IASC Inter-Agency Standing Committee

Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises

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IASC Inter-Agency
Standing Committee

Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises

List of acronyms

CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CODs	Common Operational Datasets
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GPS	Global positioning system
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICCM	Inter-cluster coordination mechanism
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MIRA	Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment
NATF	Needs Assessment Task Force
NGO	Nongovernmental organizations
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PSD	Preliminary Scenario Definition
SDR	Secondary data review
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
WFP	Word Food Programme

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Foreword

Experience has shown that coordinating needs assessments not only brings significant benefits but can also help save more lives and restore more people's livelihoods. Bearing in mind this valuable lesson, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) established the Needs Assessment Task Force (NATF) in March 2009 to improve coordinated assessment processes and strengthen the identification of strategic humanitarian priorities in complex emergencies and natural disasters.

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 and relationships with national governments, local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and disaster-affected populations.

The NATF developed this *Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises* to help realize the goal of better quality and more timely assessments through coordinated processes. It was not developed to fill a lack of assessment guidelines and tools, but rather to provide guidance for those seeking to make informed decisions on the coordination of assessments (harmonized or joint). The Operational Guidance was developed primarily on the basis of experiences gained during the early phases of large-scale quick-onset natural disasters, but it is also applicable to other types of crises. It provides guidance to coordinate assessments as well as technical tools in the annexes.

The NATF developed this Operational Guidance through a collaborative and consultative process with United Nations agencies, other international organizations, NGOs and donors at the global, regional and national levels. The Guidance was developed within the accountability framework of the humanitarian reform, and is fully in line with the coordination structures introduced by the cluster approach.

This Operational Guidance is divided in four sections:

1. The first provides background on the purpose, audience and scope of the document;

2. The second defines coordinated assessments and describes key actions to be taken, roles and responsibilities, as well as common principles to be considered when undertaking them;

3. The third provides recommendations on the types of coordinated assessments that can be carried out during the different phases that follow an emergency, and proposes standard operating procedures for doing so;

4. The fourth outlines key preparedness measures to prepare for coordinated assessments.

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

Box 1. A shared commitment to coordinated assessment

The IASC promotes the coordination of needs assessments to enhance the quality of humanitarian response. Its Members endeavour to prepare, lead and implement coordinated assessments, as described in the Operational Guidance.

The Guidance makes the following recommendations:

■ 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 Operational 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. A multi cluster/sector initial rapid assessment (MIRA) is recommended during the first two weeks following a disaster, followed by joint or harmonized intra-cluster/sector in-depth assessments.

1 Purpose, scope and audience

Why coordinate assessments?

The Operational Guidance promotes a coordinated approach to assessments in order to address a number of recurring issues during emergencies. For example, there is not so much a lack of assessment information as a lack of capacity to validate and analyse the information necessary to determine priorities and guide planning of the humanitarian response. Likewise, certain populations or situations are over-assessed while others are never measured at all. Also, assessment data is all too often insufficiently shared or used, and data sets from different assessments are not comparable. Finally, 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[1] coordinate assessments and use shared information management systems. In particular, the coordination of assessments is crucial to ensuring solid inter-sectoral analysis during humanitarian crises and therefore 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 analyse and decide on the most appropriate strategies and to support affected countries;
- 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;
- ensure consistency between and within cluster/sectors;
- support country-level assessment preparedness;
- encourage coordination during the response.

Why the Operational Guidance?

The Operational Guidance focuses on how to enhance preparedness and 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 quality and timely coordinated assessments;
- achieve a common understanding of the underlying standards stand principles that apply to coordinated assessments;
- anticipate common obstacles associated with coordinating assessments by highlighting required key actions.

1. *For the purpose of this Operational Guidance the terms "organization" and "agency" are used interchangeably.*

Who should use this Operational Guidance and when?

This Operational Guidance supports all humanitarian actors but it specifically targets:

1. Decision-makers
- Humanitarian coordinators/resident coordinators
- Humanitarian country teams
- Humanitarian organizations deciding on coordinated assessments
- Policy-makers
- Donors
- National/local authorities

2. Humanitarian implementing partners
- Cluster lead agencies
- Cluster coordinators
- Cluster member organizations
- OCHA
- National/local authorities
- Local NGOs
- International NGOs

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

Box 2. Coordinated assessment

In this document, a "coordinated assessment" is an assessment planned and carried out in partnership by humanitarian actors, in order to document the impact of a particular crisis and to identify the needs of affected populations. The results of the assessment are shared with the broader humanitarian community. The term "coordinated assessments" includes both joint[2] and harmonized assessments (further details are provided in Section 2 on *Overview*).

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2. Joint assessments are also referred to as common assessments.

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2 Overview of assessments

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."[3]

Key actions for coordinating assessments

The main actors during the humanitarian response are:

- Humanitarian coordinators and humanitarian country teams;
- Cluster/sector coordinators, OCHA and country-level inter-cluster coordination mechanisms; [4]
- Cluster/sector members.

When undertaking coordinated assessments, whether harmonized or joint, the key actions listed below should be promoted.

Establish an assessment coordination structure. This is recommended at both inter- and intra-cluster/sector levels 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 (ICCM) will typically serve as the assessment coordination structure. However, it may also choose to establish a specific Assessment and Information Management Working Group (see Box 4 on the AIM Working Group), depending on the nature and magnitude of the crisis, as well as on the preparedness level of the humanitarian community. The Working Group 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 also promote the adoption of tools and methodologies to support single agencies conducting harmonized assessments, and help build wide ownership of coordinated assessments. Similar assessment coordination structures should be established by each cluster/sector to support the sectoral assessments undertaken by their members.

3. UN High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR Master Glossary of Terms, June 2006, Rev.1.

4. In this document, "inter-cluster coordination mechanisms" refers to the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group when one has been set up, or any other cross-sectoral coordinating body established by Clusters/Sectors to perform similar functions.

Box 3. Types of assessments

■ Coordinated assessments are those planned and carried out in partnership by humanitarian actors, and of which the results are shared with the broader humanitarian community to identify the needs of affected populations.

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

■ Harmonized assessments occur when agencies collect, process and analyse data separately, but where the collected data is sufficiently comparable (because of the use of common operational data sets, key indicators, and geographical and temporal synchronisation) to be compiled into a single database and used in a shared analysis.

■ Joint assessments occur when data collection, processing and analysis form one single process among agencies within and between clusters/sectors, and lead to the production of 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 results cannot be used to inform the overall analysis.

Box 4. Responsibilities of the Assessment and Information Management Working Group

The Assessment and Information Management Working Group (AIM Working Group), which can be established on a temporary or long-term basis, is normally chaired by OCHA on behalf of the ICCM. Depending on the context, it may be appropriate that government counterparts lead the Working Group.

Participation should be open to all IASC Members and includes cluster coordinators (or focal points appointed by clusters/sectors), as well as other relevant actors depending on the situation.

The Working Group is responsible for:

- designing, planning and, when required, managing the multi-cluster/sector initial rapid assessment (MIRA);[5]
- 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 CODs and sectoral indicators;
- sharing results from ongoing needs assessments as well as information on current and planned needs assessments;
- promoting partnerships with national authorities around needs information;
- serving as a forum for the open analysis of the humanitarian situation.

Key actions for harmonized assessments

1 **Ensure the geographical and temporal synchronization of assessments.** This means that while data collection, processing and analysis may be undertaken separately, there is coordination on the timing and location in which the assessments are carried out. When assessments tackle similar topics or themes, geographic coverage should be complementary. When assessments address different topics or themes, they should be done in the same locations. This approach 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.

2 **Use a consistent set of common operational datasets (CODs).**[6] This is central to the aggregation and comparison of assessment information throughout the emergency cycle. By using CODs, 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 one agency to another).

