

MULTI-SECTOR INITIAL RAPID ASSESSMENT
GUIDANCE

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IASC
Inter-Agency Standing Committee

The Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) is a joint needs assessment tool that can be used in sudden onset emergencies, including IASC System-Wide Level 3 Emergency Responses (L3 Responses).

The *IASC Transformative Agenda* recognized the critical role of needs assessment as a basis for overall and cluster strategy development; agreed that needs assessment should be well coordinated, rapid and repeated/reviewed as necessary to reflect the changing dynamics, drivers and needs in each country and agreed that the results of needs assessments should inform the overall strategic planning and prioritization process.

Needs assessment represents one step in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) - which runs from assessment and analysis of needs to strategic response planning, resource mobilization, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of operations - and supports the response analysis conducted for strategic response planning.¹

The *Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment* (MIRA) is a joint needs assessment tool that can be used in sudden onset emergencies, including IASC System-Wide level 3 Emergency Responses (L3 Responses). It is a precursor to cluster/sectoral needs assessments and provides a process for collecting and analyzing information on affected people and their needs to inform strategic response planning. The following pages serve as guidance for undertaking a MIRA, explaining the purpose of joint data collection and a shared analytical processes and outlining the key steps required, as well as associated roles and responsibilities.

In a protracted crisis, the consolidated analysis of needs of affected people is presented in a *Humanitarian Needs Overview* (HNO), either instead of, or subsequent to, a MIRA. The HNO is a result of a coordinated assessment and joint analytical process in a given country.

THE MIRA



TOOL BOX

Further guidance, tools and best practices are available in the online MIRA toolbox: <https://humanitarianresponse.info/miratoolbox>

Note on refugee and 'mixed situation' operations: *The Joint UNHCR-OCHA Note on Mixed Situations: Coordination in Practice* clarifies leadership and coordination arrangements in the situation where a complex humanitarian emergency or natural disaster is taking place, a Humanitarian Coordinator has been appointed, and a UNHCR-led refugee operation is also underway. The Note sets out the respective roles and responsibilities of the UNHCR Representative and the HC, and the practical interaction of IASC coordination and UNHCR's refugee coordination arrangements, to ensure that coordination is streamlined, complementary and mutually reinforcing.²

Revision of the MIRA

The 2012 MIRA guidance elaborated by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Needs Assessment Task Force (IASC/NATF) was developed by drawing from the wealth of experience and knowledge gathered from United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), donors, academic institutions and other technical bodies. The guidance has subsequently been revised to incorporate lessons learned from its application in new emergencies, further field practice and other existing assessment tools and methodologies. It reflects a common vision of what is methodologically sound and realistically feasible in the highly challenging environment in which emergency humanitarian needs assessments take place.

For further information and guidance on the humanitarian programme cycle: <https://humanitarianresponse.info/programme-cycle>.

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Section 1

Overview of the MIRA

Purpose

When a sudden onset disaster strikes, a joint needs assessment process, the Multi-Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA), is one of the first steps in the Humanitarian Country Team's emergency response.

The MIRA is an inter-agency process enabling actors to reach, from the outset, a common understanding of the situation and its likely evolution. Based on its findings, humanitarian actors can develop a joint plan, mobilize resources and monitor the situation.

The MIRA is underpinned by an analytical framework that guides the systematic collection, organization and analysis of secondary and primary data.³ The MIRA informs and supports the design of subsequent needs assessments and analysis which are often more detailed and operational in focus.

The MIRA is an integral part of a larger frame of humanitarian assessments outlined in the *IASC Operational Guidance on Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises*⁴ which explains how to optimise the performance of existing assessment coordination structures and appropriate methodologies for the different stages of a crisis.

WHAT THE MIRA CAN DELIVER

- An initial common understanding of the most pressing needs affected areas, and groups
- A voice for the affected population
- Information to help guide the planning of subsequent assessments which are more detailed and operationally specific
- An evidence base for response planning
- A light, fast inter-agency process based on global best practices in rapid needs assessment

WHAT THE MIRA DOES NOT PROVIDE

- Information to directly inform the design of specific and localized humanitarian interventions
- Statistically representative primary data for quantitative analysis on humanitarian needs
- A substitute for detailed or in-depth sectoral assessments

Emergency situations requiring MIRA

The MIRA can be modified for use in a variety of contexts. However, like any tool it is best applied in certain situations.

A MIRA is most appropriate in a natural disaster setting, where a specific event triggers an emergency that is new or sudden in nature and generates a confirmed or potential humanitarian impact that is followed by a period of relative stability, allowing humanitarian actors to carry out response activities and more detailed assessments.

The MIRA is also best applied to inform strategic-level decisions under tight deadlines.

Figure 1 illustrates the criteria a HCT and/or other relevant stakeholders should consider in determining whether a MIRA is the appropriate tool for a particular context. For protracted crises, a joint needs assessment can also be employed if deemed useful by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and Humanitarian Country Team (HCT).

Figure 1: Preconditions for a successful MIRA

New and sudden?

- New sudden-onset emergency
- Significant deterioration in an ongoing emergency or new and sustained access to a previously inaccessible area
- New or additional risks to lives and livelihoods

Stability?

- Environment supports sustained access to majority of affected population
- No significant additional population movements anticipated
- Safe and sustainable access to the majority of the affected population

Urgency?

- Urgent need for new information to support joint planning
- No or limited detailed cluster/sector or agency assessments available

Joint?

- HCT supports a joint analysis and planning process
- Agencies and clusters willing to share information for joint secondary data analysis
- Agencies and clusters willing to contribute resources for joint primary data collection

Process

The MIRA is implemented through a phased process of secondary and primary data collection, joint analysis and reporting. It takes place in the first two weeks following a disaster. Having a contextualized and adapted MIRA preparedness package in place before a crisis strikes will help ensure a successful MIRA exercise. The timeframe associated with the MIRA is conceptual in nature, as few crises proceed in a purely linear fashion (see Figure 2).

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN IN THE MIRA

- Analysis of pre-crisis and in-crisis secondary data and identification of information gaps per cluster/sector.
- Agreement on a needs assessment data collection form that addresses the information gaps identified through secondary data analysis.
- Joint primary data collection using appropriate sampling approaches and mainstreaming age, gender, diversity and perceived needs of the affected populations into the methodology.
- Consultations with community representatives involved in the response.
- Joint analysis of primary and secondary needs data.
- Dissemination of the analysis to the HC, HCT, and sectors/ clusters informing preliminary and strategic response planning and cluster/sector planning.
- Communicating findings to the affected population via the most accessible mechanism and identification, where possible, of ways of receiving feed back.

Phase 1 (0-3 days): Initial assessment

The MIRA is ideally initiated by the government authority responsible for coordinating emergency assessment in the country, but can also be independently initiated by the HC and HCT. The HC and HCT, in consultation with Government authorities and in close coordination with the clusters, jointly determine the scope, establish a timeline and a coordination structure and identify resources for implementation.

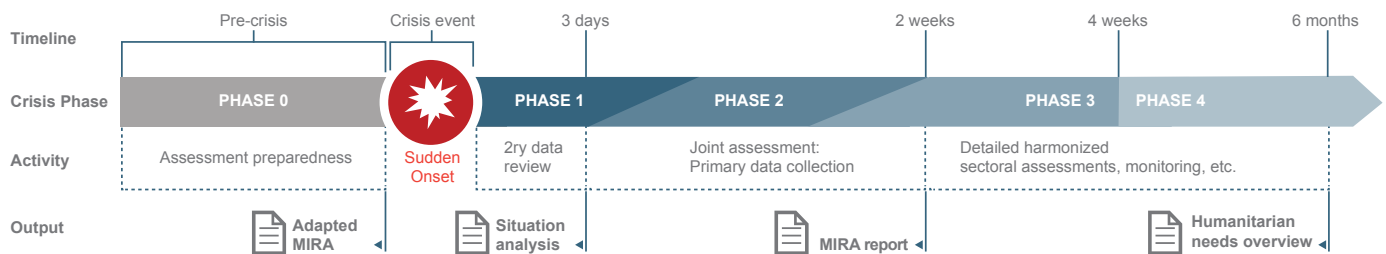
The next step is a systematic inter-sector review of available pre-crisis and post-crisis secondary data by an assessment team. The resulting situation analysis is focused on the humanitarian dimensions of the crisis (i.e. humanitarian profile, estimated number of people in need, humanitarian access) and is the key document for informing initial strategic response planning and appeals, in particular the Flash Appeal.

Phase 2 (2 weeks): Joint data collection and analysis

On the basis of humanitarian needs identified during the review of secondary data⁵, a field assessment is carried out to collect primary data through visits to affected areas and interviews with the affected communities.⁶

Secondary and primary data are analyzed in a joint process to generate a MIRA report that will inform the next cycle of response analysis and strategic planning.

Figure 2: Coordinated assessment approach and phases



The MIRA Analytical Framework

The MIRA analytical framework underpins and guides the collection, collation and analysis of secondary and primary data. Its purpose is to ensure that assessment planning and execution are conducted comprehensively and that key concerns are not overlooked.

