GUIDELINES ON DATA ISSUES IN HUMANITARIAN CRISIS SITUATIONS

THE CHRONIC PHASE OF EMERGENCIES

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Context of Prolonged Crisis Situations

- Dysfunctional/destroyed national institutional capacities;
- Stalled development programmes and processes including those providing essential social services;
- Sustained insecurity and uncertainty – causing fear & mistrust;
- Forced displacements and prolonged relocations in temporary settlements, human suffering under harsh conditions, pressure on scarce resources;
- Obsolete data sources;
- Heavy reliance on external assistance.

** Hence the need for real time data to determine the basic services for the displaced persons, especially for some target groups (shelter and sanitation, schools for children, protection for women and girls against violence, fuel and food requirements, etc.).
### Main approaches to Data Collection

- Quick counts
- Listing and Profiling
- Rapid/Baseline surveys
- Qualitative data collection
- Assessments
- Sample household surveys
- Administrative records

**Choice of a method will depend on various factors among which are:**
- level of detail,
- Accessibility (security, distances, logistics, terrain, etc)
- time availability,
- resources availability (human, financial, material),
- IDP perceptions and sensitivity,
- positive and negative implications (‘Do No Harm’ principle),
- possible backlash if the exercise does not lead to further amelioration of conditions,
- Collaboration from the government and other partners

### Quick counts

- Applicable during early phases of displacement when people are still on the move; security is of general concern and/or when access to the area is restricted to obtain overall estimates of size and possibly sex composition
- Require minimal preliminary preparations and training
- Include:
  - counting houses in each of the well-defined communities of an administrative unit without necessarily conducting home visits
  - using satellite or aerial imagery to provide an approximate number of houses/structures
  - Head count at assembly points;
  - Headcount at household level within a clearly delimited area (added value if the sex and age of household members are collected)

**All of these methods have advantages and obvious limitations**
Listing and profiling

- Essentially household-based canvassing during which IDPs are identified either in the camps or within host communities – additional information can be collected subsequently.
- Listing involves basic registration while profiling entails collection of more detailed information.
- Listing generates a database which may constantly be updated as new IDPs arrive and others leave a specific area or camp.
- Profiling enhances the detection of specific protection challenges, provides details on both the IDPs and the host communities, provides useful indicators for other sectors of assistance, and highlights individual intentions, fears and aspirations.

Rapid/Baseline surveys

- They are not necessarily nationally or regionally representative but target specific areas of focus and specific sub-populations in preparation for interventions.
- They adopt simple, action-oriented, time-saving and cost-effective procedures to identify gaps and set priorities for intervention.
- They are better structured, more detailed and employ both qualitative and quantitative approaches to generate baseline indicators as well as benchmark indicators for monitoring.
- Their strength – flexibility.
- Their weakness – high technical capacity needed for design, processing and analysis within a short time period.
Qualitative data collection

- Essential for addressing issues of concern that cannot easily be measured, captured or appraised using quantitative survey approaches - RH problems, neglect and abuse of women, children and the elderly, violation of rights, absence of protection, abductions, trafficking, gender issues including GBV, aspirations, expectations and intentions;
- Very useful in chronic humanitarian crisis situations, where it can fill wider data gaps created due to generally weakened or dysfunctional statistical systems
- Though less costly and quick to organize, qualitative approaches may require greater technical expertise for the proper design, analyses and interpretation of results
- Otherwise, they could provide misleading outcomes

Assessments/Common Country Assessments (CCA)

- Assessments involve the use of diversified task forces to compile, organize, analyze and present information on humanitarian needs and priorities in a coherent and consistent manner and at the same time identify information gaps
- They can be conduced independently by the humanitarian community or by individual clusters or within the context of a CCA where various organizations of the UN system, collaborate with national counterparts to produce multifaceted and multidimensional analysis.
- While the CCA relies essentially on existing information, other independent assessments generally use flexible approaches to combine both primary and secondary information to assess specific situations and determine urgent needs – IDPs in host communities; GBV; protection issues, etc
Sample Household Surveys

- They employ conventional sampling approaches using reliable sampling frames to conduct investigations whose results can be generalized.
- The need for updated sampling frames, strong technical support and adequate resources as well as a relatively sedentary population and some level of security make such surveys rather unlikely in countries with prolonged crises.
- The tendency has often been for those parts of the country in chronic conditions to be left out of such surveys.

Administrative Records

- Data compiled at the facility level and aggregated at various administrative levels can provide up-to-date and specific information on coverage and on beneficiaries of services.
- Administrative records also can also provide information on the facilities themselves - availability, range and accessibility of services and their quality; staff strength; etc.
- Information from this source would only be valuable in crisis situations if:
  - All stakeholders participate in a consistent manner and have qualified staff.
  - The information is properly collected, verified, centralized and analyzed.
  - Coverage is relatively complete.
DISCUSSIONS

Sharing of experiences