3 **Use a consistent set of agreed sectoral indicators.** A consistent and commonly agreed set of indicators (see Box 5) is key to harmonizing assessments.[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 according to who needs the information and for what purposes. Information managers must understand what information is needed, the scope of the assessment, and what might be an appropriate data collection methodology. 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 **Establish a process for collating data from multiple assessments.** The collation of assessment data should include, as much as possible, primary and secondary data. This is facilitated by the use of CODs. Cluster/sector members are encouraged to collect data on the agreed-upon indicators, and to use the Humanitarian Dashboard's sectoral pages to present results on needs, gaps and coverage within their sector (see Box 6). Decisions about how the data will be processed should be based on the intended audience and the quantity and type of information needed by decision-makers. All data should be disaggregated by sex and age to the extent possible.

5. See the IASC document on the Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) for more information.

6. The CODs are made available by OCHA within 48 hours of an emergency and cover essential data on seven topics: humanitarian profile, population statistics, administrative boundaries, populated places, transportation network, hydrology and hypsography. The CODs are critical to support the work of humanitarian actors across multiple sectors. For more, see the IASC Guidelines Common Operational Datasets in Disaster Preparedness and Response online at http://cod.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/default/files/iasc_guidelines_on_common_operational_datasets_in_disaster_preparedness_and_response_1_nov._2010.pdf.

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."

Box 5. Developing a package of key humanitarian indicators

The IASC NATF has been working with clusters/sectors to develop a package of key humanitarian indicators that capture the core elements of a crisis. The indicators are developed at the global level but 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.

5 **Establish a process for conducting intra- and inter-sectoral data analysis.** The value of coordinated assessments lies largely in the development of a shared analysis of the situation. Individual clusters/sectors are responsible for effective, coherent and collaborative sectoral analysis. Without it, there cannot be strong inter-sectoral analysis. Once the sectoral data analysis is completed, an initial inter-sectoral analysis is conducted by the ICCM and supplemented by the Humanitarian Country Team. The Humanitarian Dashboard can be used as a basis. The Needs Analysis Framework[8] also provides a useful reference for undertaking the analysis.

Box 6. The Humanitarian Dashboard

The Humanitarian Dashboard is a tool to consolidate and present needs assessment and other core humanitarian information in an easily accessible format so that analysis and evidence-based decision-making is facilitated. It includes 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 1).

Key actions for joint assessments

1 **Agree on collaborative arrangements when conducting a joint assessment.[9]** Clear and agreed upon roles and responsibilities for those involved are central to the success of joint assessments and help build broad ownership. Collaborative arrangements should cover the process for preparing, launching, organizing, managing and disseminating the results of the assessment. For this reason, those responsible for its organization 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 and local levels should be consulted.

2 **Jointly design and plan the assessment.** Participants to a joint assessment should agree beforehand on the primary data collection methodology. In other words, they should have defined the purpose of the assessment, developed the analysis plan, selected the sampling method (and subsequent geographic coverage), chosen the data collection instruments, and identified the questions for inclusion in the questionnaire. Where possible, generic assessment forms should be adapted to the context. Planning the assessment should include agreeing on its geographic coverage and time frame, on the training of assessors as well as on the human, financial and logistic needs.

3 **Jointly collect, analyse and interpret assessment data.[10]** Assessors 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, analysing and interpreting assessment data. Procedures for conducting intra- and inter-sectoral data analysis should be well defined.

4 **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 to decision-makers incrementally, whenever relevant information becomes available. Final results need to be communicated rapidly and intelligibly, and must highlight any significant gaps and/or limitations in the assessment data. When possible, assessments should be translated into a common or local language, and distributed widely to an array of different stakeholders and through a variety of distribution channels (verbal, electronic, printed, news media). The sharing/dissemination of the raw data should always be considered to increase transparency and allow for more in-depth cluster/sector specific analysis.

Roles and responsibilities in coordinated assessments

The Operational Guidance proposes roles and responsibilities in line with the coordination structures introduced through the cluster approach.[11] It recognizes the overall responsibility of national authorities, which it seeks to support by promoting coordinated assessments. In situations concerning refugees and other persons under its mandate, UNHCR is responsible for

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8. 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. It can be used as a starting point for causal analysis and 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).

9. 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).

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

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

coordinating all aspects of the humanitarian response, including needs assessments, whether co-ordinated multi-cluster/sector or single cluster/sector assessments.

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

Cluster/sector lead agencies at the country level are responsible for coordinating sectoral assessment and analysis.[13] They need to establish an internal mechanism for the planning, implementation, analysis and coordination of sectoral assessments. Lead agencies are also responsible for engaging in inter-cluster/sector assessment coordination. Finally, they must also ensure that cross-cutting issues, particularly gender, HIV, age and disability, are integrated in the assessments conducted by their members.

Individual organizations are responsible for supporting joint assessment and/or harmonizing their single assessments. They should proactively engage in the coordination undertaken by the clusters/sectors by participating in joint assessments when appropriate, by adhering to agreed definitions, methodologies and data sharing[14] as set out by clusters/sectors, and by ensuring temporal and geographical synchronization.

Agencies will continue to conduct single assessments. However, they should do so in coordination with their cluster/sector lead, by harmonizing data collection methodologies and synchronizing their timing and location.

12. As described in the IASC Terms of Reference for the Humanitarian Coordinator (endorsed by the 73rd IASC Working Group on 4 May 2009), the Humanitarian Coordinator at country level is responsible for establishing and maintaining comprehensive coordination mechanisms in collaboration with 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.

14. Sensitive data should remain anonymous and confidential.

OVERVIEW OF ASSESSMENTS

Figure 1. Roles and responsibilities in coordinated assessments

1 Humanitarian Coordinator

▶ Coordinates inter-cluster/sector assessments

- ▶ Appoints assessment focal point for initial assessment
- ▶ Coordinates assessments undertaken by clusters/sectors
- ▶ Promotes the use of tools for harmonized assessments
- ▶ Shares assessment data across clusters/sectors
- ▶ Supports inter-cluster/sector analysis
- ▶ Prioritizes needs and decides on strategic priorities

2 Cluster/Sector Coordinator

▶ Supports inter-cluster/sector assessments

▶ Coordinates intra-cluster/sector assessments

- ▶ Supports inter-cluster/sector assessments
- ▶ Coordinates assessments of cluster/sector members
- ▶ Promotes the use of tools for harmonized assessments
- ▶ Sets out standards for cluster/sector assessments
- ▶ Promotes joint assessments within the cluster/sector
- ▶ Shares assessment data within the cluster/sector
- ▶ Supports cluster/sector analysis

3 Cluster/Sector Member

▶ Supports and/or implements coordinated assessments

- ▶ Shares information on assessments with clusters/sectors
- ▶ Uses tools for harmonized assessments
- ▶ Participates in joint assessments at the cluster/sector level
- ▶ Contributes to cluster/sector analysis
- ▶ Uses key humanitarian indicators and CODs

Box 7. The Coordinated Assessment Pool and Roster (CASPAR)

In order to meet these responsibilities, cluster/sector leads and OCHA may request support from the Coordinated Assessment Pool and Roster (CASPAR). The CASPAR deploys individuals trained in NATF guidance and tools to support preparedness for and implementation of coordinated assessments in the field.

Box 8. Coordination of needs assessments in refugee situations

UNHCR prepares for, leads and coordinates the response in refugee emergencies in partnership with other agencies. The UNHCR Representative leads the needs assessment, ensures appropriate sectoral leadership, establishes appropriate coordination mechanisms (e.g. sectoral coordination meetings, information management and exchange and donor consultations), and advocates on behalf of refugees. The cluster approach does not apply in refugee situations.

UNHCR engages key partners, leads, coordinates and systematically monitors the following joint processes, among others:

- contingency planning and preparedness activities related to potential refugee arrivals or issues that could impact a refugee population;
- multi-sector needs assessments and analysis;
- development of response plans;
- information management (population and demographic data, maps, who does what where matrices, situation reports including priority concerns and highlights shared by partners, funding overviews, and assessments against common indicators);
- advocacy and fund-raising, including in some cases the coordination of joint appeals for stand-alone refugee operations.

UNHCR will apply the principles described in this Operational Guidance when coordinating needs assessments in refugee situations.

Principles for coordinated assessments

The following principles can support the attainment of inter-agency agreement on a common approach. These may also apply to individual assessments.

