might be a drought or an incident of political upheaval, or it may simply be the first time the indicators were ever measured. You can compare your dataset against the baseline data to see how the situation you're studying appears when weighed against the situation as measured before the event. In other words, baseline data can help you to interpret the impact of an event. For baseline data, indicators prior to the onset of the distress situation are preferred, although you can also use the value for the whole region or the country. The baseline in a refugee situation may also be the rate in the local host population in the country of asylum or the rate measured in the population within the country of origin. *Operation Data Management Learning Programme, Glossary of Technical Vocabulary, UNCHR*

C

CAPACITY BUILDING

A process by which individuals, institutions and societies develop abilities, individually and collectively, to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve their goals. *Master Glossary of Terms, UNHCR*

CAPACITY, COPING

"Refers to the manner in which people and organizations use existing resources to achieve various beneficial ends during unusual, abnormal, and adverse conditions of a disaster event or process. The strengthening of coping capacities usually builds resilience to withstand the effects of natural and other hazards." (Europ. Spatial Planning Observ. Netw., 2003) *Components of Risk A Comparative Glossary, United Nations University –Institute of Environment and Human Security*

CLUSTER SAMPLING

A sampling technique in which the selection individuals or households is concentrated within certain geographical areas that has been previously selected. It is the most useful method when a population is geographically dispersed and it is not possible to undertake a simple random sampling. Cluster sampling reduces financial costs and logistical challenges, but it usually requires larger sampling sizes than random sampling techniques in order to achieve the same level of precision. *Operation Data Management Learning Programme, Glossary of Technical Vocabulary, UNHCR*

COMMON OPERATIONAL DATASET (COD)

Predictable, core sets of data needed to support operations and decision making which are made available within 48 hours of a given humanitarian emergency. Common datasets are needed by all actors in a humanitarian emergency response. The datasets are often dynamic the first week of an emergency during a consolidation period and are maintained throughout the emergency cycle. The Common datasets are proactively identified and maintained prior to an emergency as part of data preparedness measures. All datasets must meet detailed criteria for format and minimum characteristics within the defined dataset. *IASC Guidelines on Common Operational Datasets in Disaster Preparedness and Response – DRAFT for endorsement*

COMMON ASSESSMENT

See joint assessment.

COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION

Discussion with a mixed group of community members that includes men, women and young people from all subgroups within the community (village, camp, urban neighborhood, etc.). *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

COMPLEX EMERGENCY

A humanitarian crisis that requires an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency. (IASC, December 1994) Complex emergencies are typically characterized by: extensive violence and loss of life, massive displacements of people, widespread damage to societies and economies, need for large-scale, multi-faceted humanitarian assistance, hindrance or prevention of humanitarian assistance by political and military constraints and significant security risks for humanitarian relief workers in some areas. *FTS Definition of humanitarian aid for statistical purposes, OCHA*

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

Details of the processes that led to the current emergency and the reasons why it is occurring; factors that help to explain the emergency and give insights into the responses that may be appropriate. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

CONTINGENCY PLANS

Plan aimed at dealing with the possible occurrence of a disaster, addressing such matters as forecasting, assessing the development and possible intensity of its effects, if the conditions remain variable. *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*

CONVENIENCE SAMPLING

Households and individuals are selected on the basis of ease of access. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

COORDINATED ASSESSMENT

Assessments which are planned and carried out in partnership with other humanitarian actors, with the results shared for the benefit of the broader humanitarian community to identify the needs of the affected population of a humanitarian crisis. Coordinated assessments is a broad term that includes several different types of assessments, ranging from inter and intra cluster/sector joint assessments to single agency assessment that are harmonized. *Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crisis, IASC Needs Assessment Task Force*

CROSS TABULATION

The process of combining two or more indicators; used, for example, to gain insights into the prevalence and causes of malnutrition and food insecurity. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

D

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

The role of the relief sub-programme which consists of the development of mechanisms to assess the physical and social dimension of the catastrophe, the estimate of the loss of human lives and natural wealth, the needs which must be satisfied and the identification of possible risks (Secondary Effects or Damage). *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*

DAMAGE PREDICTION

Survey of a real or potential disaster to estimate the actual or expected damages and to make recommendations for prevention, preparedness and response. *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*

DATA

The pieces of information collected from primary or secondary sources. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

