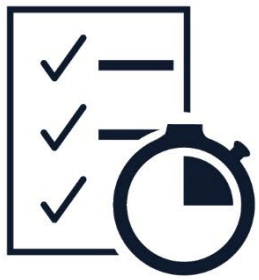


**LEARNER'S  
GUIDE**



**TECHNICAL COMPETENCY UNIT**



# **ADM.TEC 005.1**

**Conduct Rapid Assessment**



## **ASCEND**

**ASEAN Standards and Certification  
for Experts in Disaster Management**

## ASEAN Standards and Certification for Experts in Disaster Management

# CONDUCT RAPID ASSESSMENT

## ADM.TEC.005.1

### Learner's Guide



ONE ASEAN  
ONE RESPONSE



#### Project Sponsors:



The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam. The ASEAN Secretariat is based in Jakarta, Indonesia.

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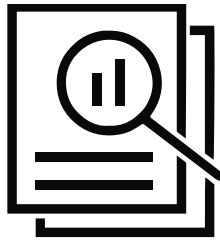
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ASCEND programme and  
Toolbox:

# Introduction



**ASCEND**

**1.1**

## The ASCEND Programme

Southeast Asian governments, through the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM), continue to invest in strengthening disaster management systems for a more secure and resilient region. However, the compounding risks and increasing uncertainty of disasters in our new climate reality threaten to set back the socioeconomic development gains of ASEAN societies. Widespread and recurring disaster damages and losses can overwhelm national capacities and worsen regional transboundary effects.

The Declaration on One ASEAN One Response (OAOR) at the 2016 ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Lao PDR, reaffirms ASEAN's vision to move towards faster and more integrated collective responses to disasters inside and outside the region. However, ASEAN's past experiences responding to large-scale disasters showed that realising the OAOR can be challenging. Various responders from different countries, institutions, organisations, and companies seek to contribute to the overall response. Their goodwill is appreciated, and several provide much-needed assistance. But ASEAN and affected Member States sometimes found it challenging to determine what knowledge and skills responders have and how they can effectively contribute to national and regional efforts.

Learnings from past experiences and shared commitment to realising the OAOR vision increased the need to develop regionally recognised Competency Standards and a certification process for disaster management professionals. The increased support led to initiatives that eventually created the ASEAN Standards and Certification for Experts in Disaster Management (ASCEND) Programme. ASCEND is now part of Priority 5: Global Leadership of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2021-2025, a programme that envisions ASEAN as a global leader in disaster management.

**1.2**

## The objectives of ASCEND

- To enhance the capacity of the ASEAN countries in the implementation of ASCEND.

- To establish regionally recognised Competency Standards and assessment processes covering five professions in disaster management.
- To improve the capacity of the AHA Centre to serve as the ASCEND Secretariat.
- To promote understanding of the ASCEND Framework among the ASEAN Member States (AMS) and other ASEAN sectors in preparation for the inclusion of ASCEND into the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA).

## 1.3

# Advantages and benefits of an ASCEND certification

### For ASEAN

The ASCEND certification can assist Member States in ensuring that competent disaster management professionals handle emergency assistance and disaster relief across the region. It also supports mutual recognition of disaster management competencies to facilitate acceptance of external aid and faster response.

### For AHA Centre

ASEAN, a rapidly developing and hazard-prone region, will need more competent disaster management professionals. The ASCEND certification can narrow current knowledge and skills gaps. It can also enable stronger cooperation and interoperability between disaster managers in their home countries and across regions.

### For disaster management professionals

Disaster management professionals can use their ASCEND certification to promote themselves professionally and serve as evidence of their experience and qualifications. It can also make it easier for organizations to determine the ability of certificate holders to perform critical work functions of specific occupations in the disaster management sector.

These ASCEND toolbox documents support the ASEAN Member States in identifying, building the capacity of, and mobilising competent disaster managers across Southeast Asia that are highly capable of contributing to reducing disaster risks and disaster losses in the region through timely and effective response.

**1.4**

## The ASCEND Toolbox

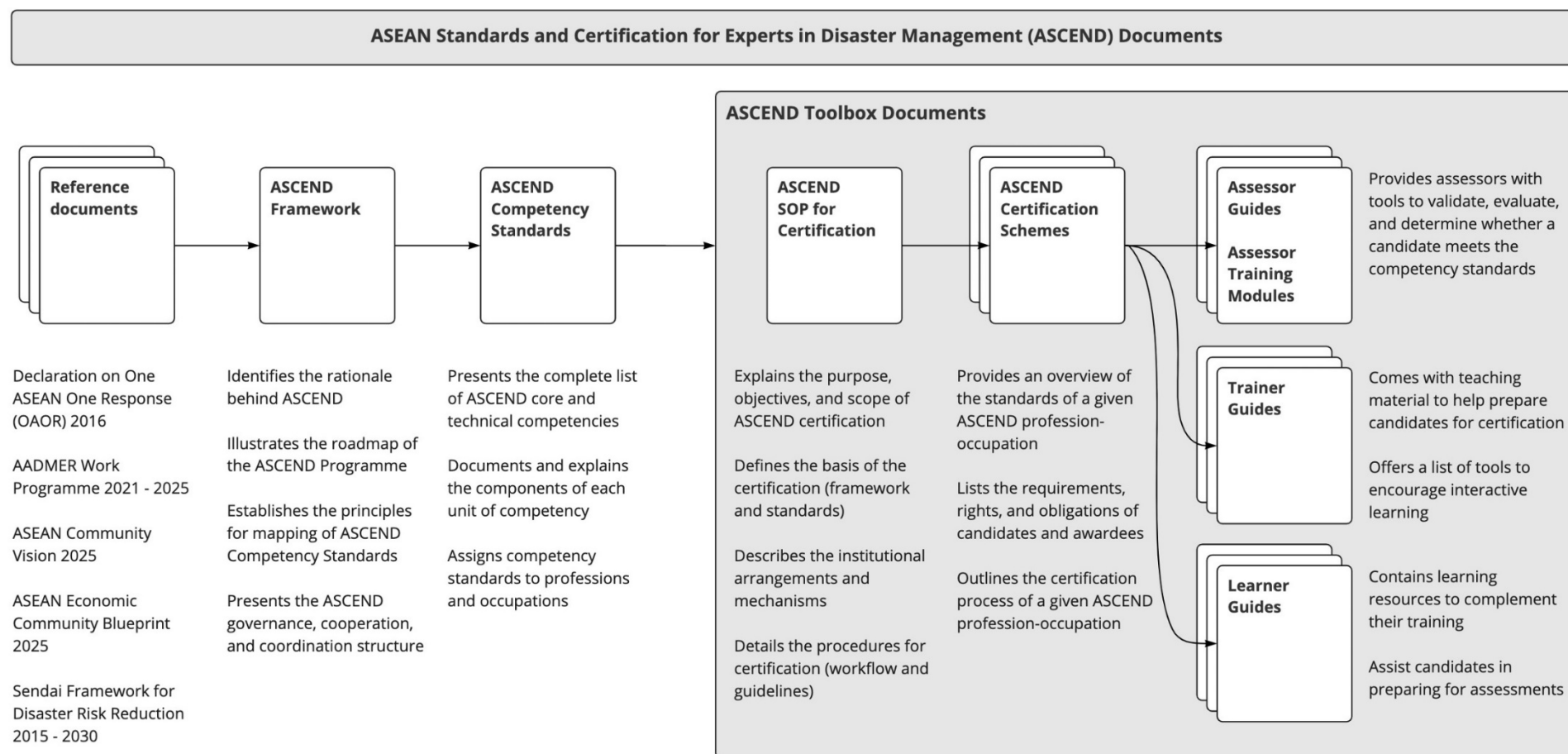
A set of technical requirements must exist before it is possible to implement the ASCEND programme in participating ASEAN Member States. The first requirement is the ASCEND Competency Standards, containing forty-three (43) regionally recognised core and technical competencies in selected disaster management professions. The Competency Standards outline the work elements and performance criteria that guide for certification of disaster management professionals across the region.

Another requirement is the development of an ASCEND Toolbox for five professions. These professions are Rapid Assessment, Humanitarian Logistics, Information Management, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), and Shelter Management. The ASCEND Toolbox consists of an SOP, Certification Schemes, Assessor Guides, Trainer Guides, and Learner Guides. The ASCEND Competency Standards, approved by the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management, are the primary basis of the Toolbox documents.

The SOP defines the basis of ASCEND, describes the institutional arrangements and mechanisms, and details the certification procedures. Certification Schemes present an overview of the standards of each profession-occupation and certification requirements, the rights and obligations of candidates and certificate holders, and general guidelines on the certification process. Assessor Guides provide assessors with tools to validate, evaluate, and determine whether a candidate meets the Competency Standards. Trainer Guides come with PowerPoint slides and presenter notes to help trainers prepare candidates for certification. It also offers a list of tools trainers may use to encourage interactive learning. Learner Guides assist candidates preparing for ASCEND certification in their chosen disaster management profession and occupation. It contains learning resources and complementary readings to help prepare them to undergo the required assessment.

The ASCEND Toolbox documents can assist the ASEAN Member States to identify, build the capacity of, and mobilise competent disaster managers across Southeast Asia to help reduce disaster risks and disaster losses in the region through timely and effective response.

Figure 1: Overview of ASCEND Toolbox Documents







# The Learner's Guide: Introduction for Candidates



ONE ASEAN  
ONE RESPONSE

## ASCEND

Welcome and thank you for your interest in pursuing an ASCEND certification. This Learner Guide is for you to read. It contains learning resources and helps you prepare for the required assessments: oral interviews, written tests, and observation checklists.

## Competency-based learning and assessment

**Competency** is the attitude and ability to use or apply one's experience, knowledge, and skills-sets to perform critical job functions in a defined work setting.

**Table 1:** *Competency areas and descriptions*

Competency area	Description
<b>Experience</b>	Refers to the qualifications of the candidate that make them eligible to pursue certification. It includes the candidate's formal education, work experience, professional training, and job-relevant life experiences.
<b>Knowledge</b>	Refers to what the candidate needs to know to make informed decisions on how to perform the work effectively.
<b>Skills</b>	Refers to the ability of the candidate to apply knowledge to complete occupational tasks and produce work outcomes or results at the standard required.
<b>Attitudes</b>	Refers to associated beliefs, feelings, motivations, and values that influence a candidate to make decisions and act according to occupational standards and the professional work setting.

There is one Learner Guide for each unit of competency. The Competency Standards and Unit Descriptor section of this document outlines the content you will be studying – broken down into elements and performance criteria that will be covered during training and assessed using competency-based methods. This guide contains a glossary of terms, a list of abbreviations,

readings and activities, a self-assessment checklist, and information about the oral interviews and written tests.