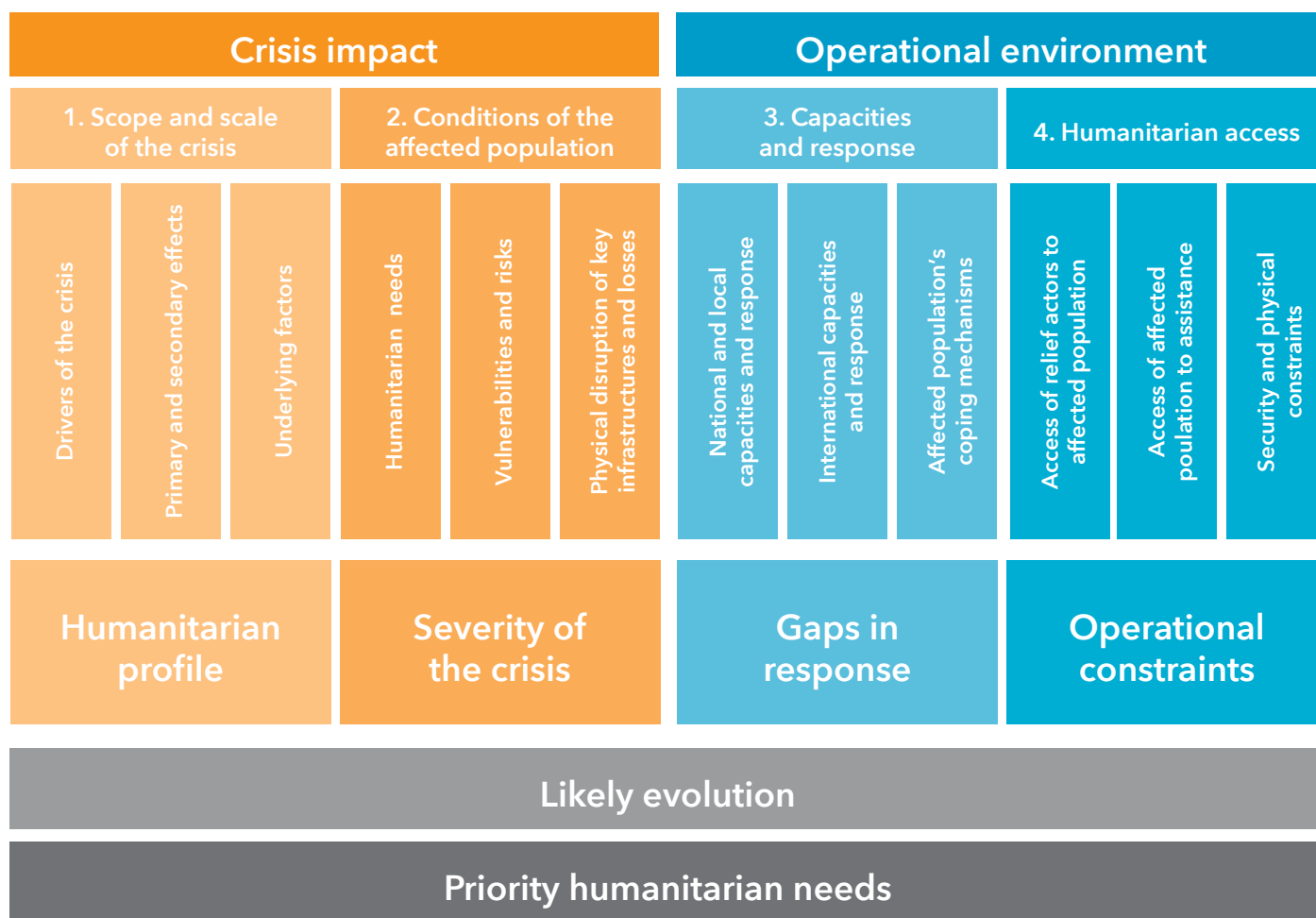
This framework supports efforts by humanitarian actors to reach a common understanding of where humanitarian needs are most severe, and which population groups are most in need of humanitarian assistance.

The framework groups four themes under two pivotal areas: *crisis impact* and *operational environment*. The diagram below describes the themes and analytical outputs. An expanded framework with a set of questions is available in Annex 2 to guide the analysis.

The crisis impact themes concern the identification of humanitarian needs, vulnerabilities and risks, disruption to infrastructures, markets and losses. The operational environment themes correlate with the ability of humanitarian actors and local communities to respond to the crisis and also guide the response analysis to strategically plan and design the humanitarian response.

The analytical outputs are described here as *humanitarian profile*⁶ which includes a sectoral and geographical breakdown and identification of vulnerable groups; *severity of the crisis* with details of needs; *response gaps* and lastly *operational constraints*. Ultimately an overview of *priority humanitarian needs* will be derived based on the likely evolution of each theme. The framework will also help to identify important information gaps that affect confidence in the final results.

Figure 3: Coordinated assessment approach and phases



Key Roles and Responsibilities

Effective coordination of a MIRA requires a balance between the representation of key actors, and the mobility of a small team with the relevant technical skillset. A MIRA can be jeopardized by failure to attain buy-in from key actors and/or the engagement of too many actors, which can overwhelm coordination mechanisms and potentially derail the process.

For smaller, sub-national level crisis contexts with good MIRA preparedness, existing capacity and resources should be sufficient. In the case of a large-scale or national level crisis, additional human resources will

likely be required. Regional offices, emergency response rosters, standby partners and specialized secondment mechanisms are all sources for additional MIRA support. Modalities for acquiring additional resources should be put in place at an early stage of a MIRA.

The roles and responsibilities in the table below correspond to a MIRA triggered by a given crisis.⁷ Figures 4 and 5 identify responsibilities for key MIRA activities, including and list specific tasks by responsibility. Some degree of adaptation will likely be needed on a country-by-country basis.

Figure 4: Key stakeholders and main activities

STAKEHOLDERS	MAIN ACTIVITIES
Host government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National and/or local government authorities should be consulted and encouraged to lead the coordination of emergency assessments and response.
Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) ⁸	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HC is responsible for ensuring the process is launched when needed and that a joint message reflecting the collective voice of the humanitarian community is projected.
Humanitarian country team (HCT) ⁹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assigns staff from respective agencies to take part in planning, designing and implementing the assessment. Endorses inter-sectoral analysis of MIRA findings and priority humanitarian needs.
Assessment coordinator (AC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees coordination of the MIRA process, encourages participation by key humanitarian actors in the assessment team and ensures production and dissemination of key MIRA outputs. OCHA will normally take on this role, as designated by the HC¹¹.
Assessment team (AT) ¹² AC, government representative or relevant organization may co-chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A multi-cluster/sector, interdisciplinary group responsible for supporting the design, planning, coordination and harmonization of assessments; conducting secondary and primary data collection and cross-sectoral analysis; and preparing and disseminating key MIRA outputs. Membership should be representative of a cross section of MIRA stakeholders: government, UN, NGOs, affected population and private sector. Skillsets to include: assessment, statistics, sectoral emergency assessment design, analysis, participatory and field research methods. Local knowledge, gender, age and protection expertise required.
Information management officer (IMO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports compilation of pre- and in-crisis information and secondary data analysis. Manages process of entry, compilation and tabulation of assessment data; ensure comparability of datasets with other information products and requirements; and produces figures, maps, and charts. Serves as member of the assessment team and reports to the assessment coordinator.
Cluster/sector coordinator (CC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures participation of cluster/sector members as relevant in the assessment team for planning, design, implementation, secondary data review and analysis purposes.
Field team leader (FTL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointed by the assessment coordinator, the field team leader leads the field assessment teams. Ensures that agreed procedures and standards are used to conduct data collection, analysis and field debriefing. Ensures findings and raw data are produced and presented to the assessment coordinator on a timely basis.
Field assessment team (FAT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representation of a cross section of MIRA stakeholders should be considered: government, UN, NGOs, affected population and private sector and a gender balanced composition. Skillsets to include: emergency programming and sectoral field data collection. Local knowledge and expertise in participatory approaches, gender and protection analysis and interview skills required.