DATA INTEROPERABILITY

The ability to correctly interpret data that crosses from one information source to another (i.e. from one cluster to another, or from a cluster to national authority etc). For example: if we assume that the A cluster have information needed by B cluster, and that data in one cluster system is accessible understood by the other system, then data can be compared. (IASC IMTF)

DEMOGRAPHY

The quantitative study of human populations and of their variations. *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*

DIRECT PARAMETERS

Factors determining the manifestation of a disaster to a large extent are the characteristics used to evaluate disasters. *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*

DIRECT SAMPLING

Households and individuals are selected directly from the entire sampling frame. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

DISAGGREGATED

Disaggregated means that aggregated data is separated. For population data, this refers to

- data at the individual level, so that you can see each person's information, or
- to data that is divided into different demographic groups, such as sex or age group

Operation Data Management Learning Programme, Glossary of Technical Vocabulary, UNHCR

DISASTER

A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources. *Terminology: Basic Terms of Disaster Risk Reduction ISDR Secretariat*

DISASTER "For a disaster to be entered into the database of the UN's International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), at least one of the following criteria must be met:

- a report of 10 or more people killed
- a report of 100 people affected
- a declaration of a state of emergency by the relevant government
- a request by the national government for international assistance" (IRIN/OCHA, 2005)

Components of Risk A Comparative Glossary, United Nations University –Institute of Environment and Human Security

DISASTER AREA SURVEY TEAM

A group that is deployed in an area after a disaster to ascertain the extent of damage to population and property and to recommend appropriate responses. *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*

DISASTERS IDENTIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS

Data giving the time and place of a specific disaster, such as its name, date of occurrence, place of origin, coverage and path of the phenomenon. *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*

DISASTER IMPACT

Any incidence of an agent, element or event on the vulnerable system (population and environment) producing undesirable effects (earthquakes, high temperatures, hurricanes, etc.). There are primary or elementary impacts and aggregate impacts. *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

The conceptual framework of elements considered with the possibilities to minimize vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout a society, to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) the adverse impacts of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development. *Terminology: Basic Terms of Disaster Risk Reduction , ISDR Secretariat*

DISASTER ZONE

Vulnerable system area (population and environment) which suffers damage defects and deterioration of its structure and normal function due to the impact of a disaster. The area of a disaster zone may be divers for example a district, colony, town, city or a region. It varies according to different factors, among them, the type of disaster, its force and duration, the vulnerability of the system affected, etc. *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*

DISPLACED PERSONS

Persons who, for different reasons or circumstances, have been compelled to leave their homes. They may or may not reside in their country of origin, but are not legally regarded as refugees. *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*

E

EMERGENCY

A situation that causes widespread human, material, economic or environmental damage, threatening human lives and/or livelihoods and exceeding the coping capacities of the affected communities and/or government. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

EMERGENCY RELIEF

The immediate survival assistance to the victims of crisis and violent conflict. Most relief operations are initiated on short notice and have a short implementation period (project objectives are generally completed within a year). The main purpose of emergency relief is to save lives. *Master Glossary of Terms, UNHCR*

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

A plan which sets out the roles and responsibilities of agencies in emergency response and the coordination arrangements which are to be utilized. *Australian Emergency Management Glossary, Emergency Management Australia*

ENTRY POINTS

The sectors and broad types of intervention where needs may first be addressed; they are identified in response analysis. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

EVALUATION

A systematic and objective analysis and assessment of the organization's policies, programmes, practices, partnerships and procedures, focused on planning, design, implementation and impacts. *Master Glossary of Terms, UNHCR*

F

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

A method to collect qualitative data/information from a group of persons pre-selected according to specific criteria. *Master Glossary of Terms, UNHCR*

G

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS)

An organized collection of tools (computer hardware and software), of information and of professional/ technical knowledge which is used to input, store, retrieve, utilize, analyze and output geographically referenced data. A GIS uses geography as its organizing principle. *Operation Data Management Learning Programme, Glossary of Technical Vocabulary, UNHCR*

H

HARMONIZED ASSESSMENT

Data collection processing and analysis is undertaken separately, however the data is sufficiently comparable (due to the use of common operational datasets, key indicators, and geographical and temporal synchronization) to be compiled into a single database, and to serve as the subject of a shared analysis. *Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crisis, IASC Needs Assessment Task Force*