**Competency-based methods** help ensure that the ASCEND certification process is relevant, valid, acceptable, flexible, and traceable – in alignment with the ASEAN Guiding Principles.

The relevance principle confirms that the ASCEND certification reflects the current professional needs in the disaster management sector. The validity principle relates to the consistency and equitability of the assessment process. The acceptability principle is about aligning the ASCEND certification to other disaster management professional standards and good practices. The flexibility principle refers to the responsiveness of the ASCEND certification to changes or differences in disaster management work settings and job requirements. The traceability principle ensures that evidence is sufficient to grant the ASCEND certification.

**Competency-based assessment (CBA)** is the process for evaluating whether a professional is qualified and competent to perform in a particular occupation. CBA is used to determine if the candidate's experience, knowledge, skills, and attitudes meet the standards and performance criteria defined in a unit of competency.



# ASCEND Competency Standards and Unit Descriptor



**ASCEND**

## 3.1

## Competency standards

Competency standards are a set of industry-accepted benchmarks that defines the experience, knowledge, skills, and attitudes professionals need to perform well in an occupation. It also reflects the requirements of work settings and considers the developments in the disaster management profession.

## 3.2

## ASCEND Competency Standards

The ASCEND Competency Standards identify the key features of work in selected disaster management professions and performance standards professionals need to meet to be deemed competent. It also provides the list of the forty-three (43) core and technical competencies that serve as the basis for defining the regionally recognised disaster management qualifications across the ASEAN Member States. The five (5) professions covered by the ASCEND Competency Standards include Rapid Assessment, Humanitarian Logistics, Information Management, WASH, and Shelter Management. Under these professions are five (5) categories of occupations: Manager, Coordinator, Officer, Promoter, and Engineer. Overall, there are fifteen (15) profession-occupation combinations (e.g., humanitarian logistics manager, information management coordinator, WASH promoter).

Each ASCEND Competency Standard has its dedicated Toolbox documents: an SOP, Certification Scheme, Assessor Guide, Trainer Guide, and Learner Guide. Only One SOP applies to all profession-occupation combinations covered by the ASCEND certification. The Certification Schemes, one for each of the profession-occupation combinations. Both these documents align with the AQRF Level Descriptors, Section 4: Guiding Principles and Protocols for Quality Assurance of the AGP, and ASEAN Disaster Management Occupations Map. The Certification Schemes also outline the ASCEND competencies under selected professions and occupations, eligibility criteria, basic requirements and rights of candidates, and obligations of certification holders. Assessor Guides describe the components of particular competency standards and offer tools to determine the candidate's qualifications. Trainer and Learner Guides expound on a given competency standard's elements and performance criteria for learning and assessment preparation purposes.

The Toolbox documents may also serve as a reference for ASEAN Member States' seeking to develop and implement national-level competency-based certification processes based on their respective capacities and needs. The ASCEND Competency Standards and its derivative Toolbox documents will be reviewed and updated every five (5) years to ensure it reflects changes in the disaster management profession and remains relevant. Table 2 describes its main components.

**Table 2:** *Components of the ASCEND Competency Standards*

Component	Description
<b>Unit title</b>	Describes the critical work function to be performed in an occupation
<b>Unit number</b>	<p>A coding system to organise the units of competency. It also indicates the types of competency standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ADM.<b>COR</b>.000.0 are core competencies. These are general professional knowledge and skills related to international humanitarian principles and disaster management standards, including ASEAN mechanisms and procedures.</li> <li>ADM.<b>TEC</b>.000.0 are technical competencies. These are specific knowledge and skills needed to perform effectively in work areas under their chosen disaster management profession and occupation.</li> </ul>
<b>Unit description</b>	Provides information about the critical work function covered by the unit.
<b>Elements</b>	Presents the occupational tasks required to perform the critical work function in the unit.
<b>Performance criteria</b>	Lists the expected outcomes or results from the occupational tasks to perform and the standard required.

**3.3**

## Unit descriptor

**Unit title** : **Conduct Rapid Assessment**

**Unit number** : **ADM.TEC.005.1**

**Unit description** : This unit covers the ability to undertake a rapid assessment, contributing meaningfully to disaster response decision-making.

### Element 1.

#### **Prepare for rapid assessment**

##### **Performance Criteria**

- 1.1 Develop a rapid assessment plan
- 1.2 Develop rapid assessment tool and methodology

### Element 2.

#### **Gather data**

##### **Performance Criteria**

- 2.1 Undertake secondary data collection
- 2.2 Perform primary data collection
- 2.3 Perform data verification, validity and reliability

### Element 3.

#### **Conduct essential analysis**

##### **Performance Criteria**

- 3.1 Identify steps of analysis
- 3.2 Analyse quantitative and qualitative data
- 3.3 Perform impact analysis

### Element 4.

#### **Identify lessons on humanitarian assessments**

##### **Performance Criteria**

- 4.1 Identify key recipients of the rapid assessment results
- 4.2 Develop report based on the recipients' profile
- 4.3 Develop rapid assessment data and information properly

## 3.4

# Glossary of Terms and List of Abbreviations

Terms and abbreviations	Descriptions
<b>ADInet</b>	ASEAN Disaster Information Network
<b>AHA Centre</b>	ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management
<b>ALNAP</b>	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
<b>ASEAN ERAT</b>	ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team
<b>COD</b>	Common Operational Datasets
<b>DHS</b>	Department of Homeland Security
<b>EM-DAT</b>	Emergency Events Database
<b>FEWS</b>	Famine Early Warning System Network
<b>GDACS</b>	Global Disaster Alerting and Coordination System
<b>HDX</b>	Humanitarian Data Exchange
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>IDMC</b>	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
<b>IFRC</b>	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
<b>INAC</b>	Initial Needs Assessment Checklist
<b>InaSAFE</b>	Indonesian Scenario Assessment for Emergencies
<b>INFORM</b>	Index for Risk Management



<b>JICA</b>	Japan International Cooperation Agency
<b>LEMA</b>	Local Emergency Management Authority
<b>MICS</b>	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
<b>NDMOs</b>	National Disaster Management Offices
<b>NFP</b>	National Focal Point
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Government Organisation(s)
<b>NZAID</b>	New Zealand Agency for International Development
<b>OCHA</b>	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>PDC</b>	Pacific Disaster Center
<b>PRA</b>	Participatory Rural Appraisal
<b>RC/RC</b>	Red Cross / Red Crescent
<b>SWOT</b>	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
<b>UNDAC</b>	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
<b>UNISAT</b>	UNited SATellite, LTD
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>V-OSOCC</b>	Virtual On-Site Operations Coordination Centre
<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisations



# Unit Readings and Activities



**ASCEND**

**4.1****Element 1. Prepare for rapid assessment****1.1 Develop a rapid assessment plan****A. Introduction**

Rapid assessment helps in making decisions on response. Field responders and emergency managers can be easily overwhelmed by sudden-onset disasters by seemingly endless issues. They may be tempted to instantly react to a specific issue before them without fully realising that many other issues are to be dealt with within a short period of time. Good rapid assessment can guide emergency managers to meet crucial needs among the highest priorities and allocate our limited resources to achieve those needs.

In order to get a common understanding of the situation, rapid assessment should be done inclusively so that many organisations can get the benefits from it, and some may even contribute along the process. Therefore, they should communicate and agree on the most effective rapid assessment measure, which eventually contributes to effective emergency response.

There is various way to conduct a rapid assessment. It may involve hundreds of people from different organisations. It can utilise the most advanced technology equipment, including drones and satellites. Either a small number of or a large number of different experts may also conduct it. An assessment plan is crucial to ensure that implementation will not be unnecessarily diverted with these various stakeholders. The plan helps guide us to get the results.

An accurate assessment depends on proper planning, design and preparation. Due to limitations in the first days or weeks of disasters, ideal assessment is impossible to achieve. A proper assessment plan will help emergency responders and managers maximise resource utilisation and anticipate obstacles in advance.

Once key stakeholders have agreed that a rapid assessment will be carried out, a Plan should be developed immediately. Planning can be drafted to be presented to key stakeholders for review, feedback and concurrence. The main point is on speed and manageability. Plan can be developed before or after the team composition is complete. The plan can be in the form of the Terms of Reference of an assessment team.

## B. Diverse stakeholders

In a major disaster, over 1,000 external organisations can respond. We cannot identify them individually, but we can identify the key ones. Many humanitarian organizations have their way of conducting rapid need assessment. It is beneficial to be familiar with some of the tools and methods.

Stakeholders are commonly categorized as follow:

- **Community**  
which includes disaster-affected communities, disaster survivors, assisted communities and assisting communities. The assisting communities may include community-based organizations, volunteer groups, faith-based organizations, or other institutions that are part of the community. 'People helping people' in the aftermath of a disaster is a common practice and should continue to be so. Local communities are indeed the first responders. They play crucial roles in life-saving action with their available, often limited, capacity.
- **Government**  
at the national and sub-national levels and different institutions, including police, civil defence and military. All Governments in ASEAN have dedicated National Disaster Management Offices (NDMOs) and Local disaster management offices (LDMOs). In addition, many other government institutions have roles and responsibilities in disaster management, including emergency response. Military, police and civil defence in this region have capacities and vast networks to the lowest level of government.
- **NGOs (Non-Government Organizations)**  
They are not specific to humanitarian work, but different NGOs focus on community development, human rights, environment, education, health, and special groups within the community, such as disabled people. They are often further differentiated by local, national or international NGOs. They are subscribed to certain principles, and their main strengths may include human resources and local knowledge. Many International NGOs have their own assessment methodology and tools. Typically, International NGOs work with National NGOs to implement their programme.
- **Red Cross / Red Crescent society**  
Serve as auxiliary to the government, RC/RC have an excellent network with the government and a good relationship with the

community. Internationally, there are IFRC (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) and ICRC (The International Committee of the Red Cross). The IFRC focuses on critical areas such as disaster response and recovery, development, social inclusion and peace, while core activities of the ICRC are to visit detainees, protect civilians, safeguard healthcare and build respect for the law.

- **Private Sectors**

Engagement of profit companies in disaster response has a long history and shows an increasing trend in terms of the amount of assistance and number of companies. Top leaders often decide their involvement, although many private sectors have their units, divisions or specialise in crisis response.

- **Regional Organizations**

ASEAN and Asian Development Bank are examples of regional organizations with growing interest and capacity in disaster management. The ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) is an inter-governmental organisation that aims to facilitate cooperation and coordination among the ASEAN Member States and the United Nations and international organisations for disaster management and emergency response in response ASEAN Region. Serves as the technical and operational arm in ensuring ASEAN's collective response to disasters, AHA Centre has some tools related to rapid assessment, including WebEOC and ERAT (ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team)

- **International organizations**

A number of United Nations funds, programmes, offices and agencies have specific mandates on the humanitarian crisis. They are coordinated by a UN Secretariat office, namely OCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) that manages several tools related to rapid assessment, including V-OSOCC (Virtual On-Site Operations Coordination Centre) and UNDAC (United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination). In addition, the World Bank has a significant role in disaster recovery work.