1 One of the key objectives of assessments is to **identify immediate humanitarian priorities** by analysing affected communities' needs and coping mechanisms and understanding the authorities' capacities (including their response capacities).[15] Humanitarian organizations should focus on the gaps that exist between these needs, capacities and gaps, as stated in the SPHERE Assessment Standard.[16]

2 **Whenever possible assessments are led by national governments**, 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 national capacities (e.g. NGOs).

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

4 **Each assessment builds on existing data.** New assessment data expand the previous analysis and add value to assessments and information systems in a "rolling assessment" process.

5 **Links between assessment and monitoring are ensured.** Needs assessments should be designed with situation and performance monitoring in mind. Initial data on needs can be used as baseline data for comparison with data subsequently drawn from monitoring systems and help show whether interventions have been successful in responding to identified needs.

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

16. http://www.sphereproject.org/

Box 9. The SPHERE Assessment Standard

The Assessment Standard acknowledges the critical importance of understanding need in relation to the political, social, economic and environmental context in which a disaster has occurred. The design of an effective response addresses the unmet needs of disaster-affected people and is based on the 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."

6 **Assessments collect exactly the data that are required for decision-making.** This includes both quantitative and qualitative data.[17] The early identification of key humanitarian indicators can facilitate timely processing and decision-making, prevent the collection of too much information and thus avoid a slowdown in the assessment's implementation, fatigue among assessed communities and delay in data processing.

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

8 **Assessments adequately address priority cross-cutting issues such as gender, age, HIV/AIDS and the environment.** Priority vulnerable groups and target populations should be included in contingency planning and initial assessments. This requires carrying out systematic dialogue with women, men, boys and girls (including adolescent girls and boys) and all potentially vulnerable groups to ensure that their needs are covered, collecting and storing data in a disaggregated form (by sex, age and diversity), and forming gender-balanced assessment teams that can capture every group's perspective and access all vulnerable groups.

9 **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, that 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 see the *IASC Operational Guidance on Information Management*.

10 **Contextual analysis is undertaken when interpreting assessment findings.** Contextual considerations allow for a clearer understanding of priority needs and a better-targeted assistance. This is supported through open-ended questions,[19] which allow beneficiaries to identify their priority needs.

11 **Early recovery[20] begins during the emergency response and takes place in parallel with relief activities.** It is an effective and indispensible component of crisis response, 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 that appear in initial and revised flash appeals are provided in approved IASC guidance notes.[21]

17. According to UNFPA's Guidelines on Data Issues in Humanitarian Crisis Situations (June 2010), "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. The Principles of Humanitarian Information Management and Exchange are accessibility, inclusiveness, interoperability, accountability, verifiability, relevance, impartiality, humanity, timeliness, sustainability, reliability, reciprocity, and confidentiality. [Global Symposium +5 on Information for Humanitarian Action, Final Report, 2008].

19. Open-ended questions have no fixed set of responses allowing respondents to answer as they sees fit. They allow respondents to think and reflect, and give them a chance to voice their answers in their own words. Close-ended questions have specific answers, which are normally short, with yes or no answers, factual and easy to verify.

20. 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).

21. The IASC Guidance on Early Recovery in Flash Appeals: A Phased Approach and the IASC Humanitarian Financing Group's document on Improving the Predictability of Financing Early Recovery Activities.

3 Approaches and procedures

Humanitarian assessments are carried out by a variety of partners and in different contexts. If due attention is paid to coordination, this diversity can be of great benefit to the overall humanitarian response.

This section recommends approaches and standard operating procedures for undertaking coordinated assessments in the first month following a crisis. It also includes references to key tools available in the online Coordinated Assessment Toolkit (http://oneresponse.info/resources/NeedsAssessment), and which humanitarian actors should consult when implementing these procedures.

Approaches to coordinated assessments

The approach 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 early strategic decisions and preliminary emergency funding allocations, while in later phases they inform programming and monitoring as well as Flash Appeal revisions.
- **The human and financial resources** that can be allocated to the assessment, relative to those devoted to the delivery of relief assistance.

The Assessment Framework (Figure 2) distinguishes between:

- Initial assessments carried out during Phase 1 (the first 72 hours)
- Rapid assessments carried out during Phase 2 (the first and second weeks)
- In-depth assessments carried out during Phase 3 (the third and fourth weeks)
- In-depth assessments, including on recovery needs, carried out during Phase 4 (fifth week onwards)

The Assessment Framework presents the approach to follow during each of the four Phases, including the recommended types of assessments and their purpose, the methodology for data collection, the link to funding proposals, and key outputs.[24]

It highlights how the MIRA approach should be used for the initial assessment carried out during Phase 1 and for the inter-cluster assessment carried out during Phase 2.[25]

Figure 3 on the *Continuum of coordinated assessments* illustrates the relative and evolving importance of the various sources of data/information that are available during the different phases of an emergency. It also details the recommended levels of coordination based on:

- the type of data/information source;
- the phase of the emergency;
- the phase of the information management cycle considered (collection/collation or 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.*

24. *These phases are conceptual in nature and no sudden-onset disaster operates along an exact timeline.*

25. *In practice, the separation between the different phases is not always clear, and timeframes vary according to context. The proposed phases are indicative and provided as a frame of reference. In complex emergencies, the timeline may differ: some periods may last longer if insecurity persists, and actors are sometimes obliged to revert to initial rapid assessment if security deteriorates. Inter-cluster/sector coordination needs to be continued throughout the phases.*

26. *Post disaster needs assessments (in Figure 2 Assessment Framework).*

Figure 2. The Assessment Framework

	PHASE 0	PHASE I	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4
	Preparedness	*Saving and sustaining lives and re-establishing essential services*		*Saving livelihoods and re-establishing essential services*	
Timeline		72 hours	1 week — 2 weeks	3 weeks — 4 weeks	5 weeks +

Assessment coordination bands: MIRA (Multi-cluster Initial and Rapid Assessment) spans Phase 1–2. Continued Inter-Cluster/Sector Assessment Coordination spans Phase 3–4.

Recommended type of coordinated assessment
- **PHASE 0:** Coordinated assessment preparedness
- **PHASE 1:** Initial assessment for Preliminary Scenario Definition
- **PHASE 2:** Multi cluster/sector initial rapid assessment (MIRA)
- **PHASE 3:** Single cluster/sector coordinated in-depth assessments, harmonized across Clusters/Sectors (any single agency assessments should be coordinated by cluster/sector coordinators)
- **PHASE 4:** 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)

Purpose of the assessment
- **PHASE 0:** Preparedness planning & gathering pre-crisis data
- **PHASE 1:** Initial assessment to:
  - estimate scale & severity of the impact of the event
  - locate affected populations
  - inform initial response decisions
  - inform Phase 2 rapid assessments
- **PHASE 2:** 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
- **PHASE 3:** In-depth assessment to:
  - analyse situation & trends
  - adjust ongoing response
  - inform detailed planning for humanitarian relief/early recovery
  - establish baseline for operational & strategic performance monitoring
- **PHASE 4:** In-depth assessment to:
  - analyse situation & trend
  - inform phasing out of life-sustaining activities
  - inform detailed planning for humanitarian relief and (early) recovery monitoring
  - feed into performance monitoring