HAZARD

A threatening event, or the probability of occurrence of a potentially damaging phenomenon within a given time period and area. *Internationally agreed glossary of basic Terms related to Disaster Management , DHA-Geneva - December 1992*

HAZARD MAP

Name given to a topographical map using a scale of variables and adding the identification of a specific kind of risk, differentiating the high, average and low probability of the occurrence of a disaster. *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*

HOUSEHOLD

A group of persons who share accommodation. *Master Glossary of Terms, UNHCR*

HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION

An approach based on the belief that a coherent response to an emergency will maximize its benefits and minimize potential pitfalls. In each country, the coordination of UN humanitarian assistance is entrusted to the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator. OCHA, under the direction of the Emergency Relief Coordinator, is responsible for the coordination of a humanitarian response in the event of a crisis and carries out this role according to approved policies and structures set by the IASC. This coordination involves developing common strategies with partners both within and outside the UN system, identifying overall humanitarian needs, developing a realistic plan of action, monitoring progress and adjusting programmes as necessary, convening coordination forums, mobilizing resources, addressing common problems to humanitarian actors, and administering coordination mechanisms and tools. It does not involve OCHA in the administration of humanitarian assistance. *Master Glossary of Terms, UNHCR*

HUMANITARIAN DASHBOARD

A tool used to consolidate and present needs assessment and other core humanitarian information in an easily accessible format, to facilitate analysis and evidence-based decision-making. *Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crisis, IASC Needs Assessment Task Force*

I

INCIDENCE

The relative frequency of occurrence of something; the extent or frequency of occurrence. *Operation Data Management Learning Programme, Glossary of Technical Vocabulary, UNHCR*

IN-DEPTH ASSESSMENT

Undertaken when substantial time, access and resources are available. In-depth assessments use rigorous methodologies that are adapted to the context, such as random, large-scale household food security and nutrition surveys, and household economy baseline surveys. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

INDICATOR

A specific variable, or combination of variables, that gives insight into a particular aspect of the situation. Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP

INFORMATION NEEDS

The data that must be collected and processed from primary and secondary sources in order to fulfill the assessment objectives. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

INITIAL ASSESSMENT

Assessment undertaken promptly following: i) a sudden crisis; ii) reports of deterioration in a long-term crisis; or iii) improved access in an ongoing crisis. An initial assessment is based mainly on secondary data and key informant interviews, but some quick field visits may be undertaken. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

J

JOINT ASSESSMENT

Data collection, processing and analysis form one single process among agencies within and between clusters/sectors. This leads to a single report. This is sometimes also referred to as a 'common assessment'. *Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crisis, IASC Needs Assessment Task Force*

JOINT PROGRAMMING

The process through which the UN country team and national partners work together to prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate the UN's contribution to most effectively and efficiently achieve the Millennium Development Goals and other international commitments related to the government's national development targets. *Master Glossary of Terms, UNHCR*

K

KEY HUMANITARIAN INDICATORS

IASC Needs Assessment Task Force has worked with Clusters/Sectors to develop a package of Key Humanitarian Indicators to capture the core elements of a crisis. For full list of the Indicators, see Annex 1. *Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crisis, IASC Needs Assessment Task Force*

KEY INFORMANTS

Individuals of a particular background (e.g. nurses, teachers and poor farmers) who provide their views on various issues. *Master Glossary of Terms, UNHCR*

L

LIVELIHOODS

The capabilities, assets – both material and social – and activities required for a means of living linked to survival and future well-being (Source: Sphere Handbook). *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

M

MAPPING OF AREAS OF RISK

Specification of the vulnerable areas at risk in the face of the destruction phenomenon based on its type and nature. There are three clearly defined areas. Intervention area: area to be evaluated when disaster occurs. The recommended measures are basically followed in this area and the groups responsible for operational intervention and health measures merge. Relief Area: the area immediately adjacent to the intervention area. Health relief operations are carried out in this area and the stages of support to the group in operational intervention are organized. Base area: Area where reserves may be based and organized. It may be the place to receive evacuees for their subsequent placement in shelters. *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*

METADATA

Data that describes other data, such as the name of the data collector, the date the data was collected or the source of the data. *Operation Data Management Learning Programme, Glossary of Technical Vocabulary, UNHCR*