- **Donor agencies and Embassies**

As humanitarian crisis knows no boundaries, other countries involved in disaster response by mobilizing their resources that come from their embassies, aid agencies (such as USAID, JICA, NZAID, etc.), specialised organizations (such as International Urban Search and

Rescue Teams, Emergency Medical Teams, militaries, etc.). They also assist in terms of funds that are channelled directly (i.e. bilateral assistance) or through different organizations (multilateral assistance)

Having familiar with critical stakeholders, we proceed with discussing with them on rapid assessment. The nature of the discussion is depended on the types of rapid assessment, whether it is a coordinated individual or uncoordinated one. The first and foremost discussion is with the affected government. While coordinated assessment is strongly encouraged, there may be cases in which individual or uncoordinated assessment is preferred. In any case, Government consent is fundamental.

### **C. What is in the Plan?**

There is no formal consensus on what should be in the plan, but in practice, the plan should have the following information or consideration:

- Overall situation, including security, freedom of movement, access.
- Disaster situation: Type of disaster and expected consequences.
- Prior knowledge of the area, including size, density, topography.
- Information is available from secondary sources and your judgement of its reliability and credibility.
- Baseline data of the stricken area, including shelter, food security, health, and protection.
- Possible information sources in the area
- Identified information needs
- Guidelines and standard working procedures
- Data collection methods and data gathering procedures, including target groups and site selection
- Designated field investigation teams, including specific tasks, size and composition of the team and, therefore, its competencies and limitations
- Analysis of data
- Presentation of information
- Recording and dissemination of results
- Time available and timing of the assessment in the evolution of the situation.
- Possible future developments of the disaster and potential secondary disaster
- Weather/climatic conditions/season
- Local cultural and other social factors that might impede and contribute to the assessment

- Logistics and administration
- Contingency plan for rapid assessment measure

## **D. A field visit for primary data assessment**

Rapid assessment depends heavily on secondary data but does not rule out the possibility of having primary data through field visits to complement secondary data information. The visit must be planned to ensure it meets the objectives. The logistics of the trip must be realistically planned. Based on the above factors, we should develop a Plan of Action for the field visit with the following elements.

- Precise definition of the field trip: area to be visited, locations, route planning, time frame.
- Team composition: number of participants, gender balance, representation from other agencies, sector specialists.
- Distribution of tasks: assessment team Leader, sector-specific tasks, logistics, communications, reporting.
- Main objectives: broad objectives, what questions need to be answered, who has the needed information, form of required output.
- Data collection issues: Observation, Interviews, Surveys, Checklists, Sampling, Indicators and standards, Assumptions.
- Logistics and organization: Transport and movement plan, Accommodation, Communication, Supplies, Equipment
- Security: Security clearance, briefing, comply with security standards

Ensure the assessment process complies with common humanitarian standards.

## **E. Adjust plan regularly based on updated situation**

As we can imagine, disaster situations may change significantly daily, either into a better or worse situation. This may be due to the community's quick recovery, the emergence of infectious disease, or deteriorating security situation.

While we have developed a good assessment plan, we should review it regularly and make necessary adjustments to ensure assessment success. An updated situation that would trigger Rapid Assessment Plan adjustment may include:

- Security and safety concerns
- Secondary disaster
- Government decision
- donor pressure
- Population movement

Changes include weather, access, security, number of displaced people, number of assistances, and coordination mechanisms. The frequency depends on the situation. Commonly, changes are more frequent in the first days following a disaster and less frequent after a few weeks.

Depending on how extreme the situation change is—varied from minor adjustments such as longer travel time from point A to point B, to major change due to significant cases, such as security or accident. In extreme cases, rapid assessment should be halted. Small plan adjustment that is decided and agreed upon by team members. Major change decisions that may involve strategic level or headquarters

## 1.2 Develop rapid assessment tool and methodology

### A. Introduction

Is every assessment conducted with a prepared assessment form? Do we have to go to the affected villages in every assessment? Should we always ask questions to the most vulnerable families in the areas? These questions can be answered by learning about assessment tools and methodology.

### B. Methodology

ASEAN-ERAT Guidelines adopt the following assessment methodology:

- **Planning**
- **Data collection**
- **Data Analysis (Estimation)**
- **Reporting**
- **Dissemination**
- **Feedback**



- **Planning**

In this phase, assessment planning is developed with a series of actions, including analysing secondary data and getting information from ASEAN partners, which resulted in an initial analysis of the disaster impact and an initial selection of locations and target populations to be assessed. Upon arrival in the affected country and prior to undertaking an assessment on-site, the assessment (ASEAN ERAT) coordinates with other national and international actors on the ground to ensure standardisation of methodology and avoid duplication of effort.

The information needs, assessment objectives and locations, and data collection methodology, tools are decided in close consultation with the disaster affected country's National Focal Point (NFP). The scope of planning includes internal arrangements such as roles and responsibilities, timing, logistical and security arrangements.

- **Data collection**

Data collection should consider the following:

- Speed vs Quality
- Quantitative vs Qualitative information
- Collect only what can be used
- Consult the people affected
- Consider differing needs of marginalised groups
- Consider bias of information sources as well as of team members
- Look for changes to trends or the unexpected

In terms of tools, it is advisable to use existing tools in the affected area, although the ASEAN-ERAT is equipped by the Initial Needs Assessment Checklist (INAC).

- **Data Analysis**

It aims to identify significant facts, trends, and anomalies to inform decision making. Data collected during the assessment should be analysed with secondary data, resulting in a recommended appropriate response, 'best case' and 'worse case' scenarios. Then, the decision on the 'most likely case'—it may be the 'best' or 'worst' or somewhere in between is to be made.

- **Reporting**

The ASEAN-ERAT should prepare a brief report on the rapid assessment immediately following completion of the field trip and analysis. The report should be short and clear with explicit recommendations. It should also clarify the limitations of the assessment and any assumptions made during the analysis.

**Dissemination.** The ASEAN-ERAT rapid assessment report shall be sent to the NFP and the AHA Centre. Permission should also be sought from the NFP/Local Emergency Management Agency and the AHA Centre to share the report with the wider humanitarian community

- **Feedback**

The team should prepare for any feedback and requests for information. Thus, it should keep up with the updated humanitarian situation. In the margin of humanitarian setting, other assessment tools and techniques can be exercised, including:

- Problem tree analysis
- Gender analysis
- Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis
- Nutritional assessment
- Household food economy analysis
- Health assessment
- Cost and benefit analysis
- Capacity and vulnerability analysis
- 'Do No Harm' framework (Local Capacities for Peace)
- Network analysis
- Environmental impact assessment

Some learning material for these tools is available on the web to expand our perspective on assessment. However, they are not part of this training material as they are not specific to rapid assessment.

- **Rapid assessment tools**

Widely used rapid assessment tools are associated with the primary data, checklists or questionnaires. The format can be paper-based or electronic, including Kobo Collect and alike. Meanwhile, tools for secondary data are also advancing, with the capability to estimate the magnitude and impacts of the disaster. These tools include:

- GDACS – [www.gdacs.org](http://www.gdacs.org)

- InaSAFE – [www.inasafe.org](http://www.inasafe.org)
- Pacific Disaster Center - [www.pdc.org](http://www.pdc.org)
- ADInet – <http://adinet.ahacentre.org/>
- EMDAT - <http://emdat.be/>

## 4.2

## Element 2. Gather data

### 2.1 Undertake secondary data collection

#### A. Introduction

Secondary data is data that is collected by someone else. It contains second-hand information collected prior to and following the occurrence of the event. While there are numerous amounts of data, we must consider time constraints and the purpose of our assessment.

Secondary data is always the starting point because:

- a body of background work has already been carried out
- it has a pre-established degree of validity and reliability
- it is helpful in the research design of subsequent primary research
- it provides a baseline to compare primary data results to

#### B. Secondary data collection

##### Secondary data collection

Secondary data is obtained from two different research strands: 1) Quantitative by Using existing databases, census, and government records and 2) Qualitative by semi-structured and structured interviews and focus groups' transcripts.

In preparedness planning, data sources are predominately secondary. There are three actions to focus on insourcing, gathering, collating and analysing data.

- Anticipate and know what you are looking for
- Know where to find important data, including from censuses, demographic data, population projections, area profiles, demographic

and household surveys, country hazard profiles, political and security profiles, administrative sources, sector fact sheets, health records, and previous lessons learned

- Assess and analyse the data for the timeliness, metadata, appropriateness, disaggregation, inconsistencies, credibility and reliability, relevance, and original purpose

Pre-disaster secondary data enables us to understand context, provide relevant information, avoid duplication, identify gaps and inform future data collection.

The purpose of secondary data collection is to:

- ensure a clearer, more detailed and up-to-date analysis of the situation at the local level before the crisis. It will provide the background information about the affected area, groups of interest, risks and vulnerabilities, as well as sectoral pre-disaster information;
- support the identification of what and where the problems might be (will describe the character and plausible explanations of the nature and causes of the disaster impact as well as the related secondary threats);
- provide a baseline with which to compare your primary data collection results;
- Identify information gaps and determine the most appropriate method to access this information (e.g. identify if a rapid assessment is necessary, information needs, etc.);
- design subsequent primary data collection<sup>2</sup> phase and identify which sites to visit. This will provide additional information that can be used for subdividing the area into relatively homogeneous zones (food economy, rural/urban, coastal/mountainous, IDPs/Non-IDPs, etc.)

Typical areas of focus while undertaking SDR for needs assessment purposes:

Table 3: Areas of focus for need assessment purposes

Focus	Content
<b>Pre-post crisis</b>	Pre-crisis Vs post-crisis data
<b>Geographical</b>	National key indicators Vs “affected area” key indicators
<b>Group</b>	Total population Vs specific sub-groups demographic data (refugees Vs residents)
<b>Livelihood</b>	Characteristic of different sub-set of socio-economic profiles (farmers Vs pastoralists)
<b>Vulnerability</b>	Characteristics of different vulnerable groups (disabled, food insecure, unemployed, etc.)
<b>Catchment area</b>	Characteristic of different livelihood zones (urban Vs rural, mountainous Vs riverine)
<b>Gender and age</b>	Characteristics of different categories of the population (Women Vs men, elders Vs youth)
<b>Sector</b>	Characteristics of different sectors ( WASH, Health, Food security, etc.)