Methodology for data collection
- **PHASE 0:**
  - Prepare & agree on assessment formats, indicators & tools
  - Organize preparedness trainings & if possible simulations
  - Establish procedures & responsibilities
  - Prepare CODs, P-Codes, & key humanitarian indicators
  - Gather baseline data
  - Prepare fact sheets & lessons learnt disasters
- **PHASE 1:**
  - Use mostly secondary data: pre-crisis information, surveys & reports prior to the event, fact sheets
  - Research primary data: initial reports from the field, media fly-overs, satellite imagery, direct observation from quick visits to field (if feasible), & information from still functioning monitoring & reporting systems
  - Use initial CODs
- **PHASE 2:**
  - Use secondary data from various sources
  - Research primary data as in Phase I, complemented by purposively selected site visits, & community/key informant interviews
  - Use Community (e.g. village, camp or neighbourhoods), or Institutions (e.g. schools & health facilities) as units of measurement for site visits
  - Use simple agreed form with key questions
  - Use expanded CODs & key humanitarian indicators
- **PHASE 3:**
  - Use secondary data from various sources
  - Use harmonized sector/cluster specific tools
  - Research primary data as in Phase 2, but with site visits selected through purposive & representative sampling methods (using more detailed sectoral surveys questionnaires)
  - Seek new data from (re)-established monitoring systems
  - Use the same units of measurement as in Phase 2, but include also Household and Individual
  - Use comprehensive CODs & key humanitarian indicators
- **PHASE 4:**
  - Use the same sources & methods as in Phase 3
  - Use additional guidance for recovery assessment (Damage & Loss Assessment & sectoral PDNA guidance)[26] for recovery assessment
  - Conduct conflict analysis in case of complex emergencies

Types of funding proposals
- **PHASE 0:** Proposals for preparedness
- **PHASE 1:**
  - Allocation of preliminary emergency funding
  - Initial flash appeal
  - First response proposals
- **PHASE 2:**
  - Emergency response proposals
  - Flash appeal revision (within one month of the initial Flash Appeal)
- **PHASE 3:**
  - Revised emergency response proposals
  - National Recovery and Reconstruction Plan
- **PHASE 4:**
  - National Recovery & Reconstruction Plan
  - Consolidated appeal

Output
- **PHASE 0:**
  - Assessment preparedness plan agreed by HCT
  - Pre-crisis data compiled
- **PHASE 1:** Preliminary Scenario Definition (within 3 days)
- **PHASE 2:**
  - MIRA Report (within 14 days)
  - Humanitarian Dashboard
- **PHASE 3:**
  - Sector/cluster reports
  - Humanitarian Dashboard
- **PHASE 4:**
  - Sector/cluster reports
  - PDNA and recovery framework
  - Humanitarian Dashboard

APPROACHES AND PROCEDURES

13

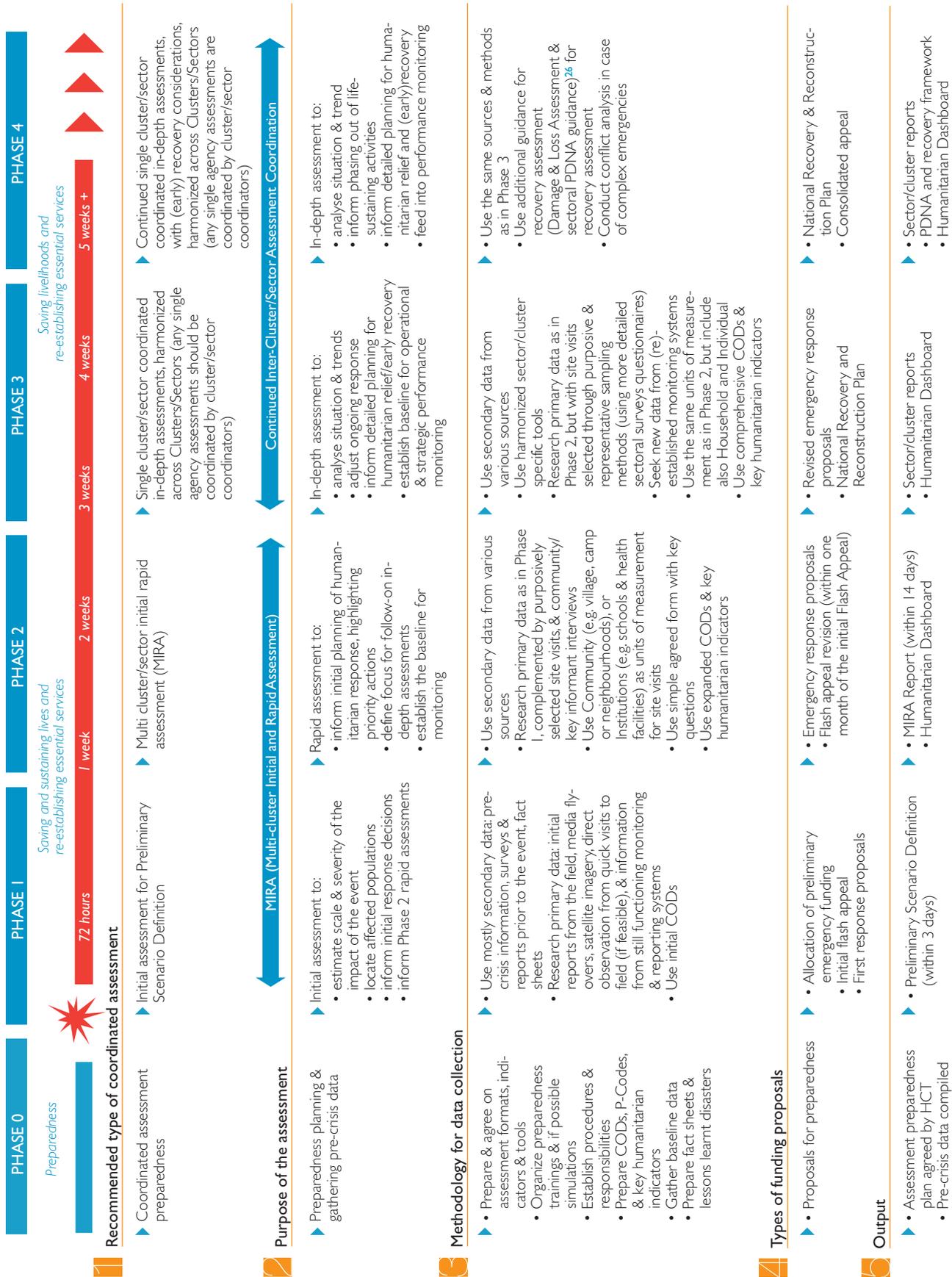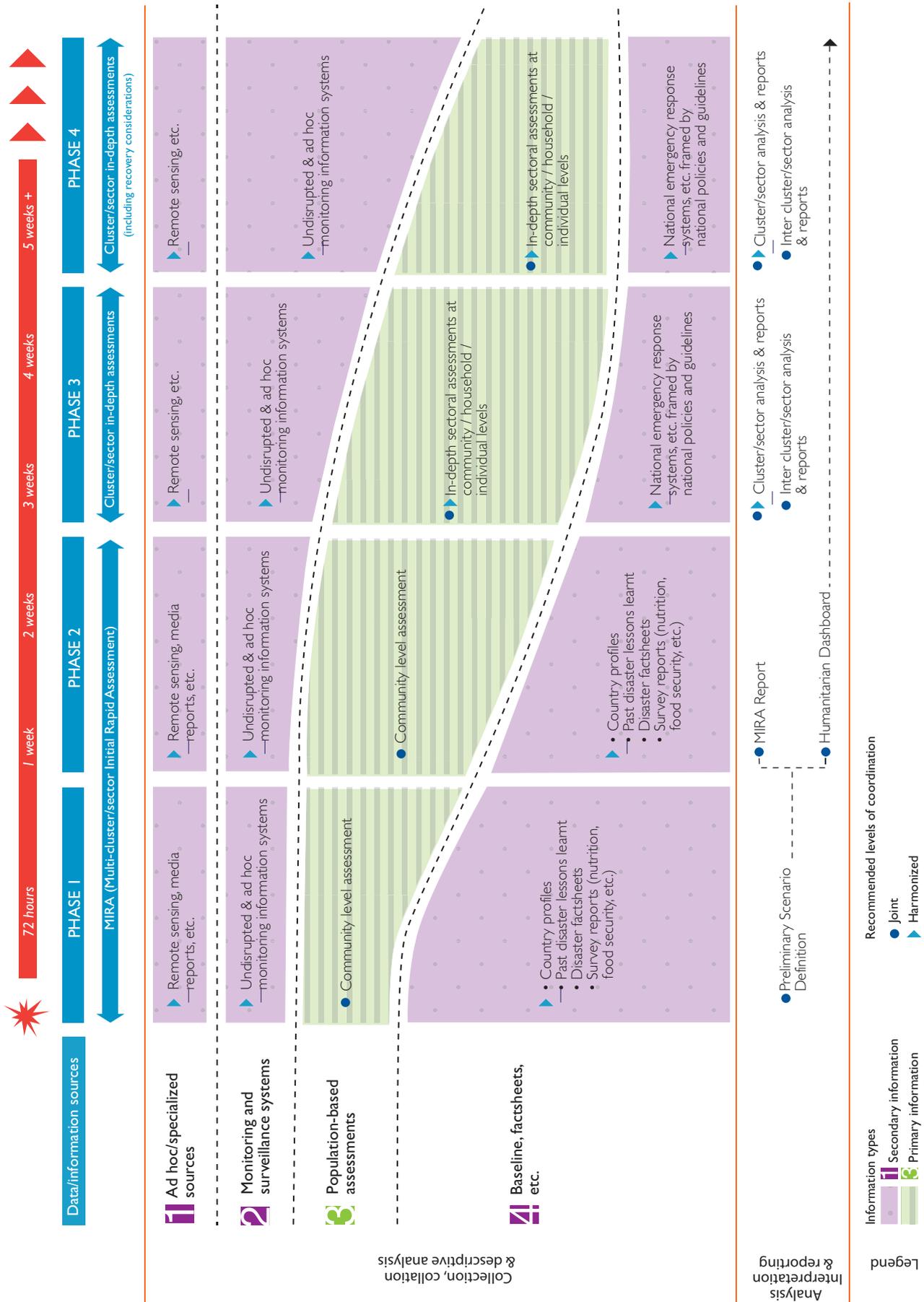# Figure 3. Data sources in assessments