Overview of MIRA by Phases and Activities

MIRA phase 1: Initial assessment

An initial and exploratory assessment mainly based on pre- and in-crisis secondary data providing a shared situational overview among humanitarian stakeholders regarding:

- The scale and severity of the crisis

- Location and estimated size of the affected population and identification of different affected groups
- Likely priority humanitarian needs of the affected population over the short, medium and longer term
- Information gaps that will need to be addressed by the MIRA phase 2

Figure 5: MIRA activities by phase and roles and responsibilities

PROCESS	STEP	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES		TIMELINE (DAYS)		
		LEAD	CONTRIBUTION / PARTICIPATION	1	2	3
1. Initiating and planning a MIRA	Decide and announce launch of a MIRA phase 1	HC/GOV	HCT	■		
	Establish/revise assessment coordination structure and appoint sector/cluster representatives.	HC/GOV	HCT/CCs	■		
	Identify technical assessment capacity in government, clusters/sectors and other humanitarian stakeholders	AC	HCT/GOV/CCs	■		
	Define objectives and scope	HC/GOV	HCT/CCs/AT	■		
	Adapt the MIRA analytical framework and methodologies	AC	GOV/CCs/AT	■		
	Set up a multi-disciplinary team for secondary data review	AC	AT/CCs	■		
	Plan and organize a joint analysis	AC	GOV/AT/CCs	■		
2. Secondary data review	Compile and organise pre- and in-crisis secondary data	AC	GOV/AT/CCs	■	■	
	Summarize data according to relevant sectors using the adapted MIRA analytical framework as a guide	AC	AT		■	
	Achieve consensus through joint inter-sectoral analysis on the most severely affected areas, groups and needs	HC/AC	AT, CCs, GOV, HCT, AP		■	
	Approve jointly defined inter-sectoral priority humanitarian needs	HC/GOV	HCT		■	
	Jointly determine whether a phase 2 MIRA will be required	HC	AC, AT, CCs, GOV, HCT		■	■
Output: Situation analysis	Informs prioritization and initial response planning					
	Informs the design of MIRA phase 2					

MIRA phase 2: Initial assessment

Rapid assessment aiming to deepen common understanding of the situation and the different impact in various geographical settings and/or on affected groups:

- Estimates scale and severity of the event's impact

- Identifies inter-sector priority needs and impact by affected groups or geographical areas
Forecasts possible evolution of the crisis and the resulting needs over the short, medium and longer term

		ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES		TIMELINE (DAYS)											
PROCESS	STEP	LEAD	CONTRIBUTION / PARTICIPATION	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
3. Primary data collection	Decide to launch a MIRA phase 2	HC/GOV	HCT	█											
	Refine objectives and the MIRA analytical framework based on findings in phase 1	AC	AT	█											
	Choose assessment methodology to context, select sites and adapt data collection tools	AC	AT	█											
	Plan for continued secondary data review	AC	AT	█											
	Train and prepare field assessment teams and organize field visits	AC	GOV/AT/FTL/FAT	█	█	█	█								
	Plan and organize the joint analysis	AC	GOV/AT/CCs			█	█	█							
	Collect primary data	FTL/AC	AT/FAT/AP				█	█	█	█	█				
4. Joint analysis	Update and fill information gaps with newly available secondary data and primary data	AC	GOV/AT/CCs							█	█	█			
	Achieve consensus through joint inter-sectoral analysis	AC	GOV/AT/CCs/AP									█	█		
	Approve jointly-defined inter-sector priority humanitarian needs	HC	HCT										█		
5. Reporting and dissemination	Draft the MIRA report	AC	GOV/AT/CCs								█	█	█	█	
	Publish the MIRA report tailored to audience and context	AC	GOV/AT/CCs												█
Output: MIRA report	Informs prioritization, response analysis and subsequent strategic response planning														
	Informs the design of further detailed assessments														

Section 2

Implementing the MIRA

This section describes the sequence of practical steps necessary to ensure a successful MIRA during emergencies, from initiation of the MIRA up to reporting and dissemination of the final findings. The chapter

details the main implementation activities. More specific guidance, tools and templates can be found in the MIRA toolbox available at: <http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/miratoolbox>.

Figure 6: The MIRA process

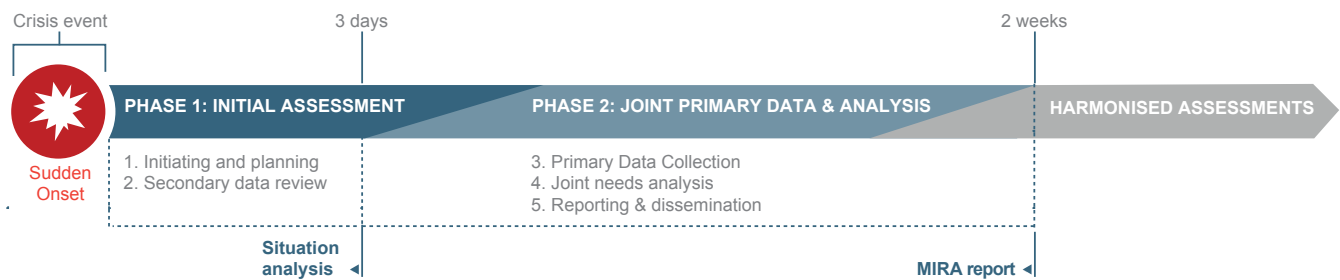


Figure 7: MIRA main stages and standard timeline

MIRA STAGES	PHASE 1			PHASE 2											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
1. Initiating and planning	█	█	█	█	█	█									
2. Secondary data review	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
3. Primary data collection				█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
4. Joint needs analysis		█	█					█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
5. Reporting and dissemination			█									█	█	█	█

1. Initiating and Planning a MIRA

When initiating a MIRA, careful planning and engagement with key stakeholders helps to ensure that all critical issues have been taken into consideration and all required resources are anticipated and provided.

The following table describes the main steps and lists activities.

Figure 8: MIRA steps and activities

STEPS	ACTIVITIES
Plan and revise coordination arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review and activate existing plans, tools and lessons learned• Identify suitable technical resources and capacities• Establish assessment coordination structure
Define the objectives and scope of the assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define initial objectives which should be broad in scope; determined by basic facts and assumptions derived from location, type of hazard, sectors affected and lessons learned• Validate objectives and scope with stakeholders.
Define information needs and adapt MIRA framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adapt MIRA analytical framework to local context (see Annex 2).• Define context-relevant categories of analysis

Using the MIRA analytical framework

The MIRA analytical framework introduced on page 4 provides a flexible model for analysis.¹³

Before proceeding, categories of analysis (i.e. rural vs. urban) need to be agreed in order to refine the analytical

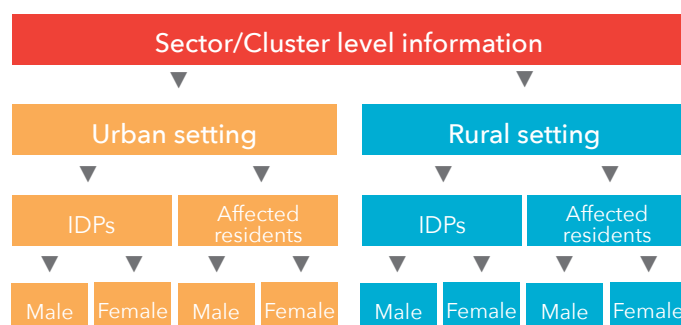
focus and provide a means to disaggregate and compare results. The categories defined are used to filter the analysis through the framework. Two main categories of analysis are commonly used for MIRA: geographical characteristics and population groups (see Figure 9). All categories of analysis are comparative. Examples given are not exhaustive.

Figure 9: Common categories of analysis for MIRA

GEOGRAPHICAL CHARACTERISTICS	POPULATION SEGMENTS OR GROUP CHARACTERISTICS
<p>Administrative area</p> <p>(i.e. province A vs. province B)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which province has been worst affected by the typhoon? 	<p>Affected groups</p> <p>(i.e. IDPs/affected residents)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are certain groups more affected /exposed to more risks than others? How do different groups cope with the emergency situation?
<p>Setting</p> <p>(i.e. urban/rural, coastal/inland)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the population affected differently according to the setting? Do populations have access to goods and services (i.e. markets)? 	<p>Vulnerable groups</p> <p>(i.e. elderly people, people living with disabilities, socially marginalized groups, LGBTI, female/adolescent/girl head of household)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are sub-groups of the population affected differently? To what extent are existing vulnerabilities exacerbated by the crisis?
<p>Distance</p> <p>(i.e. distance to storm track, conflict zone or earthquake epicentre)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are humanitarian needs greater when nearer the eye of the storm than in other places? Are people in high-conflict-intensity areas more affected than others? 	<p>Socio-economic groups</p> <p>(i.e. farmers/wage workers, religious and ethnic groups)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are fishermen more affected by the tsunami than farmers? Are certain groups more affected due to their origin, religion or level of poverty?
<p>Composite</p> <p>(i.e. geographical areas with high population density within 50 km of the epicentre of the earthquake vs. other geographical areas)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the humanitarian impact in coastal areas affected by tidal surge greater than in inland areas affected by extreme winds? 	<p>Sex and age</p> <p>(i.e. young children, adolescents, adults and older people)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are female and male populations in various age groups affected differently? How do existing gender inequalities contribute to the social and economic vulnerabilities of the population? Does the crisis exacerbate existing gender- and age-based discrimination? Are different priority needs expressed by the male and female population?

Due to time limits and logistical constraints, it is important to streamline the analytical process. The number of categories of analysis must fit with existing data collection and analytical capacities. Control the number of categories of analysis to avoid overloading data collection and sampling with excessive disaggregation. In most situations, it is recommended to limit the disaggregation plan to two to three categories only, including sub-divisions, as in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Example of data disaggregation plan



2. Secondary Data Review

Secondary data is crucial to MIRA, especially when field data collection is limited by access and resources. This data provides more detailed information and a baseline with which to compare primary data. The phase 1 secondary data review aims to identify gaps and subsequent information requirements. Phase 2 secondary data review will continue and complement the data collected at field level.

The phase 1 secondary data review leads to a situation analysis that informs the HCT on day 3 and subsequently guides initial response planning. Secondary data review will continue throughout the assessment process (phase 1 and phase 2).

The secondary data review is based on analysis of pre- and in-crisis secondary data.

Pre-crisis secondary data

- Provides background information as it identifies pre-existing problems, vulnerabilities and risks.
- Historical data helps identify patterns in priority needs. Past interventions provide evidence on how different groups might be affected differently.