Table 4: Possible secondary data sources

Pre-disaster information	Particular Disaster information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ National institutions (Ministries, research institutes, Universities, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Extensive Survey (DHS, MICS, Census, etc.)</li> <li>▪ International development institutions (i.e. World bank)</li> <li>▪ Sector fact sheets, e.g. WHO country epidemiological profile</li> <li>▪ Common operational datasets (COD)</li> <li>▪ UN, Local and international NGOs survey reports</li> <li>▪ UN global data sets or Country portals</li> <li>▪ Geospatial data</li> <li>▪ Online databases (i.e. EM-DAT, prevention web)</li> <li>▪ Previous Flash appeals, CAP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ National institutions (Ministries, LEMA, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Media reports</li> <li>▪ Assessment reports from local and international NGOs</li> <li>▪ Funding Appeals</li> <li>▪ Situation reports (OCHA, clusters, Govt)</li> <li>▪ Humanitarian profile (CODs)</li> <li>▪ Geospatial data from UNIT, Google Earth etc.</li> <li>▪ Satellite imagery, UNISAT or Private providers</li> <li>▪ Social media</li> </ul>

- ALNAP, evaluation reports, After Action reviews
- DevInfo,
- Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX)
- World Bank development indicators,
- SDGs reports
- Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)
- Index for Risk Management (INFORM)
- Warning systems (e.g. FEWS – Famine Early Warning System Network)

### **Key principles for secondary data collection:**

- The more disaggregated the data, the more useful it is for identifying the most vulnerable people.
- Importance of the data vs the time needed to find it. Decide whether the importance of the data justifies the time required to find the data. Some of the required data will not exist or be difficult to find.
- Collect only what you know you can use. Know the question you are trying to answer and the data you are looking for.
- Provide a clear timeframe for data collection and identify priorities. Ensure everyone is aware and regularly updated about groups and geographical areas of concern.
- Let the data speak to you. Be prepared for redirecting your collection efforts accordingly

## **2.2 Perform primary data collection**

### **A. Introduction**

Primary data is data that you collect yourself. It contains first-hand information collected at the time of an event or by people who directly experienced an event. The main purposes of primary data collection are:

- Gather information not available through review of secondary data.
- Confirm or refute the information provided by secondary data.
- Provide a qualitative picture of the range of impacts of the disaster and identify risk factors.
- Identify priority groups and locations requiring an immediate humanitarian response.
- Ensure that the affected population participates in identifying priorities.

- Identify key informants and priority sites for further data collection or monitoring

## B. Phase two characteristics

- **Characteristics of Participatory and Rapid Qualitative Methods**

Participatory methods aim to gain a more in-depth understanding of a situation and increase knowledge, skills, and thus self-reliance among beneficiaries. Rapid appraisals are similar to participatory appraisals in many ways but are less in-depth and are generally used to gather data in a one-time study. They are less participatory and offer quick, low-cost ways of generating qualitative data.

Each of these methods is particularly well suited to the nuances of different information needs and data collection situations. Each method represents, to varying degrees, a balance between the level of participation of beneficiaries and communities and the quickness of data collection and analysis.

- **Participatory Methods**

A participatory appraisal is a term used to describe a process and a set of techniques for collecting and analysing qualitative data. Participation is defined as a people-centred approach with the highest probability of success because it can strengthen the most vulnerable voice. At a minimum, participatory appraisals imply consultation, knowledge exchange and equitable arrangements for sharing benefits.

The key feature of participatory methods is their emphasis on participatory decision-making, enabling beneficiaries and stakeholders to analyse their situation rather than have it analysed by outsiders. This does not imply the exclusion or side-lining of outsiders. Instead, it recognises that outsiders need to learn about the insiders' situations and that insiders can analyse their own problems. Participatory methods draw on techniques developed within fields such as applied anthropology and provide a means of looking at the complex and inter-linked relationships and activities within communities and groups.

Participatory methods may involve an extended process that can last for months or years as communities develop their own skills to address issues, analyse options, and carry out activities. The emphasis is often on the quality of the process and seeking ways to involve the community in planning and decision-making.

- **Rapid Methods**

Rapid methods seek to establish 'best' estimates, trends and directions as carefully as possible but within broader degrees of tolerance than more conventional methods such as probability and non-probability sample surveys. While they incorporate participation and open-ended questions to some degree, they do not allow for the depth of discussion, exploration, and self-analysis afforded by participatory methods. Rapid appraisal methods are most often employed as discrete, one-time studies.

- **Units of measurement**

Data is generally collected at specific levels called units of measurement, which also determine the level of analysis. There are four principal units of measurement in the humanitarian needs assessment. It is important to note that different units should not be combined on a single data-collection form:

- Community-level assessments take place at the neighbourhood, village, or camp level. The aim is to evaluate the availability and quality of community-shared resources, community-level needs, risks, threats, and coping mechanisms within a community.
- Institution-level assessments look at the availability and quality of services and the condition of key public buildings such as schools and hospitals. There may be more than one such institution for a particular community in some situations.
- Household-level assessments are carried out to evaluate the needs of a household and are usually conducted with a representative or the head of the household. A household is defined as a group of persons (one or more) living together who make standard provisions for food or other basic needs.
- Individual-level assessments evaluate the needs of individuals. Such an assessment should be disaggregated by sex, age, and other diversity factors (e.g. instances when the needs of some individuals in a household differ from those of others within the same household due to their gender, age, or other diversity or vulnerability criteria)



## C. Primary data collection methods

Primary data collection helps to:

- compensate for the lack of random or statistically representative sampling
- understand the nature of the most pressing issues, concerns and needs
- give depth to the findings of secondary data reviews
- support the prioritization of interventions

The primary data collection methods may include:

- direct observations
- interviews or semi-structured interviews
- focus groups
- surveys using investigation forms
- purposive sampling
- minutes from meetings
- Participatory rural appraisal (PRA) techniques, including proportional piling tool, visual inspection and direct observation
- Surveillance
- Technical inspections
- Critical sector analysis
- Household visits
- Transect walks

However, this manual only covers some common methods practised by humanitarian actors: direct observation, key informant interviews, group discussions, and surveys with questionnaires. As there is no single perfect tool or approach, we should consider combining different methods as appropriate

## D. Direct Observation

Direct observation provides an opportunity to assess the site's situation, including potential protection concerns and risk factors. It can be done by guided tour or independent walk. In general, there are two approaches to direct observation:

- **Structured observation**

The observer is looking for a specific behaviour, object or event. For example, when an observer sees if the population uses soap before and after meals, structured observation can help answer the question. Structured observation can also be used to detect the non-existence of

a specific issue (e.g. to see if a population is not using soap before and after meals). A checklist is customarily developed to guide structured observation to function as a reminder and a recording tool.

- **Unstructured observation**

The observer is looking at how things are done and what issues exist. For instance, if an observer is interested in knowing how people move in and out of a camp, unstructured observation is an appropriate method. To guide unstructured observation, a short set of open-ended questions can be developed that will be answered based on observations.

Direct observation can rapidly collect different types of information in an emergency. It does not require costly resources or detailed training, making it a quick data collection process that is easy to implement.

However, because direct observation as a data collection technique provides a snapshot of the situation, it has limited power in a rapidly changing situation or substantial population movement.

During observation, take the opportunity to learn as much as you can. If you are discussing water, ask to see the water source. If people describe a foodstuff you do not know, ask to see it. Observation is helpful for cross-checking.

Observation is the most straightforward approach to assessing infrastructure logistics. Walking through the area with local people facilitates discussion. The atmosphere is informal, and questions are prompted by things you see. Observation is more natural than referring to a prepared checklist. Very importantly, walking and observing are excellent ways to come upon unexpected information.

**Table 5:** *Some Do and Don't in Direct Observation*

Do	Don't
Enter the observation process without preconceived notions and fixed expectations.	Begin the observation process with a set of expectations or seek to record data primarily to prove a pre-existing hypothesis.
Note observations made and information volunteered related to subjects beyond	Rely on remembering information—record observations on a checklist.

formal assessment concerns. Be prepared to follow advice from people met in the locations, and use the opportunity to observe things that were not planned.

Walk across the community outside of predefined routes such as roads, paths or natural boundaries to obtain a cross-section of points for observation and provide a balanced view of conditions.

Focus solely on misery and destitution. Be aware of capacities, opportunities, and social capital within the affected community.

Record information that is contradictory or surprising to expectations<sup>8</sup>.

Be intrusive. Take steps to be as sensitive and respectful as possible<sup>9</sup>.

Keep focused to make useful comparisons.

Take a photograph without asking prior permission

Be active and curious in the observation process. Observation is about seeing and hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling, and touching.

Be aware of what was not seen. Note the absence of services and infrastructure.

Respect local culture. Community members are observing you just as much as you are observing them. Follow local rules of behaviour, e.g. do not smoke during interviews. Be aware of gender dynamics and ensure that the teams reflect this. Be sensitive to local concerns, e.g. if there is a food shortage and water, do not consume food in front of affected community members.

### Key Sites for Observation:

- Observe (see, smell and hear) conditions and particular features of an affected community from various viewpoints and places to provide a representative view of the affected area. Walk across the community outside of predefined routes such as roads, paths or natural boundaries to obtain a cross-section of points for observation and provide a balanced view of conditions.
- Look around and talk with people. Look at what is there, what is not there and what should be there:

- Observe water collection points, latrines, communal washing areas, schools, storage facilities, tea shops, cemeteries, markets, health facilities and religious centres
- In markets, see what people buy and sell and the prices for basic commodities.

### How to Look:

- How people relate to one another, especially in light of age, gender, disability, and another minority status
- People's physical condition and activities. Look specifically at children, older persons, the chronically ill, and those persons with disabilities
- Conditions of housing, properties, livestock, and assets
- The daily lives and/or difficulties faced by women and other minorities (where and when culturally appropriate)
- State and functioning of public services, sanitation systems, and infrastructure (e.g. schools, water points, health posts etc.)
- Whether people from different groups have different coping mechanisms or access to aid
- Existing or potential public health risks in public places (including waste, pollution)
- Power relationships and potential tensions within the community
- How differently specific segments of the population are affected or vulnerable compared to some others, and why

## E. Key Informant Interviews

Key Informant Interviews provide information on critical aspects of community life and meaningful indications about access, risks, priorities, vulnerabilities and capacities at the community level. The interviews help us to:

- Provide detailed data about specific issues of affected communities.
- Clarify misinformation.
- Identify information gaps.
- Increase understanding of vulnerabilities.
- Highlight coping mechanisms and capacities

Key Informant Interviews can be done through:

- Structured formats.
- Closed questions
- Community-level questions (about your community, not about you).
- Time conscious.
- It can be carried out by phone, radio or in person

### **Strengths and limitations:**

Key informant interviews can be organised quickly and carried out with few resources. They have particular value in gaining a perspective of the impact of the disaster on a community where access to affected populations has been compromised or is difficult. They also provide a holistic and qualitative overview of the impact of a disaster on community members.