Phase 1: first 72 hours – Initial assessment for Preliminary Scenario Definition

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

In the first 72 hours, an initial assessment is recommended. Undertaken collaboratively, it will gauge the scale and severity of the crisis, forecast its evolution, locate affected populations, and identify key affected sectors. The assessment's findings are presented in the form of a Preliminary Scenario Definition and disseminated by the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator. It should be used to advise national authorities, inform initial response decisions, prepare situation reports and key messages by the Emergency Relief Coordinator, determine preliminary emergency funding needs, and initiate the planning of Phase 2 assessments. The Preliminary Scenario Definition should be included in the initial Flash Appeal.

When time and access is limited, the assessment will be done using mostly secondary data such as pre-crisis information, national authorities and media reports, crowdsourcing,[27] fact sheets and lessons learnt from similar emergencies.

Available primary data are mainly direct observation and basic analysis from remote sensing data. Organizations that are able to conduct short field visits or aerial assessments should undertake them together.

Primary and secondary data should be widely shared so that they can contribute to the intersectoral analysis. An initial assessment team involving senior agency officials (or lead agencies if clusters/sectors are already in place at the national level) will carry out the analysis.

27. Crowdsourcing is a distributed problem-solving and production model. It distributes tasks traditionally performed by specific individuals to a group of people or community (crowd) through an open call.

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

APPROACHES AND PROCEDURES

Table 1. Standard operating procedures: initial assessment for Preliminary Scenario Definition (first 72 hours)

Activity	Responsible
1. Appoints an assessment focal point to ensure exchange of information on planned/initial assessments and form an initial assessment team	▶ Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator[28]
2. Provide staff and/or sectoral information to the initial assessment	▶ Agencies (if possible with cluster/sector representation)
3. Request additional assessment support, as required, through surge mechanisms including the CASPAR	▶ OCHA and, if possible, clusters/sectors lead agencies
4. Updates and disseminates CODs	▶ OCHA
5. Coordinates information gathering (key informants, flyovers, etc.)	▶ UNDAC/OCHA
6. Collect data (particularly secondary data)	▶ OCHA, UNDAC, and agencies (if possible with cluster/sector representation)
7. Collates data from humanitarian partners and integrates with information from other sources (media, government, baseline)	▶ UNDAC/OCHA
8. Maintain communication with the national disaster management unit	
9. Undertake a common analysis	▶ UNDAC, OCHA, agencies (if possible with cluster/sector representation)
10. Compile the Preliminary Scenario Definition	▶ UNDAC/OCHA
11. Ensure that the Preliminary Scenario Definition informs flash appeals, situation reports, and the Emergency Relief Coordinator's key messages	

Phase 2: first 2 weeks – Multi Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment

Focus	Overall impact of the crisis and strategic humanitarian priorities
Timeframe	14 days
Sources	Mix of secondary and primary data. Primary field data collected jointly from purposively selected locations, spread across affected areas and chosen based on access, timing, resources and purpose of the assessment
Resources	Mainly provided by national authorities, the Humanitarian Coordinator/ Resident Coordinator office, UNDAC/ OCHA, and experienced staff from agencies and clusters/sectors, managed by the AIM Working Group
Reporting	MIRA Report with cross-cluster/sectoral conclusions

In the first two weeks, a MIRA is recommended. The assessment will be undertaken jointly, bringing together clusters/sectors around one agreed methodology so that data collection, collation, processing and analysis are aligned into a single process. The country-level inter-cluster coordination mechanism will be responsible for leading this assessment, and may form a AIM Working Group to manage it. The assessment will result in a MIRA Report, which will be used by 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 and establish the baseline for monitoring. Its key findings should be captured in the Humanitarian Dashboard and included in the revised appeal to highlight the evidence on which the appeals are based.

Assessment design and planning. The AIM Working Group promotes the harmonization of assessments by ensuring the use of CODs, key indicators and geographical and temporal synchronization by all clusters/sectors. It also initiates the joint collection of primary data.

29. 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 on how the crisis may have affected pre-crisis baselines. Primary data collection, using multiple sources and informants, will be

Table 2. Standard operating procedures: MIRA (first 2 weeks)

Activity	Responsible
1. Decides to undertake a MIRA and to commission the ICCM (supported by OCHA) to implement it. The ICCM may set up an AIM Working Group	Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator
2. Request additional assessment support, as required, through surge mechanisms including the CASPAR	Clusters/sector coordinators and OCHA
3. Ensures that the Preliminary Scenario Definition informs further assessments in Phase 2	AIM Working Group (supported by OCHA)
4. Promotes the harmonization of assessments by ensuring the use of CODs, key indicators, and geographical and temporal synchronization by all clusters/sectors	
5. Collects and performs the analysis of secondary data to complement primary data collection	
6. Coordinates the design and implementation of primary data collection though joint assessments[29]	
7. Coordinates and consolidates ongoing information collection, including, when possible, from monitoring systems	
8. Prepares a Survey of Surveys and updates it regularly	OCHA
9. Populate the Humanitarian Dashboard using key humanitarian indicators	Clusters/sector coordinators and OCHA
10. Undertake sectoral analysis	Clusters/sectors
11. Undertake inter-sectoral analysis	Initially AIM Working Group (supported by OCHA), followed by the HTC
12. Disseminates analysis report and share data	OCHA, on behalf of AIM Working Group
13. Ensures results are used to inform operational planning and flash appeal revision	AIM Working Group (supported by OCHA)

managed jointly by cluster/sectors on the basis of a pre-agreed Investigation Form. The unit of measurement (See Annex 2) is at the community and institutional levels. The Investigation Form will structure the collection of information that is deemed most relevant to the context. The primary data thus collected 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 AIM Working Group will interpret inter cluster/sector data, combining all sources of information. The Humanitarian Dashboard can be used to support this inter-cluster/sector analysis.

Reporting and dissemination. The MIRA Report should be shared as appropriate, on behalf of the Humanitarian Country Team. It should be used to inform initial situation reports and the Emergency Relief Coordinator's key messages. 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/sector assessments.

Phase 3: Week 3 and onwards – Single cluster/sector coordinated in-depth needs assessment

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

After the first two weeks, the need for detailed sectoral data becomes more pressing and each cluster/sector should coordinate single-cluster/sector in-depth needs assessments. Clusters/sectors should at minimum harmonize their assessments and, when possible, undertake them jointly.