- Provides a baseline for assessing the impact of the disaster and helps differentiate between the impact of the crisis and pre-existing or chronic needs.

In-crisis secondary data

- Provides an understanding of the effects of the current crisis and, when compared with pre-crisis information, help assess the impact of the disaster.

ANALYTICAL EXPERTISE

Data analysis should be undertaken by staff with experience of emergencies and country knowledge, guided by an experienced assessment coordinator and in collaboration with clusters/sectors and focal points. If dedicated resources are not available at country level, the collation of secondary information can be undertaken remotely, and reviewed by in-country experts.

Needed skills:

- A good knowledge of main information sources in-country
- The ability to tag and organize large quantities of information of different formats and types
- Structured and organized internet research
- Reporting and synthesis skills

Figure 11: Steps for secondary data review and analysis

STEP	OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES
Compile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating, tracking and compiling pre- and in-crisis information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use available sources: media, government, national statistics office data, cluster/sector completed and on-going assessments and remote sensing
Organize	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tagging information for easy retrieval and consolidation based on MIRA themes and the agreed categories of analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use metadata such as date, location, sector and affected groups, reliability and severity levels • Design and implement data management procedures and standards (i.e. P-codes, tool for storing secondary data, assessment registry)
Validate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining the usability of the information: relevance and completeness • Determining the trustworthiness of the information: reliability and credibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check collated data is fit for purpose, size, shape, resolution and time period, etc. • Check sources' credentials, possible motives for bias, past record of accuracy • Degree to which different information sources corroborate
Consolidate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarizing data by grouping similar data and consolidating related findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize findings by geographical areas, affected groups and sectors
Analyse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking sector-level analysis by subject matter experts from agencies or clusters and representatives of the affected population • Joint and facilitated analysis to identify inter-sector priority needs and information gaps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the MIRA analytical framework as the basis for analysis and interpretation, within and across sectors

3. Primary Data Collection

Based on the recommendations put forth during the initial assessment, the HC/HCT will decide whether to launch a phase 2 assessment including a field assessment to collect primary data through visits to affected areas and interviews with the affected communities. The purpose is to fill information gaps identified at phase 1 and/or verify by ground truthing consolidated findings and priority humanitarian needs.

Depending on the gaps identified, the scope and methodology will be set by the assessment team led by the assessment coordinator. Contextual parameters (risks and opportunities) must be considered when developing the assessment plan.

Refining objectives and information needs

1. Objectives and scope
 - Aim to find a balance between breadth and specificity of objectives. The assessment must be targeted and cannot meet all information needs of all parties.
 - They should be decided by consensus.
 - At a minimum, they should refer to the sectors to be assessed and geographical scope, groups of concern, decisions to be informed and timeframe.

Any changes in objectives or scope are to be communicated to all stakeholders. Discuss issues surrounding information and how they will be addressed. Record these in the MIRA Terms of Reference.

2. Refine information needs and the MIRA framework in consultation with stakeholders
 - Define the categories of analysis to fit the context. The purpose is to focus data collection and analysis.

Develop an analysis plan.

Based on the revised and adapted MIRA framework, design an analysis plan detailing what data to collect, where to access the information (secondary and/or primary data), and what type of analyses and comparisons it will be required to interpret it (i.e. geographical or group comparisons, trends over time).

Develop the analysis plan before designing the data collection tool(s) to ensure that only useful and necessary information is collected. This also helps to assess the feasibility of the assessment. When all information needs and available resources have been considered, it is possible to decide whether or not the assessment can be undertaken as initially planned.

KEY CONTEXTUAL PARAMETERS

- The type of decision to be informed and the given selected timeframe will influence the type of information collected, the speed required, the sampling unit (i.e. community or group level) and the level of detail in the data.
- The crisis characteristics and dynamic will affect the lifespan of the information collected, and the type and frequency of report updates (favour several 'briefs' over one-shot reports if the situation is highly dynamic).
- Security conditions and the 'do no harm' principle will influence the sensitivity of information sharing and the questions that can be asked.
- Information already available will influence the scope of primary data collection (i.e. if existing monitoring systems provides information on a specific sector, then there is no need to include questions about it in the questionnaires).
- Existing assessment capacities (i.e. technology and training, skills of enumerators) and resources, such as transport and hubs, available in country will determine the complexity of the questionnaire (i.e. some questions require sector expertise and cannot be handled by generalists), the number of assessment sites that can be visited and the sampling unit (i.e. assessment at geographical level or at affected group level).

Figure 12:

Sample analysis plan: Extract from “Physical disruption of key infrastructures and losses”

THEME	INFORMATION/ INDICATOR	DATA REQUIRED	DATA SOURCES	ANALYSIS AND COMPARISON
Infrastructure damage level	<p>Level of damage to private buildings (i.e. houses, apartment buildings)</p> <p>Level of damage to public infrastructure (i.e. schools, health centres)</p>	<p>Percentage of infrastructure damaged on a scale of magnitude:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No damage Slight damage Moderate damage Heavy damage Total destruction 	<p>Secondary data (provided by districts or provincial government officer, volunteers), NDMA and UNOSAT data, crowdsourcing data</p> <p>Primary data (community level), direct observation and key informant interview</p>	<p>Level of damage in urban vs. rural areas</p> <p>Visualization: stack bars</p> <p>To place in Section 2 of the report, ‘Damages and losses’</p>

Methodology and tools

The decision tree in Figure 13 supports the choice of appropriate design options for phase 2. Take into consideration the time, capacity and resources available, the level of access to the field, the safety of respondents and information already available.

Data collection tools

- A variety of data collection tools can be used in a MIRA. When selecting and designing tools, ensure they reflect information requirements and align with the analysis plan.
- Use a semi-structured questionnaire when little is known about a disaster, in order to encompass diversity and build a knowledge base.
- When more is known about the disaster, more structured questionnaires can be used.

Data collection techniques

Data collection should be undertaken using a mix of direct observation (DO), key informant interviews (KII) and community group discussions (CGD),¹⁴ See Figure 14 for a description of the application, purpose and use of the techniques.

The use of a combination of techniques for an assessment is critical to ensure good quality data and an age-, gender- and diversity-sensitive approach. Triangulation can build on the intentional combination of multiple data collection technique; the use of a variety of data sources (various key informants, such as local leaders, teachers, health staff, etc.); ensuring different background and/or gender of the enumerators/assessors; and the use of multiple perspectives or lenses to interpret observations (i.e. protection, gender or age).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

- Always review tools and plans already in place or used in the past and consider how to make best of use of them.
- One size does not fit all. Take time to adapt data collection tools based on the results of the secondary data, the adapted framework and the context. Translate carefully, field-test tools, and refine accordingly.
- Limit the number of questions to be asked at the field level and do not collect information that is available from other sources, or that cannot be collated and analysed within the desired timeframe. Do not seek more detail than necessary.
- Ensure that priorities expressed by the population and identified by the assessment teams are captured systematically and consistently; both views count.