The most significant limitation of a key informant interview is that it provides a subjective perspective on the impact of a disaster. As with all individual responses, information will have both an individual and a cultural bias that must be considered when analysing key informant interview responses.

Semi-structured interview (checklist) is a guided interview in which a limited set of questions are decided ahead of time. The questions are open-ended to stimulate discussion on a given topic. Close-ended questions have specific answers, which usually are short, with yes/no or definite answers. They are generally easy to aggregate and analyse as they do not require complex recoding operations. Open-ended questions have no fixed set of responses allowing the respondent to answer as s/he sees fit. They allow the respondent to think and reflect and give the respondent a chance to voice their answers in their own words.

In its simplest form, a structured interview involves asking a respondent a list of pre-determined questions about selected topics using a questionnaire. A structured interview ensures that each key informant is asked the same questions, preferably in the same order. The answers can be accurately aggregated, and comparisons can be made with confidence between sample sub-groups or between different assessment periods.

To ensure a complete picture of the affected community, we should arrange interviews with individuals of different backgrounds, responsibilities, genders, ages, and religious and/or ethnic minorities. The poorest and most socially excluded people in the affected community are likely to be the worst hit by the crisis.

Table 6: *Do's and Don'ts for Key Informant Interviews*

Do	Don't
Introduce the assessment team and ask permission to carry out the interview. Build trust with the key informants, give them time to talk about their priorities or express grief	Waste time talking as a whole team to one key informant (apart from initial introduction to authorities or other gatekeepers)
Be sensitive to the time needed to complete the interview. Be aware that the key informants may have pressing obligations or may have no obligations and just needs to talk	Substitute direct observation for the key informant's answer or explanation to a question. Where direct observation differs from a respondent's answer, note this and try to determine potential reasons why this may be the case
Ensure the data collection instrument has space to capture direct observation comments and notes. Keep the data collection instrument brief	Put the key informant in a compromising situation by conducting an individual interview. Explain to community observers why the specific key informant was chosen and what topic you want to discuss
In general, limit open-ended questions in the data collection instrument for rapid assessment	Interrogate respondents as an extractive process
Choose your key informants well. Know the information gap and identify the key informants best able to find the missing information	Create expectations about future humanitarian support
Choose a limited number of critical topics to discuss the key informants	Monopolise the time of individual interviewees. Especially during times of crisis, people have their own priorities
Be alert to non-verbal signs and behaviours which indicate how comfortable the key informant is with the interview. If the key informants are uncomfortable with the questions, do not insist they answer	Limit information to one key informant's response. Triangulate by asking others until you are confident that there is consensus on this point
Be consistent. Use the same methods in each community visited. Record data consistently to ease comparisons and highlight noticeable differences that stand out	Induce particular answers by helping an interviewee to respond
Record access routes, time taken and other logistical tips to help future plans	Ask questions that may stigmatise people or endanger them

Give voice to all vulnerable groups, specifically women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities and religious and ethnic minorities.

Use people's names when collecting information. Ensure the anonymity of the data collected, but if key protection risks are observed, refer them confidentially to a Protection specialist for appropriate and confidential follow up

Prevent key informants from asking you questions.

Let a translator answer a question for the interviewee or dominate the interview process

#### Recommendations in conducting key informant interviews:

- Interview people in a safe place convenient to them and adapt to their needs.
- Choose key informants well and strategically, and match information needs with likely key informants source
- Ensure the key informants are not compromised in participating in an individual interview. Explain to community observers why the specific key informant was chosen and what topic you want to discuss
- Ensure people do not expect preferential humanitarian support in lieu of participation.
- Ensure the anonymity of the data collected. If key protection risks are observed or reported by key informants, refer them confidentially to the most appropriate authorities or agency (police, Protection expert, etc.) for confidential follow up.

## F. Community Group Discussions

When carefully planned, community discussions have great potential for providing insights into how members of the community view operation activities and how they see the operation affecting their lives. Group discussion provides an opportunity to reflect community consensus on the overall impact of the disaster and the priorities. We can triangulate information as we collect it. When planning and conducting community interviews, we should consider the following:

- Prepared semi-structured interview questions
- Select a few representative communities.
- Schedule meetings when most people within the community can attend; the evening is often the most convenient.
- Using a team of interviewers as conducting a meeting with many people and taking extensive notes is beyond the capacity of most people.

- Plan the process among team members to ensure that participants have a fair say and that the interviewers don't take over.
- Ensure participation by a balanced representation of those attending. Prominent individuals should not dominate.
- Aim to aggregate and summarise some of the data-bearing in mind that extreme caution should be taken to quantify the data.
- Plan for additional sessions and the main meetings for those who felt inhibited among the large group of people to discuss their thoughts.
- Discussion group differs from focus group
- Size (ideally 6-10 participants, however, it can be challenging to control when the discussion is ongoing)
- Diversity in terms of age and backgrounds
- Gender of participants
- Gender of assessors
- Do not include children
- Conducted by two assessors
- Complete in 90 minutes

## G. Written Surveys with Questionnaire

Another way to gather data is through a written survey, which offers the opportunity for developing quantitative data. Conducted when the humanitarian is relatively stable, surveys usually have close-ended questions and responses are limited. Various humanitarian organizations have developed questionnaires for use in disaster assessment. The survey questionnaire should be pilot-tested to ensure its validity and reliability.

Surveys are attractive because if they are designed and administered correctly, the results may be generalized to more than just the respondents completing the survey. However, surveys raise the issue of sampling. It is rarely possible to survey the total affected population, so various sampling methods are required to allow justifiable generalization. Normally, a random sampling or a stratified random sampling procedure is best. Field conditions will dictate the sampling design. Surveys must be designed and administered by individuals with social science backgrounds and research training.

A specific type of written survey called a Panel Survey is also an assessment methodology option. A panel of experts is composed and given a questionnaire for this tool. The questionnaire may be closed-ended as in the above descriptions or open-ended as in the Delphi survey technique. The



Panel may be sent a series of questionnaires over a period of time to help refine the assessment findings.

Some issues with the written survey are it can be too lengthy, overly complex, and unable to generate useful responses. Designing a good questionnaire may take time, resources, and a deep understanding of the context. Some considerations in developing a written survey:

- Start every questionnaire with a chapeau or appreciation
- Add the required classification questions to allow for stratification of the sample and further comparisons at the analysis stage:
- Include a clear introduction that covers:
  - The survey objective
  - The estimated duration of the interview (no longer than 50 min)
  - What the respondent can expect from the interview (compensation etc.)
- Expression of approval of relevant authorities
- Information on how the survey results will be used and how the respondent can access the findings
- Informed consent
- Ensure questions are visually distinct from one another. Clearly highlight enumerator cues.
- Start with an easy, topical and non-sensitive question.
- Start with general before specific questions. Ask essential questions early to avoid the possible negative impact of fatigue.
- Ask sensitive questions later in the interview, once rapport between respondent and enumerator has been established.
- Leave space for observations to be recorded

## H. Introduction

Commonly, non-probability purposive sampling is recommended for rapid assessment. It takes the judgement of community representatives, project staff or assessors to select typical locations and/or informants according to specific pre-defined characteristics.

Advantages:

- Moderately rigorous if correct and clear criteria for selection are followed
- Useful when targeting specific groups of an affected population or specific affected areas. Less time consuming and less expensive than representative sampling

**Disadvantage:**

- Generalisations are biased and not recommended. Samples are not representative of a population due to the subjectivity of respondents

While for more in-depth or sectoral assessments, a representative or probability sampling is recommended. It is based on the principle that any location or informant has an equal chance of being selected relative to any other location or informant. It can be used in humanitarian contexts when lists of targeted households are available and all selected locations are accessible

**Advantages:**

- Generally viewed as the most representative and rigorous type of sampling
- Allows results from the sample to be extrapolated to the broader affected area and population

**Disadvantages:**

- It can be expensive and time-consuming to implement, especially in large target areas
- Requires special training for correct use
- Can miss key informants, i.e., individuals who have particular knowledge about an area or issue
- More appropriate for quantitative rather than a qualitative type of assessment

## **I. Using Technology**

In recent years, humanitarian actors have made an effort to improve both process and output of primary data collection using appropriate technology, including KoBo, ODK, Enketo etc. In this module, KoBo is an example because it is commonly used by the UN and NGO community and the AHA Centre.

Please note that besides needs assessment, digital data collection is also applicable to many humanitarian activities in monitoring & evaluation, identification & profiling, and tracking & inventory.

**Advantages in using KoBo for needs assessment include:**

- Collect GPS locations
- Take photographs
- Collect data offline
- Sync data immediately or later
- Collect data on paper form and data entry on browser

- Collect on mobile devices
- Design your own digital forms without programming

To learn more, please go to [www.kobotoolbox.org](http://www.kobotoolbox.org)

## 2.3 Perform data verification, validity and reliability

### A. Introduction

Data verification ensures that the collected data is correct and free from redundancies. Data verification ensures that the database consisting of information collected from different sources is accurate and thus ready to be used. While different standards of classifying the data may apply, it is important to arrange it in a standard format to make it readable and easy to use.

### B. Data Validation

Validity is the extent to which something is “true” and generalisable. There are different types of validity. Data validation is a process to ensure that your data is authentic and free from errors.

Many assessments fail the test of validity. Assessors who fail to validate issues adequately run the risk of seeing their assessment criticised for not accurately measuring the problem and having their results rejected.

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.

Validation can be made at various levels:

- **Validation while collecting data**

When users are handed out virtual forms, certain fields are marked mandatory. It is to be made that these fields are duly filled and that no unnecessary repetition is made in the form. Before the user clicks the submit button, it should ensure that the form is filled in correctly.

- **Validation while storing data**

When forms are being stored after being collected, it should be made sure that no two forms are the same. It will give rise to redundancies, and databases are very sensitive to redundancies.

- **Validation while arranging data**

As mentioned earlier, different companies have different formats and standards for arranging data. Data should be rechecked for errors, inconsistencies etc. while being arranged in a specified format.

## C. Reliability

Reliability is related to the indicators and measures - chosen by 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. In this case, achieving a reliable measure 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.

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

The following is an example of criteria for data credibility and reliability:

Table 7: Source reliability ratings

Rating	Description
<b>A</b>	Completely reliable refers to a tried and tested source that may depend on confidence. These are extremely rare and should be kept for special occasions.
<b>B</b>	Usually, reliable refers to a source that has been successful in the past, but there is still some doubt in a particular case. This should be used for sources

of known integrity such as United Nations agencies, military entities, some major NGOs, etc.