The findings of single cluster/sector assessments should be compiled into in-depth 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 as well as the revision of emergency response proposals.

Assessments undertaken by each cluster/sector should also be sufficiently harmonized to allow inter-cluster/sector comparison. The results will be used in the ICCM inter cluster/sector analysis, and may also be used by the Humanitarian Country Team.

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 CODs. This will allow the results of assessments to be collated within the cluster/sector.

Data collection, collation and processing. An increasing amount of primary data collection can take place in this Phase. Much of this data will come from (re)-established information systems. Additional community level assessments[30] should be undertaken jointly to increase consistency and efficiency. The units of measurements may be broken down to household and individual levels 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 table of key indicators. 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 analyse the sectoral data under the leadership of the Cluster/Sector Coordinator. The Humanitarian Dashboard sectoral pages can be used to support this analysis.

30. The community level assessment is a standardized methodology for the systematic collection, collation and analysis of primary data gathered directly from affected communities. It focuses mostly on qualitative information and provides a unique opportunity to integrate "needs and priorities as perceived by affected populations" into the broader assessment of key humanitarian priorities.

APPROACHES AND PROCEDURES

Inter-sectoral data analysis and interpretation. Based on the above, the ICCM begins inter-sectoral analysis to identify linkages and issues that cut across clusters/sectors. The Humanitarian Dashboard should be used to support this analysis. Inter-sectoral analysis should help achieve a common understanding of priority interventions, areas and vulnerable groups, as well as establish a common basis for forecasting possible trends and scenarios. The results should be used for decision-making by OCHA, clusters/sectors, the ICCM and the Humanitarian Country Team.

Assessment reporting and dissemination. The findings of cluster/sector assessment and other assessment data should be shared widely on behalf of the cluster/sector.

Table 3. Standard operating procedures: single cluster/sector coordinated in-depth needs assessment (week 3 onwards)

Activity	Responsible
1. Continues to coordinate inter-cluster/sector assessments	ICCM
2. Ensure cluster coordination of assessments and joint sectoral analysis	Cluster/sector coordinators, supported by cluster/sector members
3. Collate, process and analyse data (including regular updates) into a standard database to facilitate sharing of results	
4. Coordinate the design and implementation of primary data collection through harmonized or joint assessments	
5. Coordinate and consolidate ongoing information collection from monitoring systems	
6. Ensure assessment data are used to populate a set of key humanitarian indicators and maintain an inter-cluster database	Clusters/sector coordinators and OCHA
7. Maintain the Humanitarian Dashboard	
8. Cluster specific analysis of the humanitarian situation	Cluster/sector coordinators
9. Multi-cluster analysis of the humanitarian situation supported by the Humanitarian Dashboard	Initially by ICCM, supported by OCHA and supplemented by the Humanitarian Country Team
10. Circulate assessment reports in user-friendly formats to key stakeholders	ICCM, supported by OCHA

31. PDNAs or PCNAs 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 their Joint Declaration on Post Crisis Needs Assessment and Recovery Planning (25 Sep 2008). The PDNA combines the Damage and Loss Assessment developed by the United Nations 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.

Phase 4: Week 4 and onwards Addressing recovery needs

This phase is essentially the continuation of the previous one. The main difference is that early recovery considerations become more explicitly integrated in the cluster/sectoral assessments and as such are taken into account in the inter-cluster/sector analysis. In some cases, formal post-disaster or post-conflict needs assessments (PDNA/ PCNA)[31] can be carried out, upon the request of the government.

As of the second month, the need for recovery-oriented data may increase, in particular on the part of the government. Clusters/sectors assessments should be forward-looking while maintaining focus on the ongoing emergency response. 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.[32] There is no clear-cut boundary between the relief and recovery periods.[33]

In principle, recovery considerations need to be integrated into humanitarian assessments and programming. When a government requests a formal PDNA or PCNA, a stand-alone report is produced, which includes a recovery framework and plan after a PDNA or a transition result framework after a PCNA. Often such reports are the basis for developing national plans and are used for resource mobilization in recovery-oriented donor conferences.

4 Preparing for assessments

Preparedness is key to the success of a coordinated assessment. Humanitarian and development partners are strongly encouraged to make coordinated assessments part of their emergency preparedness efforts. A well-designed common assessment approach that includes agreed-upon roles and responsibilities 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 assessments 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 on how sector/cluster assessment information will be collated and shared withothers;
- Definition of how sector/cluster members address needs assessment.

If needed, cluster/sector lead agencies and OCHA can request support from the CASPAR for preparing coordinated needs assessment. Support can take of the form of training for 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 knowledge and understanding of coordinated assessments and collective analysis. 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 the use of existing coordination mechanisms, especially for inter-cluster/sectoral coordination for preparedness and contingency planning. Include 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, draft terms of reference for an Assessment Working Group, and/or assessment-related tasks for the ICCM. Develop partnerships with national research institutions and other national bodies that have data collection capacity.
- **Prepare CODs.**
- **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 learnt to the national context, and link them to the

32. 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).

33. Early recovery in complex emergencies is usually placed within a transition phase. Such transitions to development are not linear processes, and relapses of insecurity are often observed. They also require explicit political choices towards peace- and state-building objectives and 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.

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 to 4.** This includes adapting standard operating procedures, reporting formats, information requirements and questionnaires. When possible, adapt existing tools. Share draft assessment tools with stakeholders, carry out field-testing, and revise them based on the feedback.

- **Ensure the organization of logistics and human resources.** This includes securing agreements for the funding and transportation of required equipment (tools, computers, PDAs). Identify participants for the assessment team, ensuring a suitable gender balance, and where needed, train in-country capacity.

- **Define the parameters of the assessment design.** Clarify the purpose and audience, the targeted phases and the methodologies. Identify how information will be collected (PDAs, mobile phones), how it will be processed (databases, spread sheets), and how it will be analysed. Agree on an outline for the technical and analytical assessment reports and on who will be responsible for producing them.

- **Develop a process around communicating findings, and identify how the information will be shared and disseminated broadly.**

A1 Humanitarian Dashboard

Purpose

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

- assist the humanitarian country team in facilitating analysis, dialogue and strategic programming on needs, coverage, gaps and priorities;
- assist cluster lead agencies in presenting consolidated assessment information from within the clusters, and in tracking/highlighting progress against their targets;
- serve as the basis for a process of inter-sectoral analysis, including the discussion of needs, coverage, gaps and priorities across clusters;
- highlight information gaps and point out areas to be targeted for further needs assessment;
- support advocacy by illustrating key issues, bottlenecks, number of people in need, and coverage.

Users and scope

The principal intended users of the Humanitarian Dashboard are the humanitarian country teams, cluster/sector partners at country-level and humanitarian coordinators. In addition, its audience[34] 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).

Process

A new or updated Humanitarian Dashboard is produced when a crisis breaks out or is imminent, when assessments provide new information on an ongoing crisis, 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 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 assistance in their sector?
- How many people are receiving assistance in their sector?
- 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 humanitarian coordinator, 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 overall gaps and analysis, capacities and constraints as well as on the humanitarian country team's priorities. This is to be decided by the team.

34. Certain sections of the Humanitarian Dashboard with particularly sensitive information may have to remain confidential. Ultimately it would be the responsibility of the humanitarian coordinator to determine the level of sensitivity and which sections would be for public use or for limited access.

ANNEXES

Analysis and discussion of the Humanitarian Dashboard findings will be led by the humanitarian coordinator, and will focus on inter-sectoral analysis and conclusions. Changes will be made to the Overview Page as needed to reflect the humanitarian country team's consensus around key issues.

The Humanitarian Dashboard will be issued in the name of the humanitarian coordinator who will bear the overall responsibility and ownership. The Dashboard will be distributed to the humanitarian country team's members, and posted on the One Response Website. It can also be attached to situation reports and flash/consolidated appeals, as deemed useful.

Box 10. 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 that looks at how a particular number or piece of information relates to the whole.
- "Benchmarking" is a form of comparative analysis that compares different geographic locations within a country, or different countries.
- When data are 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 the humanitarian response.