Figure 13: Design options for MIRA phase 2

Phase 1: Secondary data review

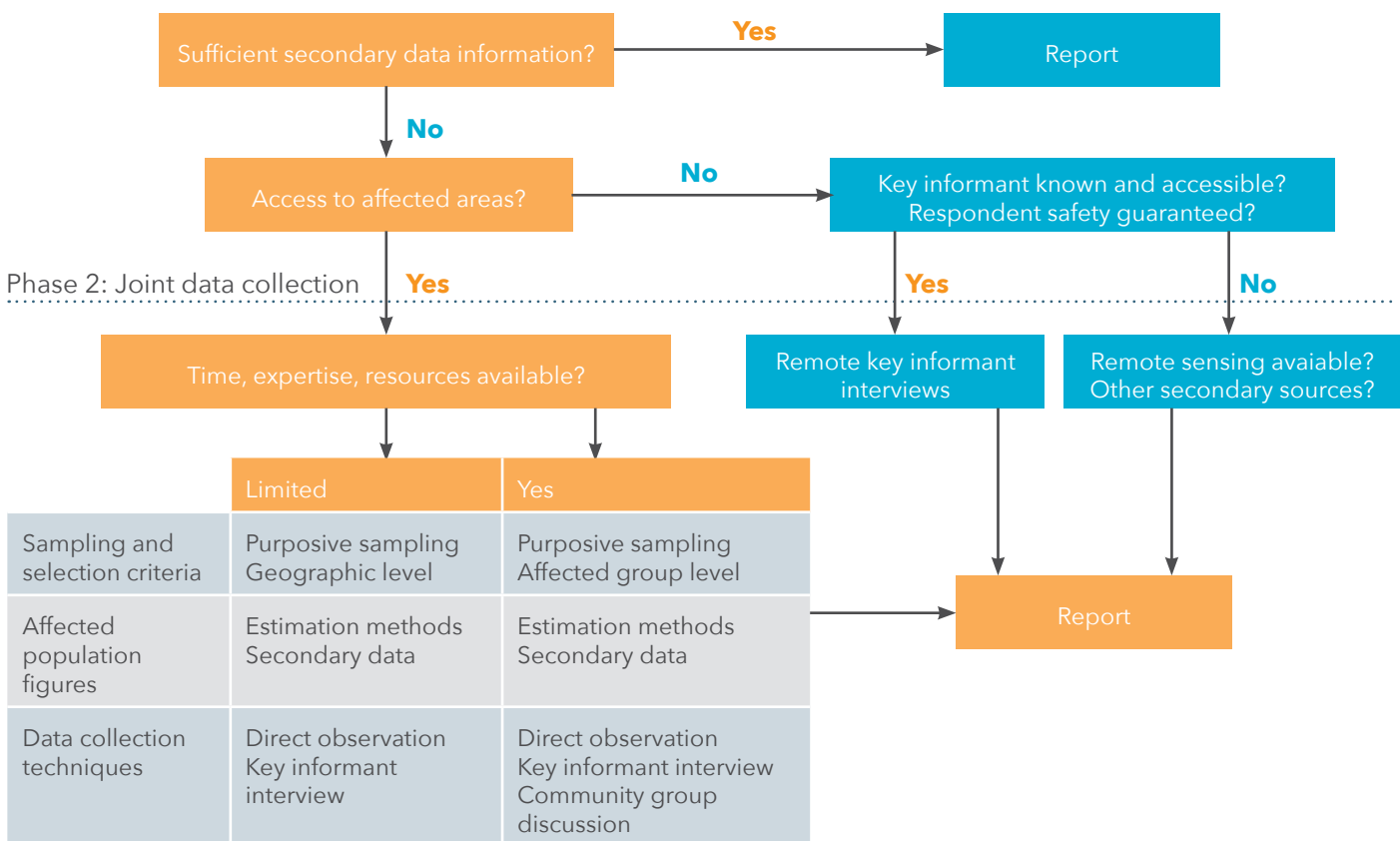


Figure 14: Data collection techniques

TYPE	MEANS OF OBSERVATION	RESPONDENT GROUP
Key informant interviews (KII)	(Semi) structured questionnaire adapted to data collection technique, expected respondent knowledge	Individuals with prior and specific knowledge of certain aspects of the community (e.g. community leaders, farmers, members of women’s groups, health workers)
Direct observation (DO)	Structured (looking for) and unstructured (looking at) observation (sounds, smells, visual impressions, taste, touch)	N/A
Community group discussions (CGD)	Interview of a group of individual to gain information on conditions, situations, experience or perceptions through group interaction	Small population groups sharing certain characteristics (e.g. age, sex)

Data collection technology

The use of mobile technology (i.e. smartphones, tablets, field computers) for field data collection is an increasingly common approach. Mobile data collection can significantly reduce data entry error, the time and resources required to prepare the field data for analysis, and makes for more flexible and agile design of data collection tools.

The decision to employ mobile data collection technology in the MIRA should be based on:

- The ICT environment in the area to be assessed (i.e. mobile phone/data coverage, access to electricity).
- The technical capacities of the MIRA stakeholders to adapt the technology rapidly if the system was not put in place during MIRA Phase 0: Preparedness Activities.

Site selection and target groups

In order to account for the differing impact of the disaster across population groups, purposive sampling¹⁵ is recommended as it ensures that different types and levels of impact are captured by the assessment.

The recommended sampling unit for MIRA Phase 2 is the community/affected group level. For assessments taking place at the early stage of a medium- or large-scale disaster as in the case of MIRA, there will always be a trade-off between the diversity of the sample and the efficiency and timeliness with which data can be collected.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SITE SELECTION

- Visiting fewer sites allows for more time at each site and ensures better data quality.
- Know when to stop. When a common pattern is observed, there is little benefit to carrying on.
- A purposive sample is not representative of the entire affected population and results cannot be extrapolated or interpolated for the wider population of interest. It will nonetheless provide critical information on areas and groups in greater or lesser need and support verification of already known information.
- When the affected area is geographically large, consider using a higher sampling unit such as sub-district, municipality or commune.

Resource field assessment teams

The structure and size of the assessment team will vary with the scope of the assessment undertaken, the volume of information to collect, the type of crisis and where the assessment takes place. In some situations, several hubs will need to be planned for and resourced. The assessment coordinator is responsible for anticipating and planning human, financial and material resources drawing from partners' staff and in-kind participation.

- Ensure all data collection is conducted by experienced and qualified staff, and that dedicated coordination mechanisms are in place, involving key stakeholders and government.
- Invite key national actors to join the assessment team, if appropriate. This may provide access to existing information channels, including a range of in-country experts. It also ensures that the assessment process builds on existing resources and mechanisms and is likely to be used in national decision making.

Organizing field visits

- Ensure teams have the necessary logistical means and administrative framework to conduct field assessment, including standard operating procedures and safety recommendations.
- Ensure field teams are aware of the site selection plan and the planned procedure if a target group or site is inaccessible.

Plan the following on a day-by-day basis:

- Which locations to visit
- How much information to collect
- How to include local authorities in the assessments
- Planning team meetings and revising responsibilities

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FIELD ASSESSMENT TEAMS

- Consider the size, composition, competencies, backgrounds and limitations/bias of the team members. The more qualified and experienced the team is, the more likely it is that the assessment findings will be accurate and reliable.
- As far as possible, ensure gender balance, ethnic diversity, complementary and multi-disciplinary skillsets, and varied agency representation.
- Provide all assessment team members (including drivers and translators) with clear instructions, reporting lines and job descriptions to enable them to understand their responsibilities and work objectives.
- Train all team members, even if they are experienced in assessment, in sampling strategy, code of conduct, data collection forms, ethics in data collection, “do no harm” principles, avoiding raising expectations, accountability to affected population, etc.
- Ensure teams know how to engage with communities in an appropriate way and how to react to urgent cases.
- Consider to use the field assessment team to disseminate important humanitarian information to communities.

Practical ways to include age, gender and diversity

Women and men will have distinct and equally valuable information to bring to the assessment. Men, especially leaders, might provide better information on the demographics and security situation of the area, while women ascertain in their role as caregivers who is at risk and which needs prevail. They often have access to information men won't have, especially around protection risks.

- + Interview a balanced number of women and men (through KIIs or CGDs) to reflect needs and priorities of the whole population.
- + Use key informants from different communities or groups to assess how different types of people experience the situation differently.
- + Assess questions and themes that might be relevant to socially marginalized or other vulnerable groups.
- + Assess information needs of key informants, different communities or groups (how to get information, what they need to know, which sources they trust).
- + Partner with specialized NGOs or networks working with hard to reach groups.
- + Mobilize self-governance structures, such as youth and women's groups, as sources for assessment information.
- + Conduct a participatory ranking of problems and solutions recording priorities expressed based on sex, age and diversity.
- + Hold assessment interviews with different segments of a population simultaneously (e.g. men's and women's community group discussions) so that one group does not try to infiltrate the other and to ensure both are equally consulted.
- + As much as possible, ensure that the place where the interview takes place is sufficiently private.

4. Joint Needs Analysis

The analysis process

The analysis process involves uncovering and describing patterns or trends in data and the existing relationships or associations between events and conditions observed at field level or reported by information sources. The analysis should consider available secondary and primary data.

Data collection and analysis is an iterative process. New data are compared and contrasted to old, to note, confirm or contradict patterns and trends. Figure 15 describes the steps of analysis through description, explanation, interpretation and forecasting.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANALYSIS

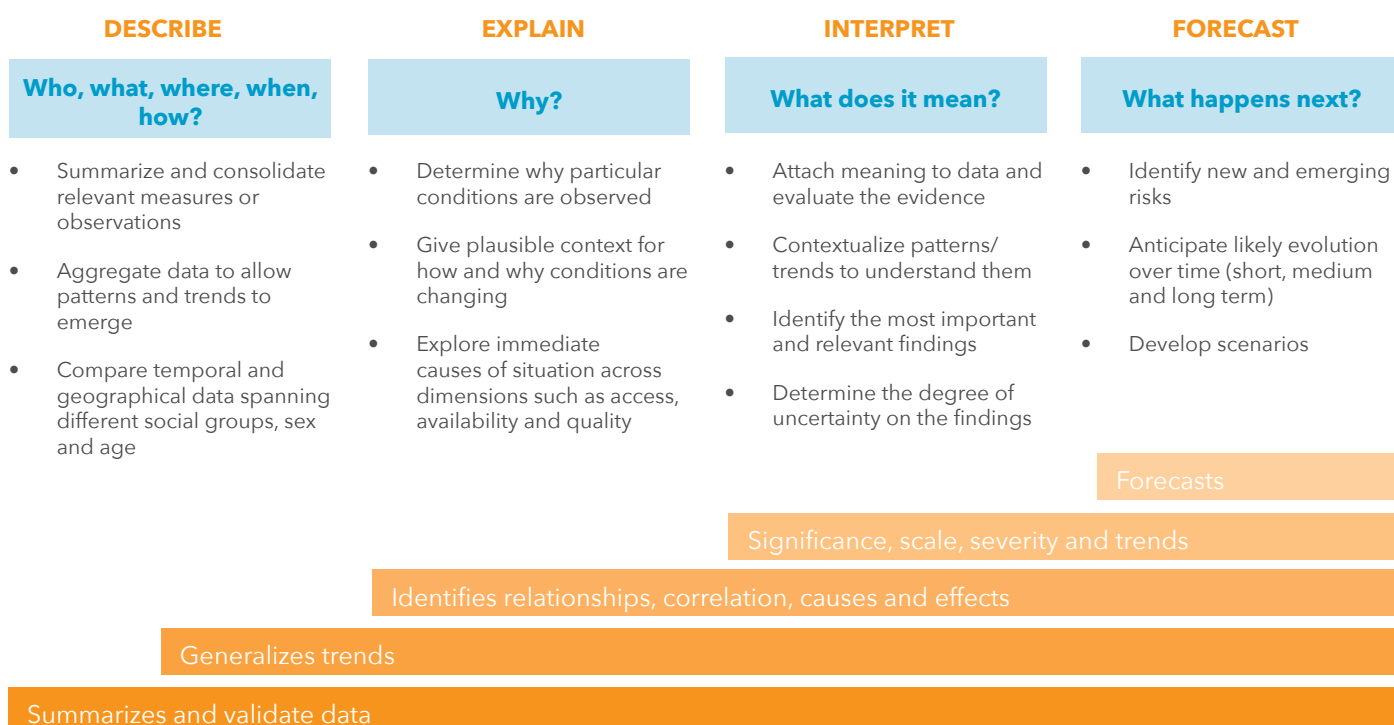
- Ensure sufficient time and resources for analysis. Equally, know when to stop. The process of analysis has seemingly infinite combinations of variables to explore and compare.
- There is no straightforward model or one-size-fits-all framework to support inter-sector needs analysis. The volume and quality of data varies from one context to another and determines the type of possible analysis.
- Acknowledge weaknesses and limitations of data and analysis in the MIRA report.
- Identify the nature of the problems as well as the root causes contributing to the existence and the evolution of the needs. Look for potential inter- and cross-sectoral relationships.