<b>C</b>	Fairly reliable refers to a source that has occasionally been used in the past and upon which some degree of confidence may be based. Some press sources and NGOs could fit in here.
<b>D</b>	Not usually reliable refers to a source that has been used in the past but has proved more often than not to be unreliable. Some press sources and NGOs could fit in here.
<b>E</b>	Unreliable refers to a source that has been used in the past and has been proven unworthy of any confidence.
<b>F</b>	Reliability cannot be judged by a source that has not been used in the past.

Table 8: *Information credibility ratings*

Rating	Description
<b>1</b>	<b>Confirmed by other sources</b> is applicable when a source different than the originally reported one confirms the information independently of the first source.
<b>2</b>	<b>Probably true</b> indicates confirmation of essential parts of reported information by another source. Aerial imagery is included in this category.
<b>3</b>	<b>Possibly true</b> means that investigation of a reported fact or action has revealed no further information. However, the information is compatible with previous actions or background information available.
<b>4</b>	<b>Doubtful</b> applies to an information item if it tends to conflict with previously reported and validated information.
<b>5</b>	<b>Improbable</b> is applicable if an information item contradicts previously reported and validated information.
<b>6</b>	<b>Truth cannot be judged</b> if any freshly reported information item cannot be compared with information from any other source. It is used when 1-5 cannot be applied. It is preferred to use a rating of 6 rather than an inaccurate 1-5 rating.

## D. Understanding biases

Almost all information has a bias. Bias is a part of doing assessments. Bias may be intentional, natural, contextual, or cultural differences. It cannot be eliminated, but its effects will be minimized through candid discussion amongst team members. The following is different kinds of biases:

- **Selection Biases**

It was caused by choosing non-random data for analysis. Some information is unconsciously chosen or disregarded, misleading us to a wrong conclusion:

- **Anchoring Effect:** Relying too heavily on one piece of information, usually, the first piece of information found, when making decisions
- **Availability Cascade:** Judging the frequency of an event or category by the ease with which instances of this comes to mind.
- **Confirmation:** Only seeking information that confirms our initial decisions, hypothesis, judgments or conclusions, ignoring information against them.
- **Evidence Acceptance:** Accepting data as true and focusing more on the story's coherence than the reliability of the underlying data.
- **Salience:** Focusing on the most easily recognizable, interesting or shocking features in a set of data, while other possibilities or alternative hypotheses are ignored.

- **Social Biases**

It is a result of our interactions with other people. The way we are processing and analysing information depends on our relations with the persons who provided us with information or hypotheses

- **Group thinking:** Choosing the option most group agrees with or ignores conflicts due to a desire for consensus.
- **Halo Effect:** Accepting or rejecting everything another group member says because the analyst likes/respects or not the person.

- **Institutional:** Interpreting information in line with the interests of a certain organization.
- **Mirror Imaging:** Assuming that others will act the same as we would, given similar circumstances.
- **Stereotyping:** Expecting a group or person to have certain characteristics without having real information about the person.
- **Process Biases**  
It can impact our ability to process information based on evidence. They prevent us from accurately understanding reality even when all the needed data and evidence are in our hands
  - **Clustering Illusion:** Overestimating the value of perceived patterns in random data.
  - **Framing:** Being influenced in our decisions by how a situation has been presented.
  - **Hindsight:** Claiming the key items of information, events, drivers, forces or factors that shaped a future outcome could have been easily identified and more predictable than they were.
  - **Impact:** Overestimating the significance of an event based on the potential impact.

## 4.3

## Element 3. Conduct essential analysis

### 3.1 Identify steps of analysis

#### A. Introduction

Analysis is a necessary process to reach into assessment outputs. A balance team members of trained generalists and specialists can perform a sound analysis. But in many cases, the rapid assessment team does not have a full-time specialist committed from designed to report due to their high demand for other humanitarian action.

**Step 1.** Get the key questions right! The analysis involves answering a series of key questions.

- What changes over time/remain the same? Was it pre-existing or as a result of the crisis?
- What is not surprising and doesn't need to be presented in detail?
- What is surprising/important/different about one group/one time/one place from another?
- How is one geographical area different from another, and what variations are there from one place to another?
- If it didn't get worse, why not? If it gets worse, what will worsen? What will make that happen?
- What is the next level of detail required?

**Step 2.** Get the principles right at the core of analysis:

- be clear and transparent with the methodology
- know the limitation of the tools
- be confident in the reliability of the data
- algorithms and scientific methods should be avoided
- use triangulation techniques
- involve experts
- be able to explain results and justify priorities

**Step 3.** Get the process and procedure right:

- Summarizing, comparing, and collating
- Understanding relationships of causes and effects
- Interpreting severity

## B. Data Collation

Structure is the most important aspect of collating and managing data information, which allows us to answer questions more clearly and identify gaps, inconsistencies and anomalies

Effective collation requires the data to be organized in a way that makes it easy to:

- compare
- contrast
- summarize
- prioritize
- identify gaps



The basic principles to remember in collation are:

- keep it as simple as possible
- decide on the level required for decision making
- use simple tools such as spreadsheets
- create an archiving and retrieval system that allows for quick and efficient use of data

Collation requires the data to be disaggregated. Data can be divided into valuable parts or groups. Data can be disaggregated by: geographical area (where), affected groups (who) or sectors (what)

Data can then be cross analysed by:

- the sector needs variance by location (what x where)
- targets groups variance by location (who x where)
- the sector needs variance by target group (what x who)

It is essential to be aware of the pitfalls, inconsistencies and problem areas in data collation.

- Too much data compiled into one field restricts effective analysis. Use discrete fields.
- Geographical locations can be confusing. It is essential to:
  - be familiar with local administrative regions and groupings
  - avoid mixing data from different administrative regions (provinces, districts, towns, regions, health districts)
- Look for the gaps in the data. Beware of making assumptions and confusing 'no data' with 'no problem'.
- Look for inconsistencies in the data. Use triangulation of primary and secondary data from different sources.
- Identify bias in the collection methodology, including bias between team members or sector members or bias in data collected at different times
- Identify the challenges in storing and sharing information:
  - reduce replication of efforts
  - explain the methodology
  - store reports in a place where everyone can access them
  - index data back to the original source

## 3.2 Analyse quantitative and qualitative data

### A. Introduction

There are two broad categories of data collection methods: quantitative and qualitative. Today's researchers recognise that both methods have subjective and objective qualities. The difference in the two categories lies in the approach and the types of questions they seek to answer. There is the erroneous perception that quantitative methods are more objective and qualitative methods are more subjective.

Key principles for secondary data analysis:

- Scrutinise information and identify the underlying details of important facts, patterns, trends, significant differences or anomalies that are not always readily visible. Consider the details.
- Separate the matter into key parts and/or essential elements; break things down; identify causes/key factors, features/possible results.
- Ensure there is enough time to turn data into information. Often a great deal of time is spent collecting information, but too little time is given to preparing for data collection or analysing it.
- Challenge your own assumptions and conclusions. Discuss your findings with your colleagues and reach a consensus on conclusions.
- Consider bias and reliability/credibility. Don't rely on one source only.
- Be sceptical when dealing with comparisons. Researchers like to do a "regression," a process that compares one thing to another to see if they are statistically related. They will call such a relationship a "correlation." Always remember that a correlation DOES NOT mean causation.
- Be careful of the actual meaning of the terms used. Terms such as 'affected', 'household', or 'community' can mean different things in different areas. Definitions may change over time, and erroneous conclusions may be drawn where this is not recognised. Define potentially confusing or sensitive terms.

- If you use technical terms, make sure you define them correctly. E.g., specify which type of malnutrition you are referring to (stunting, wasting, etc.)
- Ensure the secondary data review is appropriately referenced. A well-documented secondary data review and analysis allows for easier use of the material by other interested parties and allows for greater product credibility.
- Clearly define when information is based on assumptions instead of facts or sufficiently verified information.
- Think about whether or not your findings make sense (Does it fit in with the history and context? Does it make sense to the people living there? Etc.)

## B. Quantitative Methods

Quantitative research uses methods to ensure objectivity, reliability, and generalisation. They seek to exert maximum control over the questions and potential answers and most often incorporate probability sampling methods to allow for statistical inference to the larger study population. The researcher is considered external to the actual research, and results are expected to be replicable no matter who conducts the research.

Quantitative methods help answer who, how much, and how many. Where probability sampling is used, statistical analysis will provide precise estimates for study variables, such as frequencies, averages, ranges, means, and percentages, at a known and quantifiable degree of confidence.

The intent is to gather data to test a pre-determined hypothesis, and only answers to those questions/variables included in the questionnaire are collected. Questions are not open-ended, and respondents are expected to provide short 'answers'. This eases analysis but limits the degree to which respondents participate and explain what they perceive (causes, rationale). Instead, explanations are sought by comparing associations and potentially causal relationships between variables (e.g. diarrhoea prevalence is lower among children whose primary drinking water source is a borehole; the lower prevalence, therefore, is explained by the source of water)

- **Strengths**

Precise estimates, backed by statistical theory, are often invaluable for decision-making and advocacy because they are robust and objectively verifiable if the data is collected and analysed correctly.

- **Weaknesses**

The greatest weakness of the quantitative approach is that it can take human behaviour out of context in a way that removes the event from its real-world setting. Factors or variables left out of the data collection instrument are simply not considered in the analysis

Quantitative Methods are helpful in the following Situations:

- When 'accurate' and 'precise' data are required.
- When sample estimates will be used to infer something about the larger population with the support of the statistical theory.
- To test whether there is a statistical relationship between variables.
- To produce evidence to prove that a particular problem exists or to justify a particular strategy.
- To identify the characteristics of a population (for example, during a baseline survey)

## C. Qualitative Methods

Qualitative research methods provide the researcher with the perspective of target audience members through immersion in their culture or situation and direct interaction with them. These methods help to answer questions such as how and why. The focus is on presenting perceptions, judgments, and opinions and explaining meanings, processes and reasons.

Qualitative interviews differ from traditionally structured interviews, in which formal questionnaires are used, not limited to a set of predetermined questions to be asked in sequence. Instead, the interviewer uses a checklist of topics to guide the interview, pursuing avenues that open along the way.

When applying qualitative methods, the researcher becomes the data collection instrument, and results vary greatly depending on the researcher. Hypotheses and additional 'follow-up' questions are generated during data collection and analysis, and measurement tends to be subjective. Therefore, by their very nature, the methods are often not objectively verifiable

- **Strengths**

The strengths of using qualitative methods are that they generate rich, detailed data that leave the participants' perspectives intact and provide

a context for their behaviour. Respondents provide their explanations in a participatory exchange with interviewers.

- **Weaknesses**

The weakness of using qualitative methods is that data collection and analysis may be labour-intensive and time-consuming. As a result, the number of respondents to which the method is applied is usually far fewer than quantitative methods. Another disadvantage is that qualitative methods are often not objectively verifiable.

