

Coordinated Assessment and Information Management Training for OCHA Surge Rosters and UNDAC Members

I. Introduction

1. Throughout an emergency, assessments contribute to the evidence-based strategic planning and decision-making necessary for an effective humanitarian response. Coordinated assessments, involving contributions from numerous organisations and stakeholders, are necessary to ensure the quality, cohesion and efficiency of data collection and analysis. OCHA has a key role to play in this process.
2. Recently approved Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) coordinated assessment guidelines and methodology are currently being rolled-out in humanitarian emergencies. Central to this are (1) the Multi-sector/cluster Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) approach and (2) harmonized assessments and analysis. MIRA awareness and other coordinated assessment training courses have been implemented and personnel trained in assessment are available within OCHA and partner organisations.
3. There is need to build the capacity of key personnel deployed in emergencies to lead/facilitate/assist/support the initiation and implementation of the coordinated assessment process. They must be able to mobilize partners and resources for coordinated assessments, ensure high quality data analysis and the production of fast and useful outputs (Preliminary Scenario Definitions, MIRA Reports and Humanitarian Dashboards). These assessment outputs should be best suited to inform key decision making and strategic planning during the response.
4. The aim of this training event is to upgrade the skills of OCHA surge mechanism¹ personnel/members with existing knowledge and skills in coordinated assessments. This will enable them to better take a leadership role in the process in new or escalating emergencies .

II. Training Proposal

5. This proposal entails one face-to-face training event which is to be called the Coordinated Assessment and Information Management Training for OCHA Surge Rosters and UNDAC Members. The five-day training will be held in April 2013 in Estonia. It will focus on strengthening the skills and confidence of OCHA surge mechanism personnel/members. Emphasis will be put on practical, field-based scenarios with practical tips and tools for coordinating assessments. OCHA Surge Capacity Section (SCS) will carry out the event in cooperation with the Field Coordination Support Section (FCSS).
6. The focal points for the development of the training event are Josef Reiterer, from SCS, and Albrecht Beck, from FCSS. Expert staff from the Coordinated Assessment Support Section (CASS) and Information Support Services Section (ISS) will develop the content. OCHA may call upon the Assessment Capacity Project (ACAPS) and other partners to provide additional subject matter expertise.

III. Key Objectives

A. Reaction and Planned Action

7. After participation in the training, OCHA surge mechanism personnel/members will:
 - a. React positively to the overall training;
 - b. Join a pool of trained personnel willing to keep abreast of latest developments and contribute to the learning of others;

¹ 'OCHA surge mechanism' is used here as a shorthand for the full range of OCHA and affiliated mechanisms including; UNDAC, ERR, SBPP, ASP, IHP and support partners

- c. Express confidence in taking a leadership role initiating and facilitating a Multi-cluster/sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA);
- d. Express confidence in their ability to integrate coordinated assessment outputs into strategic planning and decision-making processes;
- e. Score an 80 percent (%) relevance rate of each individual session/topic of the training.

B. Learning and Confidence

8. After completion of the training, OCHA surge mechanism personnel/members should:
 - a. Outline the main steps to quickly and effectively initiate a MIRA, coordinate secondary data analysis, and lead the planning and implementation of community level assessments;
 - b. List and describe individual and organizational roles and responsibilities in the coordinated assessment process and the resources available;
 - c. Describe the key steps to delivering a fast and high quality assessment, including how to access and coordinate partners and resources;
 - d. List and describe key information management tools which support coordinated assessments;
 - e. Identify key information needs and approaches to carry out joint analysis and identify response priorities, and;
 - f. Explain and demonstrate how to develop coordinated assessment outputs (i.e. Preliminary Scenario Definition, Humanitarian Dashboard) and utilize them for strategic planning and decision-making processes.

C. Application and Implementation

9. When trained OCHA surge mechanism personnel/members assume their function, they should:
 - a. Confidently assume a leadership role in the initiation and facilitation of coordinated assessments;
 - b. Facilitate high-quality joint data collection, management and analysis.
 - c. Efficiently ensure the development and dissemination of high-quality PSDs, MIRA Reports and Humanitarian Dashboards, and;
 - d. Use outputs of efficient coordinated assessments as the basis for Strategic Response Plans, Flash Appeals and other key documents and decisions,

IV. Content

10. The training will cover the following coordinated assessment processes topics:
 - a. IASC Guidance on Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises, which outlines the agreed assessment approaches and methodologies for each phase of an emergency
 - b. MIRA framework and process
 - c. Available assessment resources (organisations, personnel, equipment/material, support by HQ)
 - d. Information management tools and processes
 - e. Facilitating multi-sector joint data analysis
 - f. Assessment outputs (Preliminary Scenario Definitions and MIRA Reports) production and dissemination
11. The training will also cover advice on integrating coordinated assessment outputs into decision making and strategic planning processes including:
 - a. Briefing/liaison with local authorities, HC/RCS, HCTs and clusters/sectoral working groups
 - b. Targeted information needs identification and report
 - c. Flash Appeals/Coordinated Humanitarian Action Plans (CHAP)

- d. Strategic Response Plans

V. Methodology and Resources

12. The methodology will include:

- a. Participatory approaches using facilitated discussions.
- b. Group work, desk exercises, and simulations to allow for practical application of information and concepts presented.
- c. Presentations in plenary.