MONITORING

(syn. surveillance) System that permits the continuous observation, measurement and a valuation of the progress of a process or phenomenon with a view to taking corrective measures. *Internationally agreed glossary of basic Terms related to Disaster Management , DHA-Geneva - December 1992*

MORTALITY

The number, magnitude or frequency of deaths over a period of time among the total sick and well population of an area. The numerical expression of deaths, usually given as a mortality rate. *See also* morbidity and mortality rate. *Australian Emergency Management Glossary, Emergency Management Australia*

MORTALITY RATE

The ratio of the number of deaths in a given population to the total number of that population. *Syn.* 'death rate'. *Australian Emergency Management Glossary, Emergency Management Australia*

MULTI-SECTORAL

Action or discipline that implies and needs coordination at all levels between and among the various activities involved in managing a situation, eg. a disaster, such as the health sector, transport agriculture, housing, public works, water supply, communications, finance etc. *Australian Emergency Management Glossary, Emergency Management Australia*

N

NATURAL DISASTER

A serious disruption of the functioning of the society, causing widespread human, material or environmental losses that exceed the ability of affected society to cope using only its own resources. *FTS Definition of humanitarian aid for statistical purposes, OCHA*

NATURAL DISASTER, SLOW ONSET

A disaster event that unfolds alongside and within development processes. The hazard can be felt as an ongoing stress for many days, months or even years. Drought is a prime example. *Reducing Disaster Risk: A challenge for development: Glossary of Terms UNDP*

NATURAL DISASTER, SUDDEN ONSET

A disaster that is triggered by an instantaneous shock. The impact of this disaster may unfold over the medium- or long-term. An earthquake is a prime example. *Reducing Disaster Risk: A challenge for development: Glossary of Terms UNDP*

O

OBSERVATION

Visible and significant aspects of the affected area are noted. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

P

PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

An approach to development and/or government in which key stakeholders (and especially the proposed beneficiaries) of a policy or intervention are closely involved in the process of identifying problems and priorities and have considerable control over analysis and the planning, implementation and monitoring of solutions. *Master Glossary of Terms, UNHCR*

P-CODE

This is short for 'Place Code.' P-codes provide unique reference codes to geographic locations and are important identifiers in data management systems. *Operation Data Management Learning Programme, Glossary of Technical Vocabulary, UNHCR*

POPULATION AT RISK

A well-defined population whose lives, property, and livelihoods are threatened by given hazards. Used as a denominator. All those persons who would be directly exposed to floodwaters within the dam break-affected zone if they took no action to evacuate. *Australian Emergency Management Glossary, Emergency Management Australia*

PREPAREDNESS

Activities designed to minimize loss of life and damage, to organize the temporary removal of people and property

from a threatened location and facilitate timely and effective rescue, relief and rehabilitation. *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*

PRIMARY DATA

Data collected during the assessment, from interviews with key informants, focus groups, households and individuals. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

PROBABILITY

The likelihood of a specific outcome, measured by the ratio of specific outcomes to the total number of possible outcomes. Probability is expressed as a number between 0 and 1, with 0 indicating an impossible outcome and 1 indicating an outcome is certain. *Australian Emergency Management Glossary, Emergency Management Australia*

PROXY INDICATOR

An indirect means of measuring a variable. They provide information about a factor indirectly. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

PURPOSIVE SAMPLING

Particular groups are selected for interview. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

Q

QUALITATIVE DATA

Observations that are categorical rather than numerical; they often involve attitudes, perceptions and intentions. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

QUANTITATIVE DATA

Observations that are numerical. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

R

RANDOM SAMPLING

A method to draw a representative sample by means of selecting households or individuals randomly (every person in a group has the same chance of being chosen) from the whole population of households or individuals surveyed. *Operation Data Management Learning Programme, Glossary of Technical Vocabulary, UNHCR*

RAPID ASSESSMENT

Undertaken following an initial assessment in a sudden crisis, or as a component of a reassessment. It is based on a combination of secondary and primary data. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

RECONSTRUCTION

Actions taken to re-establish a community after a period of rehabilitation subsequent to a disaster. Actions would include construction of permanent housing, full restoration of all services, and complete resumption of the pre-disaster state. (OFDA) *Internationally agreed glossary of basic Terms related to Disaster Management , DHA-Geneva - December 1992*

RECOVERY

A focus on how best to restore the capacity of the government and communities to rebuild and recover from crisis and to prevent relapses into conflict. In so doing, recovery seeks not only to catalyze sustainable development activities, but also to build upon earlier humanitarian programmes to ensure that their inputs become assets for development. *Master Glossary of Terms, UNHCR*

REMOTE SENSING

The small or large scale acquisition of information of an object/phenomenon, by the use of either recording or real-time sensing devices that are wireless, or not in physical/intimate contact with the object (such as by way of aircraft, spacecraft, satellite, buoy or ship).