Qualitative Methods are useful when:

- A broader understanding and explanation is required on a particular topic for which quantitative data alone is insufficient.
- Information is needed on what people think about a particular situation and their priorities.
- Seeking to understand why people behave in a certain way.
- There is a need to confirm or explain quantitative findings from a previous survey or secondary data.
- Resources and time are in short supply

## **D. Qualitative and quantitative techniques in rapid assessment**

Quantitative data guides in understanding the magnitude and scale of a humanitarian crisis by providing a numeric picture of its impact upon affected communities. It addresses the questions: how many and how much.

Qualitative data focuses on determining the nature of the impact of a disaster upon affected populations. Qualitative data answers questions of how and why coping strategies have adapted or failed to adapt to the changed circumstance.

A combination of different types and data sources is required to build a holistic picture of the affected population when undertaking a needs assessment. Sources for information include both primary and secondary data. Types of information include qualitative and quantitative data.

- **Quantitative data**

Scientific measurement is key to quantitative research. During phases I and II of an assessment, there will be limited primary quantitative data collected from a joint field assessment process (i.e. a multi-sector assessment with the buy-in and support of multiple agencies) because

of time and access constraints. Quantitative information collected through primary data collection will be relevant only to the visited sites and cannot be generalized for all affected areas and groups. Because quantitative data is numeric, the collection and analysis of data from representative samples are more commonly used.

Meanwhile, the use of large representative sample sizes does not typically happen until phase III of an assessment when there is sufficient time and access to enable sampling of households and individuals. Experience in assessments highlights that measurable amounts of quantitative information are often collected during assessments but not used.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses of Quantitative Research**

The advantage of legitimate quantitative data collected rigorously, using the appropriate methods, and analysing critically is reliability. However, the shortcoming of quantitative data is that it fails to provide an in-depth description of the experience of the disaster upon the affected population.

The main strengths of quantitative data collection are listed below:

- numeric estimates
- opportunity for relatively uncomplicated data analysis
- verifiable data
- data which are comparable between different communities within different locations
- data that do not require analytical judgment beyond consideration of how the information will be presented in the dissemination process

Weaknesses inherent in quantitative data are listed below:

- gaps in information - issues that are not included in the questionnaire, or secondary data checklist, will not be included in the analysis
- a labour-intensive data collection process
- limited participation by affected persons in the content of the questions or direction of the information collection process

- **Quantitative data**

The key contribution of qualitative data is that it provides information about the human aspect of the emergency by acknowledging context to the priority needs of affected populations and respecting the core principle of needs-based assistance and ownership by affected populations.

One major challenge for phase I and phase II assessments is finding the right balance in collecting and analysing qualitative information to identify trends and overarching issues for people affected by a crisis and present this information appropriately.

The main strengths of qualitative data collection are listed below:

- rich and detailed information about affected populations
- perspectives of specific social and cultural contexts
- inclusion of a diverse and representative cross-section of affected persons
- an in-depth analysis of the impact of an emergency
- a data collection process that requires limited numbers of respondents
- a data collection process that can be carried out with limited resources.

Weaknesses inherent in qualitative data are listed below:

- results in data that is not objectively verifiable
- requires a labour intensive analysis process (categorization, coding/recoding, etc.)
- needs skilled interviewers to carry out the primary data collection activities successfully.

Four elements regarding qualitative and quantitative information are key to ensuring the use of the right types and right sources of information during a rapid needs assessment to improve decision making:

- Qualitative and quantitative information are important to understanding the impact of a disaster upon an affected population. However, given time and access constraints, primary qualitative information will often combine with secondary quantitative information to address knowledge gaps.
- Qualitative and quantitative data collection calls for specific and agreed upon technical methods and requires specific skills sets for accurate collation, collection and analysis.
- In qualitative research, the data collection instrument is the researcher. Thus, the assessment team is the core element in the problem's observation and analysis.

- Qualitative and quantitative data interpretation are interchangeable; the crucial consideration is how data is presented and what questions are being asked.

### 3.3 Perform impact analysis

#### A. Introduction

Vulnerabilities and capacities of affected people and the capacities of local actors to assist must be carefully assessed. Principally, a disaster is a situation when affected people needs external assistance. This does not mean they have no strengths or capabilities to survive and sustain their lives. They may need specific assistance crucial for getting on their feet again.

Many examples of inappropriate assistance make affected people more vulnerable in the long term, as they rely more on external help. This must be caused by poor rapid assessment analysis, among other reasons.

Humanitarian agencies are increasingly using concepts of risk, capacity and vulnerability as a complement to assessing the needs of a population. The concepts tend to be used for potential future needs, providing a basis for predicting the likelihood of needs occurring within a particular timeframe.

Risk analysis is described as a 'process to determine the nature and extent of risk by analysing potential hazards and evaluating existing conditions of vulnerability and capacity. A population 'at at risk' is the one that has a high probability of suffering harm or loss – and the level of risk faced is generally expressed as the product of the level of threat (or hazard) faced and the vulnerability of the individual or group. Existing vulnerabilities may include:

- Depleted household food stocks
- Inadequate supply of essential foods
- Malnutrition
- Inadequate supply of emergency clinical medical services
- Severe climatic conditions aggravated by lack of shelter, warm clothing or heating fuel and/or water shortages

The commonly accepted definition of vulnerability is 'the characteristics of a person or group in terms of their capacity to anticipate, cope with, resist and



recover from the impact of a natural hazard'. Vulnerabilities include but are not limited to:

- Human dimension that conditions susceptibility to disasters
- Potential areas for harm or injury
- Potential areas for damage or destruction
- Social and organisation vulnerability

Closely linked to vulnerability, the notion of capacity is described as the resources of individuals, households, communities, institutions and nations to resist the impact of a hazard, including coping strategies. Capacities may refer to:

- Local skills and knowledge
- Local environment
- Technical skills
- Financial status and capacity
- Management skills
- Resource generation
- Networking skills
- Indigenous knowledge

Coping mechanism may refer to various ways and means to respond to crises or emergencies, difficulties and problems in life.

It is important to focus on the changes between the situation before and after the disaster during a rapid assessment. Therefore, assessments in emergencies place people and their livelihoods at the centre of the action and determine how the components generating vulnerability are affected.

The analysis of the information gathered should facilitate a clear understanding of:

- The degree of people's livelihood resistance and resilience, enabling them to survive and adequately meet their basic needs. This will help understand and determine their wellbeing status and any income-generation concerns.
- People's current level of well-being in terms of health (including mental health), nutrition, water and sanitation, employment, housing, etc.
- The level of self-protection is linked to having adequate means to protect people, the home, goods and means of production, and having skills and techniques that contribute to such protection.

- The conditions of social protection, which in general is provided by local institutions and which involves precautionary measures that people cannot arrange by themselves.
- Governance refers to how power is exercised in managing financial, social and national resources to respond to the situation.

Identifying vulnerable groups normally forms the basis for the targeting of interventions. The vulnerable group may be the entire civilian population, but vulnerability is more narrowly defined in most cases. The notion of the 'vulnerable group' – typically based on assumptions about socio-economic status – can introduce artificial distinctions that do not necessarily reflect a population's real needs. Not belonging to a 'vulnerable group' can itself be a major vulnerability factor.

An assessment of people's capacity to cope should state the risks to which they are most susceptible and should clearly differentiate the levels of risk faced as a basis for determining appropriately prioritised and targeted responses. Any assessment must also consider the question of state and local capacity and responsibility.

Vulnerability analysis highlights the question of local capacities: the population's own coping mechanisms in the face of a disaster and the government's response to it. The capacity analysis is used to judge the level and type of support required.

Vulnerability and capacity analysis is often based on lengthy assessment methods, such as mapping, wealth ranking, semi-structured interviews and participatory methods, which are rarely feasible or appropriate in rapid-onset disasters. Vulnerability mapping is generally used before a crisis benefit humanitarian needs assessment analysis.

## **B. Understanding sectoral map**

Maps are commonly used to analyse humanitarian needs. We can look at the same layering of base maps, baseline and situational data to paint a picture of the ongoing emergency concerning particular sectors/clusters.

Maps provide visual and geographic information on shelters within the affected area. The visual strength maps can show how displaced people are distributed following a disaster.

Rapid environmental assessments may be undertaken as part of the response to a potential or actual pollutant release that could cause large-scale human impact. This may be due to a specific technological/industrial accident or where an elevated hazard is assumed due to a natural hazard such as a flood or earthquake resulting in certain cases, identifying a potential threat from environmental pollutants may be serious enough to drive decisions about the evacuation of vulnerable populations. In challenging situations such as releasing highly toxic materials, a mapping may also be needed to enable responding agencies to operate safely

This map shows basic structures and organisational facilities within a country or affected area. Transport networks are key to representing other facilities such as education, hospitals, fire stations, police, power structures, banks, etc. Many infrastructure products will become base maps or baseline products to assess which situational data will be over-layed.

Products showing specific infrastructure themes will be necessary to those looking at specific vulnerabilities, so there must be individual products. Things should not, however, be looked at in isolation, and having some generalised products showing key infrastructures such as the main hospitals, government buildings, and schools can be useful for everyone

## 4.4

## Element 4. Present rapid assessment results

### 4.1 Identify key recipients of the rapid assessment results

#### A. Introduction

We cannot persuade our audience if we do not know much about them. Knowing our audience helps you shape the assessment results in a most likely way to gain their acceptance. Our goal is to persuade our audience, not simply to inform. We should pursue this effort so that people in need of assistance will get the right one informed by our assessment results.

## B. Be mindful of the audience

The assessment report should meet the needs of its audience and answer the questions in their minds. Be aware of the different needs that each may have. Some audiences may have in-depth knowledge of the assessed humanitarian context, while others may be decision-makers without that particular knowledge. Address the audiences at the level of their existing knowledge. So it is crucial to have a clear picture of what they already know. From that, you can build your messages, adding information that they don't already have. By the same token, if our audience knows little about rapid assessment, we may need to spend some time explaining it in more detail. Similarly, we should know their expectations to prepare to manage those expectations.

Think about how much information your audience needs, not how much information you can provide. In some cases, you may want to provide additional information in a handout after your presentation. Check for anything that can affect how they're likely to respond. Find out also what they may be expecting from your report. We will have to address your audience's expectations or preconceived notions in your presentation.

Is the assessment report a high or a low priority for them? How much do they care? If they have a high level of interest, we may be able to cut to the chase quickly, going directly to crucial messages. If their level is low, we may have to build interest before getting to the main messages.

Moreover, the report will not be in their native language for part of its audience. Consider whether translations should be done, taking into account that they take more time, involve considerable cross-checking with the original, and, of course, add to costs. For some audiences, presenting the report with an explanatory note that is not part of the report may be a solution.