Practical ways to include accountability to affected populations (AAP)

Accountability to affected populations (AAP) means ensuring affected people's views and contributions are effectively integrated into all phases of the humanitarian programme cycle, including communicating with communities. To ensure the voices of the affected population in a MIRA:

- + Define humanitarian needs that reflect the expressed perspectives of the affected population across age groups, gender and other aspects of diversity.
- + Assess the information needs and trusted/reliable information channels for the affected population.
- + Include community-based organizations and local communities in assessment.
- + Ensure representation of the affected population in analysis processes.
- + Share the results of the assessment with communities in different ways (examples include using radio spots, local websites and public forums to inform communities).
- + Make the final report available/accessible to the affected population in the local language(s).

Figure 15: Analysis steps



Undertaking joint analysis

Joint analysis for the purpose of this document is defined as the facilitated process during which findings of a humanitarian needs assessment are collectively analysed by different stakeholders. The process aims to:

- Build a common understanding of the humanitarian situation
- Validate the assessment results
- Generate ownership of the results, and
- Facilitate agreement on priority needs.

The same data can be interpreted in different ways by specialists with different expertise and areas of focus. Relevant partners across sectors/clusters should be involved to ensure the diversity of views are represented and understood.

Analysis of the data and, specifically, the process of ranking needs, should involve people familiar with the

assessment methodology and its limitations, the findings, the context, and who have expertise in multiple sectors and emergency programming.

Sector-level analysis involves consolidation, processing and analysis of data collected for each sector. The sector/ cluster teams translate data analyses into priority needs, groups and geographical areas which are synthesized following the agreed MIRA analytical framework, the analysis plan and process. Evidence should be cross-checked and information triangulated to examine inconsistencies, confirm findings and identify information gaps.

Inter-sectoral analysis facilitates discussion bringing together the MIRA stakeholders so intra- and intersectoral data, information and knowledge can be shared and consolidated in a structured manner, cross-cutting issues can be identified and a common understanding of the situation, priority humanitarian needs, groups and geographical areas can be built.

Figure 16: The joint analysis workshop

State objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redefine objectives and ensure common understanding of the scope of the analysis among all participants • Define key concepts and agree on decision modes (voting, majority, etc.)
Describe situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present findings and issues within each sector based on the MIRA analytical framework using corresponding questions • Contrast current conditions, status and risks with the ongoing or planned responses and the level of access • Discuss upcoming events or the likely evolution of the crisis to form the basis of the development of scenarios
Build consensus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants should provide evidence to support their position and indicate their level of confidence in the analysis and interpretation • Record evidence provided and conclusions reached, including diverging views
Agree on priority humanitarian needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record priorities (areas, sectors and groups), and highlight the needs of the most vulnerable even if not considered a priority on a national scale • Highlight information gaps (they could hide extreme vulnerabilities) • Identify risks based on lesson learned • Take a holistic approach to identifying inter-sectoral needs and agree on which to prioritize

5. Reporting and Product Dissemination

The MIRA report is produced to inform strategic response planning and appeals. The purpose of the report is to help decision-makers - including the humanitarian country team, sector/cluster leads and members, the government and donors - to collectively appreciate and communicate on the nature and dynamics of the crisis and to further define strategic humanitarian priorities.

Documenting data and methods

- Clearly cite limitations
- Describe the methodology (including methods, assumptions made in developing scenarios and how conclusions were reached)
- Provide information on the data and the methods of collection and analysis

Sharing findings and data

The dissemination strategy should provide different levels of detail, formats and channels for different audiences in a series of reports, notes or briefings. In insecure environments, MIRA might contain sensitive information that cannot be shared publicly. Ensure context-specific methods are adopted for protecting and sharing data. Remember, lack of information sharing can lead to inefficient and poorly-planned programming, the possible duplication of assessments and, subsequently, assessment fatigue among the affected population.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REPORTING

- Be clear and transparent about the limitations of your analysis, the methods used and your degree of confidence in the findings.
- Make the assessment questionnaires, tools, checklists, and other documentation publicly available, where possible, explaining how they were used during the assessment.
- Use assumptions but clearly define when these differ from facts or sufficiently verified information. Distinguish between facts/observations and judgement/interpretation.
- Key terms should be clearly defined to avoid misunderstanding and different interpretations. Use accepted terms and standards, e.g. SPHERE. Avoid jargon and technical language.
- Ensure the report captures how females and males and age groups have been affected.
- When using estimates for affected population figures, explain the methodology used to reach the final number or range. Be explicit, precise and double-check figures. Record source and other metadata.
- Include maps and use data visualization to ease understanding.
- Keep information as simple as possible while making sure no important information is omitted. Avoid repeating information.
- Articulate results. Translate conclusions into easily understandable language and focus on value added. Summarize the main findings briefly and clearly in an executive summary. This section should distill the findings from the assessment into a few key messages.
- Dissemination of findings is an iterative process. Products should be updated regularly. Make information available online where possible so all stakeholders can access it.
- Share findings with affected communities and national authorities to ensure accountability.
- When briefing on findings, ensure that the main differences and distinctive assistance and protection needs of the population are highlighted so as to feed into an evidence-based and efficient response analysis.
- Clearly identify information gaps, or the known unknowns, and needs for further assessment phases.
- Give credit to participating stakeholders.

ANNEXES

Annex 1. MIRA Preparedness

Assessment preparedness helps to ensure the availability of timely, relevant and quality information necessary to respond effectively during the days immediately following an emergency.

The *IASC Inter-Agency Contingency Planning Guidelines* and *Emergency Response Preparedness Guidelines*¹⁶ provide practical instruction on strengthening preparedness.

Preparedness planning enables readiness for an immediate in-country response and should be undertaken in support of the relevant national authorities, and in partnership with other humanitarian and development actors.

Planning for initial assessments should include:

- Identification of agencies/organizations that will participate
- Agreement on specific rapid assessment tools
- Agreement on coordination structure(s), roles and responsibilities
- Discussion on how sector/cluster assessment information will be collated and shared
- Outline of logistics plan including anticipated resource requirements and commitments
- Identification of resource gaps, capacity-building needs and information gaps, with an associated plan as to how these will be addressed

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT PREPAREDNESS

- Raise awareness. Increasing awareness of the importance of the process helps ensure timely, quality and relevant information.
- Agree on assessment coordination structures. Identify key stakeholders; maximize the use of existing coordination mechanisms; include links to national disaster management bodies and other appropriate government entities and international/national NGOs.
- Review assessment planning already undertaken; particularly government contingency planning, assessment formats and approaches. Review technical guidelines produced and used in the past, based on lessons learned.
- Set out collaborative arrangements. Agree on standard operating procedures, draft terms of reference for an assessment and information management working group, and/or assessment-related tasks. Develop partnerships with national research institutions and other national bodies that have a data collection capacity.
- Develop assessment tools and data collection methodology. Adapt standard operating procedures, reporting formats, information requirements and questionnaires (existing ones, when possible). Share with stakeholders, carry out field-testing, and revise based on feedback.
- Strengthen capacities and skills of partners and stakeholders through training. Maintain a list of trained staff, their location and contact details in case of emergency.
- Compile and store baseline data and risk analyses. Work with partners to collect baseline data, populate key indicator sets, and compile common datasets. Based on vulnerability and risk mapping, adapt fact sheets and lessons learned to the affected area context.
- Gather and disaggregate qualitative and quantitative data. Integrate a gender perspective in the MIRA process by collecting and analysing gender-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive information related to the specific context in order to facilitate a robust understanding of the situation of female and male populations of various age and diversity groups.
- Ensure the organization of logistics and human resources. This includes agreements for the funding and transportation of equipment (tools, computers, tablets, smartphones). Identify members of the assessment team, ensuring a suitable gender balance and, where needed, train in-country capacity.
- Develop protocols for data sharing and a dissemination plan for communicating the findings.