RESPONSE ANALYSIS

Analysis to determine the need, or otherwise, for an intervention and, if appropriate, to identify the most suitable types of intervention, the timing and the targeting criteria. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

S

SAMPLE

A selection of households or individuals from the total affected population. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

SAMPLING FRAME

The area and population that the assessment covers. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

SCENARIO

A description of situations that could occur; it is a set of informed assumptions about a situation (Source: ODI Network Paper No. 59). *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

SECONDARY DATA

Data collected from outside the current assessment. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

SECTOR

A technical grouping of project activities. "Multi-sector" is reserved for projects with no one dominant sector. *FTS Definition of humanitarian aid for statistical purposes, OCHA*

SITUATION ANALYSIS

A deliberate process where the current incident situation, the factors that are relevant to the incident, the courses open and their consequences are reviewed and alternative strategies are assessed and an incident action plan is recommended. *Australian Emergency Management Glossary, Emergency Management Australia*

SNOWBALL SAMPLING

Households and individuals are selected according to recommendations from other informants; each informant recommends the next set of informants. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPS)

Written instructions describing how specific activities are to be conducted. SOPs ensure that treatment given to persons of concern meets standards and is provided in a fair and uniform manner. It is also essential that SOPs stay alive and are updated to reflect changes in operational processes and in the division of labor within the office. *Operation Data Management Learning Programme, Glossary of Technical Vocabulary, UNHCR*

STRATIFIED SAMPLING

Stratified sampling consists of dividing the study population into several homogeneous subgroups, in a way that each individual only belongs to one subgroup (no overlap among them). For instance, variables such as camp, country of origin or age may be used to divide the population into different strata. Once the subgroups have been selected, a random sample is selected within each one. *Operation Data Management Learning Programme, Glossary of Technical Vocabulary, UNHCR*

STRUCTURAL VARIABLES

The underlying features of individuals, or the society and area in which they live; they do not change quickly, and therefore indicate chronic (permanent) issues. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

SURVEILLANCE

A monitoring system that tracks special events over time within a particular population (such as births, deaths, disease cases) at a given periodicity. With a surveillance system properly set up, the data updates are continuous, so you can have information on the monitored issues almost in real-time. Consequently, it is easy to compare trends over time and to monitor situations on a timely basis. *Operation Data Management Learning Programme, Glossary of Technical Vocabulary, UNHCR*

SURVEY

A detailed study that gathers information through observations and questionnaires from a representative sample of the total population studied. *Operation Data Management Learning Programme, Glossary of Technical Vocabulary, UNHCR*

SYNCHRONISED ASSESSMENT

Geographical and temporal synchronisation of assessments means that while data collection, processing and analysis is undertaken separately, a minimum level of coordination is ensured in terms of the timing and location in which the assessment is carried out. *Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crisis, IASC Needs Assessment Task Force*

T

TRIANGULATION

The process of validating one set of results through comparison with similar results from a different source. *Operation Data Management Learning Programme, Glossary of Technical Vocabulary, UNHCR*

TRIGGER

An event or series of events indicating that the nutritional or food security situation is deteriorating, or has already reached a level of crisis, and that an assessment is needed. *Glossary of Food Security Terminology, WFP*

V

VULNERABILITY

The degree of susceptibility and resilience of the community and environment to hazards. *Australian Emergency Management Glossary, Emergency Management Australia*

VULNERABLE GROUPS

Categories of displaced persons with special needs, variously defined to include: unaccompanied minors, the elderly, the mentally and physically disabled, victims of physical abuse or violence and pregnant, lactating or single women. *Australian Emergency Management Glossary, Emergency Management Australia*

VULNERABILITY ANALYSIS

Technique used to detect the vulnerability of a place in the face of a destructive phenomenon, based on the study of its physical and geographical location. *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN)*