## C. Acknowledge their attitudes and concerns

We will have a better chance to persuade our listeners when we have some information about what they already think. What attitudes, biases, interests, or concerns might they have that affect how they receive and respond to the assessment results? Do they have strong opinions or feelings about the results? To what extent are their egos and values likely to be a factor?

Is the audience likely to be friendly or hostile toward your point of view? If they hold positive views about assessment and the results, we should reinforce those views. If they hold opposing views, we have to anticipate their objections

and respond. We might start with points to get agreement from the audience before moving to the more controversial parts of the report.

## **4.2 Develop and deliver a report based on recipients' profile**

### **A. Introduction**

A rapid assessment officer must ask questions such as:

- should he/she provide a report in 10 minutes of presentation or a 20-page document?
- How many photos or statistical figures help to convince audiences?

We need to know in advance for adequate report preparation

### **B. Develop report**

Regardless of the form of a report (narrative, graphic, infographic, briefing, presentation, etc.), it should be clear and exciting in both content and presentation.

Rapid assessment outputs will reach your intended audience only if you effectively communicate the messages well. The main activities are:

- Write relevant, readable, and persuasive products
- Optimise the visual presentation of the main messages
- Communicate uncertainty
- Document data and methods
- Disseminate findings and preserve/protect your work for access by others

Needs assessment informs decision-making concerning four main questions:

- whether to intervene;
- the nature and scale of the intervention;
- prioritisation and allocation of resources; and
- programme design and planning.

## Basic Elements of the Report Content

The tips to follow for organizing the content of the assessment report are relatively basic. However, the importance of a well-structured report cannot be stressed enough. A good report will have a clear, logical structure with visual signposting and section headings to show the leading ideas. This section provides a suggested outline to structure the report's content and can be used as a checklist.

Guidance is explicitly provided to each of the report structures, which are:

- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Background Information
- Methodology and Limitations of Analysis
- Findings
- Recommendations
- Appendixes
- References.

Findings of rapid assessment report may include:

- An analysis of the most predominant threat
- Areas that are most at risk
- Distribution of most vulnerable population
- Main characteristics of the affected population
- Total number affected by the disaster
- Mortality and morbidity rates
- Total number and types of injuries (minor, severe) and illness
- Situation of critical sectors such as emergency health, shelter, food supplies, water and sanitation, psychosocial and mental well, and significant livelihood
- Damage to economic resources, properties, road or infrastructures and community structures
- Other organisations present in the target zone, including secondary sources of information
- Continuing or emerging threat
- Response from different organisations
- Response by the affected country and capacity to cope with the situation

## C. Share report

- Spending time choosing the methods of dissemination. For an assessment to truly be successful, the results must be shared with the appropriate audience in the right way.
- Any document used to disseminate findings should be attractive, readable, concise, highlight results, and include graphs, bullet points, or images to break up lengthy amounts of text.
- Identify key findings of the rapid assessment.
- Define and prioritise the actions and resources needed to reduce immediate risks.
- Estimate the additional support required from national and international sources for relief and recovery.
- Provide recommendations regarding priority needs, further action needed short term and long term goals.
- Prepare detailed plans according to interventions, including general project goals, dollar amounts required and key assumptions for implementation

Aside from traditional hard-copy dissemination and via email addresses, there are many ways to disseminate assessment findings electronically, including the following:

- Organization web portals: AHA Centre, NDMOs, etc.
- Shared humanitarian portals: HDX, HumanitarianResponse.info, ReliefWeb, etc.
- IASC cluster-specific websites: sheltercluster.org, globalprotectioncluster.org, etc.
- Social media: Facebook, Twitter, Google+, etc.
- File synchronization services: Sharepoint, Dropbox, Humanitarian Kiosk, etc.

## D. Be transparent on methods, terminology and assumptions used

All aspects of the assessment methodology need to be clearly articulated and openly shared. This can be done by asking how the assessment will be carried out, the information sources used, sites selected, time frame, the personnel involved, and decisions about the level of information collected. It also includes the assumptions made in developing scenarios and how conclusions were reached.

There are often multiple staff changes in the early days and weeks after a disaster. Having this information documented will help ensure all stakeholders are on the same page in understanding the assessment's purpose and reliability. Highlighted learning:

- Share the methodology process with end-users to strengthen the credibility of the CA process and findings.
- Giving credit to participating stakeholders in ways that highlight the networked approach is not a substitute for methodological accountability.
- Make the assessment questionnaires, tools, checklists, and other documentation publicly available, explaining how they were used during the coordinated assessment.
- Key terms used in the assessment products should be clearly defined to avoid misunderstanding and different interpretations. For example, what does affected mean? What does damaged mean? What is meant by site?

## 4.3 Keep rapid assessment data and information

### A. Introduction

When the assessment report is completed and conveyed, the final action is to keep a good record of the assessment data. This practice is important as other people, teams, or institutions can use the data for their humanitarian programming purposes, including monitoring and evaluation and disaster recovery work.

### B. Record keeping purpose

Obviously, when we conduct a rapid assessment for our own institutions' purpose, we will use the results and their supporting data to implement, monitor, and evaluate our humanitarian programme as a manifestation of the accountability principle.

When a coordinated assessment is conducted, the expectation to keep the assessment record is even greater, as more than one organisation is likely to make further use of the record. Other stakeholders who do not participate in the assessment may want to use the record; thus making record-keeping more crucial.



Record keeping may have indirect purposes, such as:

- **Future disaster**  
Although different types and scales of the disaster occur, some data and information may be relevant. The record at least gives information that particular data was available and it was accessible from a specific source
- **Training and exercises**  
Data and information from real disaster response is a great source for training and disaster simulated exercises. This gives more quality to the training or simulation exercises
- **Further research**  
As assessment continues to be refined, records of assessments will be beneficial for further study and research.
- **Further promotes open data practices**  
Some data should be freely available to everyone to use and republish as they wish.

## C. Record keeping measure

Data and documentation keeping may include the following actions:

- Identify a good place to keep the record. In EOC, organisations, government, and non-government agencies such as universities. In a common virtual place such as reliefweb.int, AHA Centre portal
- Select data to be kept. Some unnecessary data may be removed. Name the data that is easily understood.
- secure storage, including backup of electronic records, retention, archiving and retrieval of assessment results and required data
- safeguard any confidential information



# Self-assessment Checklist



**ASCEND**



## Self-assessment Checklist

Please use the checklist below to help you determine whether you are prepared to be assessed in this unit of competency. The boxes without tick mark indicate that there may be some areas you need to work on to become ready for assessment.

<b>Instructions</b> Please tick (✓) the box if your answer is yes	<b>Questions</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have I read the Learner Guide and understood its contents?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have I attended, participated in, and completed all training sessions and activities?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have I reviewed the learning resources to reinforce what I've learned in training?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Am I able to demonstrate my understanding of each element and performance criteria of this unit of competency by writing a summary in my own words?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Am I able to communicate how my experience, knowledge, skills-sets, and attitudes make me qualified and competent enough to perform the job related to this unit of competency?



# Oral Interview and Written Test Guide



**ASCEND**

## Oral interview and written test guide

This section guides candidates on how to communicate, demonstrate, or present evidence, responses, and their work in a professional manner. There are three primary ways the candidates will be assessed: through observation, oral interview, and written test. The assessor will determine the final assessment methods and tools depending on several factors like the local context, professional needs, and the like.

### On observations

Assessors will observe the candidate over a period of time to collect evidence of their capability to meet the required standards and performance criteria. Assessors may attend selected learning sessions, if any, to witness how candidates complete their activities and participate in exercises. In doing so, assessors can get a sense of the candidate's key strengths and areas for improvement concerning the unit of competency. It will benefit candidates to ensure their work is always complete and presentable.

### On oral interview

Assessors will conduct oral interviews to confirm and evaluate the candidate's experience, knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding the unit of competency under assessment.

Please review the Unit Readings and complete the Self-assessment Checklist in this document. It may include verification questions about what you learned from the training content and material. It may also include competency questions about your knowledge and skills. Assessors may ask you what knowledge or skill you will use or apply to address a specific occupational issue or problem. Candidates need to think about how they will carry out their critical job functions in a defined work setting.

Finally, the interview may also include behavioural questions that focus on attitudes. Assessors may ask for examples of what you will do when a particular situation happens or when circumstances change. Candidates will need to support their answers with reflections on their own or other's experiences and the lessons learned from those.

### On written tests

Assessors will also present a written test to candidates to confirm whether candidates learned and understood the training content and material concerning the unit of competency under assessment.

Accuracy, brevity, and clarity are the ABCs of good writing. The first thing candidates are suggested to do is answer the questions as accurately as possible. It helps structure your response and sharpen your main points in an outline before writing them down. Candidates are advised to use short and simple sentences and paragraphs. The key messages and transitions between your sentences and paragraphs must be clear. Your answers need to be easy to read and understand. It includes removing and leaving out irrelevant material. Candidates are also expected to write coherently and logically so that readers can follow their thought.

Proofread and correct errors in your work before submitting it. How you format your work also matters. If you are using a computer, please check whether your indentions, margins, spacing, listings (bullets, numerical sequencing), and page numbers are in order.



# Recommended Readings



**ASCEND**



## Recommended Readings

ACAPS. (2011). *Questionnaire Design for Needs Assessments in Humanitarian Emergencies*, Switzerland. Accessible [here](#)

ACAPS. (2011). *Technical Brief – Direct Observation and Key Informant Interview Techniques*, Switzerland. Accessible [here](#)

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The Sphere Project. (2014). *Sphere for Assessments*. Switzerland. Accessible [here](#)

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# Training Evaluation Sheet



**ASCEND**



## Training evaluation sheet

**Name of Training**

**Competency unit title and number**

**ADM.TEC.005.1** Conduct Rapid Assessment

**Location of training**

**Date of training**

### Instructions

Please tick (✓) your level of agreement with the statements below

**Strongly Agree**

**Agree**

**Neither Agree or Disagree**

**Disagree**

**Strongly Disagree**

### Training content and facility

The training objectives were clearly defined and met.

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The training content was organized and easy to follow.

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The training material was relevant and useful to me.

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☐

The training facility is adequate and comfortable.

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☐

### Training delivery and activities

The trainers/presenters were knowledgeable and well prepared.

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The trainers/presenters were engaging and helpful.

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The length of the training was sufficient for learning.

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The pace of the training was appropriate to the content and attendees.

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The activities and exercises encouraged participation and interaction.

☐☐☐☐☐

### What did you like most about this training?

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**What parts of the training could be improved?**

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**Other comments and feedback:**

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**Thank you for completing this training evaluation form.  
Your response is appreciated.**



# ASCEND

ASEAN Standards and Certification for Experts in Disaster Management

**THE AHA CENTRE**

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