Sample overview page

HUMANITARIAN DASHBOARD ▶ SAHEL FOOD AND NUTRITION CRISIS

(as of 20 February 2011)

SITUATION OVERVIEW

▶ **SEVERITY**: Over 10 million people are affected by food insecurity in 8 countries of the Sahel region. A number of areas will see acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3), in particular from April to September.

The nutritional situation is catastrophic in the most affected areas with severe malnutrition rates ranging from 10-15%. (Fewsnet, Regional Strategy Feb 2012)

▶ **DRIVERS OF CRISIS**: This is a crisis of eroded resilience, compounded by sporadic rains, insufficient harvests and price increases. Agro-pastoral production in the poorest areas decreased by 50%; market prices of agriculture produces increased, up to 60-85% for corn and 100% for dry cereal.

▶ **SAHEL STRATEGY 2012**: This dashboard is aligned to the Response Plan addressing the Food and Nutrition Crisis in the Sahel developed by the Regional Working Group on Food Security and Nutrition (FSNWG - composed of United Nations agencies, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, NGOs and donors).

TREND ANALYSIS

▶ **FOOD SECURITY**: The severity of acute food insecurity is not likely to surpass IPC Phase 3 if the response is sufficiently robust. The most severe food insecurity problem is expected from January to March in agropastoral and rainfed farming areas of central and southern Mauritania. (Fewsnet Feb 2012)

▶ **NUTRITION**: Severe, chronic constraints on nutritional wellbeing mean that levels of acute malnutrition are likely to remain near or above 15 percent in the most affected areas. (Fewsnet Feb 2012)

▶ **AGRICULTURE**: While the regional production is slightly higher than the 5-year average localized shortfalls continue to impact food availability (harvest deficits: Chad 50%; Niger 30%; Mauritania 52%).

▶ **REMITTANCES** are decreasing due to the economic downturn in Europe and the return of over 200,000 economic migrants from Libya/Cote d'Ivoire.

▶ **SECURITY**: The recent escalation of hostilities in Mali and the presence of armed groups in Mauritania, Niger and Nigeria may affect local food accessibility. (IASC Dec 2011, OCHA Feb 2012)

PEOPLE IN NEED ACROSS SAHEL

>10 million	Food insecure people
> 1 million	Children suffering from severe malnutrition (SAM)
> 2 million	Children suffering from moderate malnutrition (MAM)

PEOPLE IN NEED PER COUNTRY

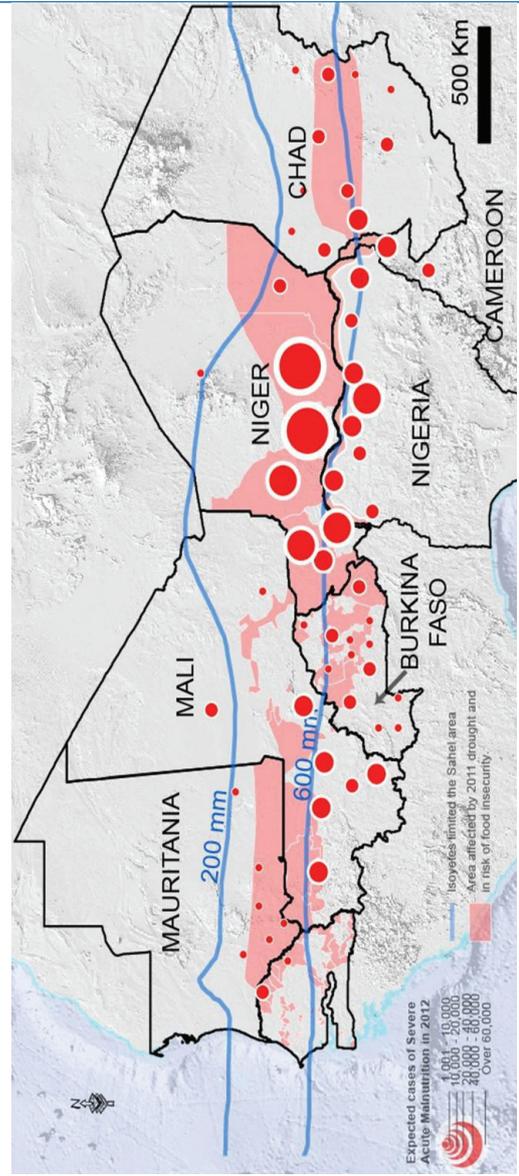| Country	Food insecure population	Expected # of SAM caseload	Expected # of MAM caseloads
Burkina Faso	1,670,000	99,200	101,000
Cameroon (north)	ND	55,100	91,000
Chad	1,600,000	127,300	300,000
Mali	3,000,000	175,000	175,000
Mauritania	700,000	12,600	40,000
Niger	5,458,000	331,000	725,000
Nord Nigeria	ND	207,700	559,000
Senegal	850,000	20,000	68,000

BASELINE INDICATORS

Number of children dying yearly of malnutrition in the Sahel	226,000
Number of children dying yearly in the Sahel	645,000
Average poverty rate (sub-Saharan Africa)	51%

Country	Burkina Faso	Cameroon (north)	Chad	Mali	Mauritania	Niger	Nigeria (north)	Senegal
Crude mortality rate[1]	13	14	16	15	10	15	16	11
<5 Mortality rate[1]	176	136	175	178	111	143	143	75
<5 Global acute malnutrition[1]	10.2%	11.4%	15%	10.9%	10.7%	12.3%	9.7%	10.1%
<5 Severe acute malnutrition[1]	2.4%	3%	3.5	2.2%	1.4%	1.9%	1.9%	2.3%
HDI rank (out of 187)[2]	181	150	183	175	159	186	156	155
Rural population[3]	75%	42%	72%	65%	59%	83%	51%	58%
Total population (thousands)[3]	16,468	19,598	11,227	15,369	3,459	15,511	158,423	12,433

(Sources: (1) UNICEF/MICS 2011, (2) UNDP 2011, (3) World Bank 2010)

MAIN AREAS OF FOOD INSECURITY AND MALNUTRITION THE SAHEL REGION

Sources: Unless otherwise stated, the Response Plan addressing the Food and Nutrition Crisis in the Sahel, 2012

A2 Key information management 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 are collected. When many stakeholders are involved, 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 take too long to compile, and not all the data are actually analysed 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 elements needed by multiple actors;
- eliminating elements 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 (e.g. not choosing household level data in an initial rapid assessment).

The volume of data received and the complexity of the analysis required to make the information useful will determine whether the data analysis solution will be automated or manual. Given the volume of data in most humanitarian crises – particularly joint needs assessments –, an automated analysis of needs assessment data is often required. Decisions about how the data will be analysed should be made during the design phase and executed during the collation phase. Some of the questions that should be asked during 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 (new data are gathered) or secondary (already-existing data that can be gathered from desk reviews, pre-crisis data, etc.) data collection techniques. 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 but that are reviewed and analysed 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 data are 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 is not possible, either because they are not available or accurate, a primary data collection system needs to be designed.

Data collection methods

Different primary data collection techniques can be used depending on the situation. For example, a rapid needs assessment of a large area might use community-level data collection forms with closed-ended questions. In contrast, for more detailed but less urgent data at household or individual level, a survey that includes representative sampling from the population might be used. Another technique used in ongoing needs assessment is surveillance, where the same data is collected repeatedly over a period of time, rather than just once.

Visual inspection of the disaster scene is a very effective assessment tool. It may take the form of satellite imageries or flyovers if the disaster-affected area is wide, or of a walk or inspection drive by a team equipped with field data collection tools such as camera with GPS and situation assessment maps. A visual tour helps understand the physical, economic, cultural and social aspects of a disaster. A visual inspection should help the assessor validate secondary data on the level of vulnerability and needs and verify the 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 because it may often be geographically limited.