13. The course management team will include:

- a. Course Coordinator (FCSS)
- b. Facilitators (1 FCSS, 1 SCS)
- c. Subject matter experts (CASS, ISS, ACAPS)
- d. Administrative support (from host organization)

VI. Participation

14. SCS and FCSS, in consultation with CASS and ISS will identify candidates who meet pre-determined criteria and are most involved in OCHA surge mechanism deployments. Within the agreed ratio, priority will be given to the ERR 13th rotation

15. Those nominated for this course will be selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- a. Expertise in humanitarian affairs and assistance, coordination, operational support, emergency relief and response.
- b. Existing knowledge of coordinated assessment mechanisms and methodology
- c. Currently enrolled in one of the OCHA surge mechanisms or affiliates (i.e. SBPP, ASP, ERR, IHP, Map Action, UNDAC)
- d. Excellent oral and written English is essential.
- e. Commitment to be deployed with OCHA.

Coordinated Assessment and Information Management (AIM) in Humanitarian Crises

Talinn, Estonia 22 - 26 April 2013

<p>INTRODUCTION</p>	<p>Over the course of the past three years, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee’s Task Forces on Needs Assessments (NATF) and Information Management (IMTF) have elaborated inter-agency guidance and tools designed to improve humanitarian data collection and analysis. Improving the evidence-base for humanitarian action continues to be a core priority for member states and donors and has been highlighted as part of the IASC Transformative Agenda. It is within this context OCHA is called upon to play a key coordination and facilitation role on behalf of Humanitarian Coordinators. Similarly, as part of the Transformative Agenda, cluster lead agencies and cluster members have committed to strengthening coordinated needs assessment, analysis and monitoring</p> <p>Within the strategic plans of OCHA country offices, a core objective focuses on creating a common understanding of the humanitarian situation through strengthened coordination of the collection, analysis and sharing of information on needs. This requires OCHA staff to have skills and capacity to facilitate joint assessments and analysis, and consolidate data with a view to “telling the story” of a humanitarian emergency.</p>
<p>AIM</p>	<p>Support OCHA country offices and Humanitarian Country Teams in carrying out the assessment coordination function through the provision of training, skills-building and technical assistance.</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES</p>	<p>By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explain OCHA’s core mandate, in particular, the roles and responsibilities associated with its coordination function around the Humanitarian Program Cycle. ▪ Apply relevant IASC information management and assessment guidance and tools, and able to clearly explain them to other stakeholders; ▪ Develop an assessment, data management and analysis plan for a coordinated assessment approach in different country contexts (focusing on new emergencies and protracted crises); ▪ Confidently lead or support a joint assessment or MIRA.
<p>PARTICIPANTS</p>	<p>Select representatives from OCHA surge mechanisms and personnel who are currently working with or acknowledge their commitment to being deployed to an OCHA office within 12 months.</p>
<p>PREPARATION</p>	<p>Participants are expected to participate in pre-departure training discussions/activities and to arrive at the workshop having reviewed all background documents provided prior to the meeting. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IASC Operational Guidance on Coordinated Assessments for Humanitarian Crises (Provisional Version, November 2011) ▪ MIRA Approach (Provisional Version, November 2011) ▪ IASC Guidance on Common Operational Datasets ▪ Operational Guidance on Responsibilities of Cluster/Sector Leads and OCHA in Information Management ▪ IASC Humanitarian Information Centre Terms of Reference ▪ Draft Guidelines on Survey of Surveys

Draft Summary Agenda: **UN OCHA Coordinated Assessment and Information Management (AIM) in Humanitarian Crises**

Time	Sunday 21 April	Monday 22 April	Tuesday 23 April	Wednesday 24 April	Thursday 25 April	Friday 26 April
09.00		<i>Review of Previous Day</i>	<i>Review of Previous Day</i>	<i>Review of Previous Day</i>	<i>Review of Previous Day</i>	Field exercise, cont.
09.30		Introduction to Course Objectives and Approach	Skills Development: Building Blocks (1-4): 1. Baseline Data 2. Reviewing Secondary Data 3. Survey of Surveys 4. Analytical Framework	Skills Development: Building Blocks 5 – 7: 5. Key Informant Interviews 6. Sampling 7. Questionnaire Design 8. Assessment Plan	Coordinated Assessments in Practice: Examples from the field	
		Warm Up Exercise				
10.30		<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
10.45		Introduction the Humanitarian Programme Cycle and IASC Transformative Agenda	Building Blocks 1 – 4, cont.	Building Blocks 5 - 8, cont.	Coordinated Assessments in Practice: Examples from the field, cont.	Group presentation of field exercise
11.30		Introduction to IASC Guidance on Assessments and Information Management			Harmonized Assessments and the CHAP	
13.00		<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
14.00	<i>Arrival</i>	Introduction to the Multi-Cluster/Sector Rapid Assessment (MIRA)	Applying the Skills and Guidance: Introduction to Group Work and Desk Top Exercise	Summary of Building Blocks: Bringing it all together	Harmonized Assessments and the CHAP, cont.	Review of overall concepts, wrap up and course evaluation
		MIRA Introduction Group Exercise	Desk Top Exercise: Developing a Preliminary Scenario Definition	Introduction to Group Work and Desk Top Exercise: Planning for a Community Level	Introduction to Field Exercise	<i>Departures</i>

				Assessment (CLA)		
15.30	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	
16.00	Registration and Transfer to Venue	Group discussion of participant questions	Desk Top Exercise, cont.	Desk Top Exercise, Cont.	Field Exercise, cont.	
		Summary and Wrap Up	Daily Wrap Up	Debrief on Desk Top Exercise		
17.30						
19.00	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner/Social Event	Dinner	