Annex 2. MIRA Analytical Framework

CRISIS IMPACT	OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT
<p>The crisis impact themes are directly related to the identification of sectoral humanitarian needs, vulnerabilities and risks, and an assessment of their severity as well as their immediate causes. Assessing the crisis impact entails:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studying the drivers of the crisis and their consequences in terms of number and type of group affected. • Understanding the current conditions of the affected population and severity of the crisis. 	<p>The operational environment themes are used to identify the degree to which the population in need is assisted. Understanding this pillar entails:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimating the response capacity and needs per sector, and gaps to be addressed. • Examining the level of access for humanitarian aid and the influence on aid delivery (operational constraints).

SCOPE AND SCALE OF THE CRISIS	CONDITIONS OF AFFECTED POPULATION	CAPACITIES TO RESPOND	HUMANITARIAN ACCESS
<p>Drivers are a factor or a set of factors that (can) trigger or expose to suffering or life-threatening conditions.</p> <p>They are differentiated by effects, from primary to secondary, such as a hurricane causing floods (primary effect), triggering population displacement (secondary effects) and subsequent loss of livelihood.</p> <p>Underlying factors are contextual elements that exacerbate the crisis, such as pre-existing food insecurity, lack of governance capacity, hazard-prone conditions, gender inequalities, social discrimination, remoteness.</p>	<p>Understanding the condition and status of the population calls for the assessment of the humanitarian outcomes in each key sector/ cluster, and the existing vulnerabilities and risks resulting directly or indirectly from the crisis.</p> <p>The immediate causes of identified issues should be assessed in order to tackle their root causes (degree of accessibility, availability, awareness, quality and usability of goods and services).</p> <p>Finally, physical disruption of key infrastructures and losses needs to be estimated, as well as the losses directly and indirectly caused by the crisis.</p>	<p>Capacities and responses (planned or ongoing) refer to the ability of main stakeholders involved in the humanitarian response to meet the population's needs. It is measured at different levels (national and international capacity, coping mechanisms of the affected population).</p>	<p>Assessing humanitarian access entails estimating the degree to which people in need are able to reach and be reached by humanitarian aid. It covers the access of relief actors to the affected population, the access of the affected population to markets and assistance, and security and physical constraints affecting both humanitarian actors and the affected population.</p>

HUMANITARIAN PROFILE ¹⁵	SEVERITY OF THE CRISIS	GAPS IN RESPONSE	OPERATIONAL CONSTRAINTS
<p>Analytical output:</p> <p>Geographical scope and scale of the crisis, including the estimate of the number and type of affected groups.</p>	<p>Analytical output:</p> <p>Severity of the crisis, including an estimate of the number of people in need at each sector level.</p>	<p>Analytical output:</p> <p>Gaps in response, including an estimate of the number of people whose needs cannot be fulfilled with the current level of response or capacity.</p>	<p>Analytical output:</p> <p>Identification of the operational constraints, including an estimate of the people in need unable to receive regular assistance.</p>

In analyzing the impact of the crisis and of the operational environment as parallel and complementary themes, the MIRA analytical framework derives an analysis of unmet needs and key humanitarian priorities.

THEMES	SUB-THEMES	SITUATION (including information gaps)	POPULATION SEGMENTS OR GROUPS Choose appropriate segments (age interval, sex) or groups (humanitarian profile, socio economic, religion, etc.)	GEOGRAPHICAL AREA Choose appropriate geographical boundary, i.e. admin level, urban/rural, etc.	LIKELY EVOLUTION over the short, medium and long term
<p>DRIVERS OF THE CRISIS</p> <p>Definition:</p> <p>Factor or set of factors that has the potential to expose human-beings to life threatening danger or risk</p>	<p>Primary effects</p>	<p>What is the magnitude, intensity range, severity (or other appropriate classification) of the disaster, i.e. Richter magnitude scale for earthquake, Tropical Cyclone Intensity Scale, Volcanic Explosivity Index, flood stages, etc.?</p> <p>What primary effects occurred as a result of the process itself? i.e. water system damaged due to flooding or collapse of buildings during an earthquake, landslide, or hurricane?</p>	<p>What is the total estimated population living in the affected area that are (potentially) exposed to primary and secondary effects?</p> <p>What are the demographic characteristics (sex and age interval) of the affected population? How many are they?</p> <p>Which population groups, and how many, are (most likely) affected by the primary and secondary effects of the crisis?</p>	<p>What geographical areas are currently affected or potentially at risk of being affected by primary and secondary effects?</p> <p>What are the current and potential areas hosting displaced populations?</p>	<p>How are these drivers likely to evolve, change or continue?</p> <p>Are upcoming events likely to aggravate the situation (elections, rainy season, increased population displacement, etc.)?</p> <p>What are the prospects for early recovery and durable solutions?</p>
	<p>Secondary effects</p>	<p>What secondary effects occurred as a result of primary effects? i.e. fires ignited as a result of earthquakes, disruption of electrical power and water service as a result of an earthquake damaging power plants, or flooding caused by a landslide into a lake or river, population displacements, crop failure, market disruption?</p> <p>What are the triggers, trends, patterns and dynamics of population movements?</p>			
	<p>Underlying factors</p>	<p>What are the main root causes of the crisis?</p> <p>What are the underlying factors that have contributed to increased vulnerability (i.e. marginalization, discrimination, legislation)?</p> <p>Which factors create tensions/ social disruption and why?</p> <p>What pre-crisis vulnerabilities contributed to the crisis? How and why have these been worsened or exacerbated by the crisis?</p>	<p>What are the historical, social/political, religious, cultural, ethnic or socio-economic characteristics of the population living in the affected areas?</p> <p>What are the dynamics as well as pre-crisis vulnerabilities within and between groups (including gender based discriminations, age diversity and marginalized and vulnerable social groups) and how do these dynamics deepen existing vulnerabilities, create tension/social disruption?</p> <p>What is the total estimated population living in the affected area that are additionally vulnerable due to to underlying factors?</p>	<p>What geographical areas are currently affected or potentially at risk of being affected due to underlying factors?</p>	<p>How the underlying factors are likely to evolve, change or continue?</p> <p>How are underlying factors likely to influence the post-crisis situation?</p>

THEMES	SUB-THEMES	SITUATION (including information gaps)	POPULATION SEGMENTS OR GROUPS Choose appropriate segments (age interval, sex) or groups (humanitarian profile, socio economic, religion, etc.)	GEOGRAPHICAL AREA Choose appropriate geographical boundary, i.e. admin level, urban/rural, etc.	LIKELY EVOLUTION over the short, medium and long term
CONDITIONS, STATUS AND RISKS Definition: Condition: the circumstances or factors affecting the way in which people are living during a crisis. Status: the situation at a particular time during a crisis. Risk: a situation in which the population has exposure to danger.	Crisis outcomes and humanitarian needs	What is the status of and impact of the crisis on: mortality, morbidity, nutritional status, livelihoods, dignity or quality of life of affected populations?	How many people are in need of assistance, in total and per group? Are the various groups affected differently? How and why? How many men, women, boys and girls including older people are in need of assistance? Are men, women, girls and boys affected differently? How and why?	In which geographical area has the mortality, morbidity, nutritional status, livelihood, dignity and quality of life of the affected population been worsening or disrupted? Are the geographical areas affected differently? How and why?	How are conditions of mortality, morbidity, nutritional status, livelihoods, dignity or quality of life likely to evolve, change or continue? Why? What protection risks exist as a result of these conditions?
		How has the crisis impacted affected populations' access, availability and use of basic services and goods? I.e. what is the degree of access to markets, health services, safe water, etc.? What is the availability of staple food and NFI on local markets?	How many people do not have sufficient access to basic services and goods, in total and per group? Are the different groups affected differently? How and why? Is access to basic services and goods different for men, women, girls and boys? How and why?	In which geographical area has the access to basic goods and services been disrupted? Are the geographical areas affected differently? How and why?	How is access to, and availability and use of basic services and goods likely to evolve, change or continue? Why?
	Vulnerabilities and risks	What current risks pose additional threats: how and why?	How many people are at risk, in total and per group? Are the various groups differently at risk? How and why? How many men, women, boys and girls are at risk? Are men, women, girls and boys differently at risk? How and why?	What geographical areas are under increased risks, additional threats or vulnerable to specific hazards? Are the geographical areas differently at risk? How and why?	How are current risks likely to evolve, change or continue? What additional risks, hazards or threats might appear and aggravate the conditions of the affected population? What protection risks should be anticipated/ considered as a result of these risks?
	Physical disruption of key infrastructure and losses	What damages to basic infrastructures and physical assets has resulted from the crisis? How many buildings (private or public) are destroyed, partially or completely?	How many people are affected due to physical disruption of key infrastructures, in total and per group? Are the various groups affected differently? How and why? Are men, women, girls and boys affected differently? How and why?	In which geographical areas has physical disruption of key infrastructures occurred? Are the geographical areas damaged differently? How and why?	How might additional risks, hazards, threats or vulnerabilities create further damages or losses? What protection risks should be anticipated/ considered as a result of these conditions?
		Have any changes in economic flows been registered as a result of the crisis (lower revenues or purchasing power, price fluctuation, increased demand for social services, decline in output in productive sectors)?	How many people are affected due to losses, in total and per group? Are the various groups affected differently? How and why? Are men, women, girls and boys affected differently? How and why?	In which geographical areas have losses occurred? Have the geographical areas suffered losses differently? How and why?	How are economic flows likely to evolve, change or continue?