In recent years **satellite imagery**, such as Earth Observation satellites, has demonstrated its utility in providing data on remote areas with difficult field access. 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. It allows timely overviews of the overall area affected by a given disaster and of its impact on population centres and physical assets (infrastructure, buildings, installations, transportation networks, storage facilities, farmland, irrigation works, environment, etc.).

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, behaviours and perspectives, and as a tool to interpret quantitative data, advocate for a programme or get buy-in, and help in the design of quantitative surveys. There are several advantages to this approach. Obtaining information directly from knowledgeable people is efficient. The format is flexible enough to explore new ideas and issues not anticipated while planning the assessment or the 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 the discussion on bias below) and it is sometimes difficult to prove the validity of findings (see discussion of validity below).

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, they are useful in producing information about beliefs, opinions, practices and reactions. A focus group will provide insight into a predetermined 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. They 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.

A **written or orally-administered survey** is a routine expectation of consumers of assessment. Surveys lend themselves to quantification, which is useful in establishing programme scale

and funding target levels. It is the only form of needs assessment that allows 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). Owing to the requirement of analysing a large number of surveys and the need, therefore, for machine assistance and response coding, 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, a focus group or a key informant approach. In constructing survey instruments, it is essential to pilot test the questionnaire and to engage with information management specialists who can advise on coding responses, etc. Where the language of the respondents is different than the language of the assessor, the questionnaire must be carefully translated.

Units 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, it is necessary to establish a unit of measurement for different data elements. Different units of measurement should not be combined on the same form (e.g. household-level questions on a village-level form).

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?

Not only will the unit of measurement affect the type of information obtained from the needs assessment, it will also have an impact on the time and the amount of resources needed to conduct it and the volume of data that will be received as a result. The 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 by creating a questionnaire, administering a household survey, or any field-based research process is complicated and should not be undertaken lightly.

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 run the risk of seeing their assessment criticized for not accurately measuring the problem and of having their results rejected. Many assessments fail the test of validity. External validity, described below, 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 the design and measure(s) used for a particular assessment/survey (e.g. questions or indicators) accurately describe the concept to which they are being applied.

Reliability is related to the indicators and measures chosen as well as to the assessors. There are many sophisticated formulas for estimating the reliability of an assessment, but only one aspect will be discussed here. 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, assessors receive training on the instrument, and then independently assess the same situation. Inter-rater reliability is established when their scoring of the same situation are consistent. If

they arrive at different scores it is necessary to re-examine the measure, their training and their application of the measure. Reliability is increased when the same instrument or measure is used over a number of different disaster events and situations.

The **construction of the questionnaire** is equally important. An interview is the period of time that the assessor engages a respondent and this time needs to be thought out in the same way that one would think about how to structure a meeting. For example, opening questions should build a relationship, inspire commitment to the interview and build trust. More difficult or sensitive questions should not be asked until the assessor has established rapport. However, they should not be left until the very end, as the interview should conclude with "wrap-up" demographic or next steps questions. In addition to the order of the questions, the assessor also needs to think about the wording. All survey questions need to be pilot-tested to ensure that they are uniformly understood. This is particularly important when surveys are translated into local languages or dialects. The assessor should make sure that each question asks only one question. It is also necessary to decide whether they will be open-ended or closed-ended questions. For closed-ended 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 levels are commonly described as nominal, ordinal and ratio, each one expressing a type of information. Nominal implies no relationship between the nominal values. It is a simple system in which numbers are labels for categories. In ordinal measurement, 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, together with 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 to legitimately generalize from the individuals visited and interviewed to the entire affected population. A poorly drawn sample means that assessors should not generalize and can, scientifically at least, only describe areas visited and individuals interviewed, a great impediment to drawing useful conclusions.

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

In assessments, "the ability to generalize the findings" is a concept known as external validity. The better the sampling plan, the greater the likelihood of satisfactory external validity. Because it is rarely possible to choose a "simple" random sample in a disaster recovery situation, 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 analyse the affected areas to ensure maximum comparability between the sample chosen and the overall population, a concept known as "proximal similarity". Further, it is 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. The subsections are then subjected to a random selection method. Once a subsection is selected, it may be further subdivided, other probability selections made, until at the lowest level, sample units (houses or people) can be listed and a selection can be made. 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 when dealing with population segments, e.g. ethnic or religious groups, or different occupational strata, e.g. fishers, herders, etc. The principles are the

same. Using more than one sampling procedure, such as choosing a cluster, stratifying within this cluster, and then randomly selecting respondents is known as multi-stage sampling. Drawing a representative sample is critical. However, no sampling plan will work in every situation.

Non-random samples are often referred to as purposive samples. They are often employed when using key informants 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 are completely legitimate as long as the findings are circumscribed by referencing methods for choosing the respondents.

Cross-checking and triangulation

In all needs assessments it is important to cross-check or triangulate findings, or in other words making sure that all findings are 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 endeavour. The needs assessor must seek to understand the sources of the bias and how it is affecting the analysis and conclusions, and must work to eliminate it as much as possible. There are three primary sources to bias.

The first is shortcomings in the research methodology. The sample itself may bias the results. For instance, the balance between rural and urban areas is uneven; a visit to a water source is conducted in the early afternoon whereas people fetch water in the early morning; a community with significant labour migration is assessed while the workers are gone. 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 programmatic, cultural, "agency" or expertise bias, as when a water/sanitation expert may be only looking for related projects and skew the findings or the weight of the findings in a favoured direction, or when a "westerner" misses some cultural aspects thereby affecting both what they are told and what they understand to have been said . The assessor may ask questions, intentionally or not, 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 the hopes of receiving 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. In this case, the respondent is not trying to skew the results but to provide the answer the respondent thinks the assessor is looking for. .

Training data collectors

When there is no available capacity in the country, measures should be taken to ramp up quickly. In the case of a rapid needs assessment, there will be only a short time for training 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

A3 Glossary

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 totalled 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.* Boston : Kluwer Academic Publishers, c1990; *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information*, 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

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 and that 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

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

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. (European Spatial Planning Observation Network, 2003) Thywissen, K. *Components of Risk: A Comparative Glossary*. United Nations University –Institute of Environment and Human Security, 2006.

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 that 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 neighbourhood, 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*, CARDIN

Convenience Sampling

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

Coordinated Assessment

Assessments that 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 Crises*, IASC NATF

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

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*, 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*, 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/International Malnutrition Task Force)

Demography

The quantitative study of human populations and of their variations. *Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information*, 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*, 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 that exceed the ability of the affected

community or society to cope using its own resources. *Terminology: Basic Terms of Disaster Risk Reduction*, ISDR Secretariat

"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)

Thywissen, K. *Components of Risk: A Comparative Glossary*, 2006

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*, 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*, 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*, 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) that suffers damage defects and deterioration of its structure and normal function because of 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*, 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*, CARDIN

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 that sets out the roles and responsibilities of agencies in emergency response and the coordination arrangements that 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

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

Geographic Information System (GIS)

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

Harmonized Assessment

Data collection processing and analysis is undertaken separately, however the data is sufficiently comparable (because of 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 Crises*, IASC NATF

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*, 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 United Nations humanitarian assistance is entrusted to the 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 United Nations 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 Crises*, IASC NATF

Incidence

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

ANNEXES

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

Joint Assessment

Data collection, processing and analysis form one single process among agencies within and between clusters/sectors, leading to a single report. Also referred to as a common assessment. *Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises*, IASC NATF

Joint Programming

The process through which the United Nations country team and national partners work together to prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate the United Nations'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

Key Humanitarian Indicators

The IASC NATF 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 Crises*, IASC NATF

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

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

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*, 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

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

Observation

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

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

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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*, 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

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

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

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

Sex and age disaggregated data

One of the most effective ways to understand different needs within a population is to collect data by sex and age (SADD), and to analyse that data, in part, using a gender and generational analysis that is situated within the context of the particular country, region and crisis. *Sex and Age Matter*, OCHA/Feinstein/Tufts/Care

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 be updated to reflect changes in operational processes and in the division of labour 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

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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 Crises*, IASC NATF

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

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*, CARDIN

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Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments
in Humanitarian Crises

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IASC Inter-Agency
Standing Committee