THEMES	SUB-THEMES	SITUATION (including information gaps)	POPULATION SEGMENTS OR GROUPS Choose appropriate segments (age interval, sex) or groups (humanitarian profile, socio economic, religion, etc.)	GEOGRAPHICAL AREA Choose appropriate geographical boundary, i.e. admin level, urban/rural, etc.	LIKELY EVOLUTION over the short, medium and long term
<p>CAPACITIES AND RESPONSE</p> <p>Capacity: combination of strengths and resources within a community, society, government or organization that can be used to respond effectively to disaster situations.</p>	<p>National and local capacities and response</p> <p>International capacities and response</p>	<p>What are the existing response capacities of national/sub-national, community, private sector, non-governmental and government entities, markets and financial service providers, etc.? Are there alternatives to the direct provision of assistance, e.g. financial service providers?</p> <p>What are the existing response capacities of the international community?</p> <p>Is there specialized response capacity in place (psychosocial, health, disability, and age/gender sensitive)?</p> <p>How have existing capacities been affected by the crisis?</p> <p>Have contingency measures been activated? Are any preparedness and coordination procedures in place?</p> <p>What crisis interventions have taken place to date? Who has responded?</p> <p>Who and how many have been targeted, reached and covered by the different types of interventions?</p> <p>Is the provided assistance having negative consequences (i.e. price inflation, markets ability to recover, etc.)?</p>	<p>How many affected people are reached by national and local assistance, in total and per affected group? Have specific groups been excluded or favoured for assistance?</p> <p>Do men, women, girls and boys have different levels of access to assistance? How and why?</p> <p>Is the provided assistance covering needs of all affected groups? Are there any population segments who may be overlooked due to current targeting mechanisms?</p>	<p>How many affected geographical areas are reached by international, national and local assistance, in total and per geographic division?</p> <p>Have specific geographical areas been excluded or favoured for assistance?</p> <p>Is the provided assistance covering needs?</p>	<p>How sustainable and scalable are these capacities?</p> <p>Can these entities scale up their responses? Where and how?</p>
	<p>Affected population's coping mechanisms</p>	<p>What are the coping mechanisms (positive and negative) used by the affected populations?</p> <p>What type of community-based mechanisms/networks have communities established?</p>	<p>How many people are affected but able to cope with the situation using positive coping mechanisms, in total and per affected group? Are specific groups using negative coping mechanisms?</p> <p>Are men, women, girls and boys using different coping mechanisms? How and why?</p> <p>Are the coping mechanisms enough to cope with the situation?</p>	<p>How many geographical areas are using positive and negative coping mechanisms, in total and per geographic division?</p> <p>Are coping mechanisms weaker or stronger for certain geographical areas? How and why?</p>	<p>Are the community coping mechanisms sustainable?</p> <p>Which positive coping mechanisms are likely to offset the negative impacts of the disaster?</p> <p>What protection risks linked to negative coping mechanisms can be anticipated (e.g., lack of access to food resulting in begging, transactional sex, etc.)?</p>

THEMES	SUB-THEMES	SITUATION (including information gaps)	POPULATION SEGMENTS OR GROUPS Choose appropriate segments (age interval, sex) or groups (humanitarian profile, socio economic, religion, etc.)	GEOGRAPHICAL AREA Choose appropriate geographical boundary, i.e. admin level, urban/rural, etc.	LIKELY EVOLUTION over the short, medium and long term
HUMANITARIAN ACCESS	Access of relief actors to the affected population	<p>Are there any movement and travel restrictions for relief agencies, personnel or goods?</p> <p>Has interference in the implementation of humanitarian activities by powerful groups or persons been reported?</p> <p>Has violence against relief agencies' personnel, facilities and assets been reported?</p> <p>How do these factors affect the general access from relief actors to the affected population?</p>	<p>How many affected people are accessible by relief actors, in total and per affected group? Are there specific population groups that are not accessible by relief actors? Are there hard to reach population groups or segments?</p> <p>Are men, women, girls and boys accessible in different ways? How and why?</p>	<p>In how many geographical areas are there reports of irregular access of relief actors to the affected population, in total and per geographic division?</p> <p>Is access of relief actors to the affected population better or worse for certain geographical areas? How and why?</p>	<p>How are these constraints likely to evolve, change or continue, and how will this affect humanitarian interventions?</p> <p>What protection risks should be anticipated/ considered as a result of these conditions?</p>
	Access of affected population to assistance	<p>Have restrictions on affected populations' access to services, markets and assistance been observed?</p> <p>Are there reports of denial of the existence of humanitarian needs or entitlement to humanitarian assistance for specific affected of vulnerable groups?</p>	<p>How many affected people are unable to access markets or assistance, in total and per group? Are there specific population groups that are not able to access assistance?</p> <p>Are men, women, girls and boys able to access assistance in different ways? How and why?</p>	<p>Are there geographical areas where irregular access of the affected population to humanitarian assistance is reported</p> <p>Is access of the affected population to humanitarian assistance better or worse for certain geographical areas? How and why?</p>	
	Security and physical constraints	<p>Is there ongoing insecurity/hostilities affecting humanitarian assistance and access of beneficiaries to relief interventions?</p> <p>Have security incidents occurred after assistance provision? What, and committed by whom?</p> <p>Is there presence of mines and explosives?</p> <p>Are there obstacles related to terrain, climate, lack of telecommunications or lack of infrastructure?</p>	<p>How many affected people are unable to access AND receive assistance due to security and physical constraints, in total and per group? Are there specific population groups that are not unable to access or receive assistance?</p> <p>Are men, women, girls and boys able to access or receive assistance in different ways? How and why?</p>	<p>In how many geographical areas are there reports of irregular access of the affected population to humanitarian assistance AND of relief actors to the affected population, in total and per geographic division?</p> <p>Is access of the affected population to humanitarian assistance AND of relief actors to the affected population better or worse for certain geographical areas? How and why?</p>	

Endnotes

1. For further information and guidance on the humanitarian programme cycle, please see the HPC Reference Module and the following web resources: <http://humanitarianresponse.info/programme-cycle>.
2. See The Joint UNHCR-OCHA Note on Mixed Situations: Coordination in Practice at <http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/programme-cycle/space/document/joint-unhcr-ocha-note-mixed-situations-coordination-practice>
3. For the purpose of the MIRA, primary data is in-crisis data collected by MIRA assessment teams in the field or by others using the same instrument. Primary data is collected through first-hand experience using methods involving direct contact with respondents. All other data sources that feed into the MIRA process are considered secondary and can be divided between pre- and post-crisis sources.
4. IASC Operational Guidance on Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises, NATF (2012): www.humanitarianresponse.info/programme-cycle/space/document/operational-guidance-coordinated-assessments-humanitarian-crises-0.
5. If necessary, concurrent planning for primary data collection begins in phase 1 to address information gaps and assess the most affected areas in detail. Note that an HCT may opt to bypass phase 2 in favour of detailed and sectoral needs assessments if that capacity exists.
6. MIRA sampling techniques typically focus on the community or affected group level; sample sizes are generally small and focused and not intended to be statistically representative.
7. The humanitarian profile intends to categorize the different affected groups for any given crisis and generally includes: displaced, non-displaced, host family/resident community, refugee, dead, injured, and missing. The purpose of the humanitarian profile dataset is to help determine the different groups, their numbers, their needs and the level of relief assistance that may be required. www.humanitarianresponse.info/applications/data/document/iasc-guidelines-humanitarian-profile-cod.
8. In cases where the MIRA is initiated at the sub-national level, the roles of host government, HC and HCT would be replaced by their regional equivalents and likely identified during the MIRA preparation phase.
9. In countries where there is no HC, the Resident Coordinator (RC) may also take on this role.
10. In countries where there is no HCT, the UN Country Team may also take on this role.
11. Where OCHA is without an in-country presence, the Humanitarian Coordinator may look to OCHA's regional office for support or may ask another organization to assign an assessment coordinator.
12. In those countries where an assessment and information management working group (AIMWG) is in existence, this group may become/serve as the assessment team, or a subset of the AIMWG may serve this function.
13. An expanded MIRA analytical framework containing questions to guide the analysis is available in Annex 2, organized by the main themes.
14. Focus group discussions and household/individual surveys are rarely appropriate at this time, given the volume, complexity and time required for data processing.
15. In purposive sampling, there is one or more specific, predefined group or location selected for data collection. Purposive sampling can be very useful in situations where a targeted sample needs to be reached quickly and where sampling for proportionality is of lesser importance. It involves defining which characteristics or criteria are important according to the assessment objectives (e.g. affected population in urban vs. rural areas), and visiting sites or localities that represent a cross-section of these.
16. See Emergency Response Preparedness Guidance for more details: www.humanitarianresponse.info/programme-cycle/space/emergency-response-preparedness-guidance-and-templates.

