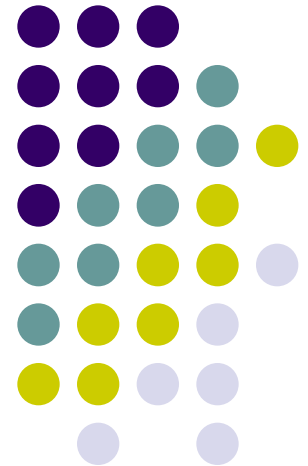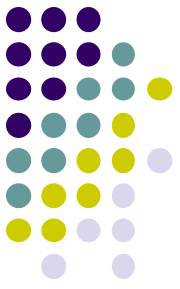# Introduction to Needs Assessment

TIME Training

September 1-5, 2014

In this session….

➤ **When and why we do needs assessments**

➤ **Types of needs assessments**

➤ **Protection and participation principles**

➤ **Needs assessment coordination and the role of UNHCR in different contexts**

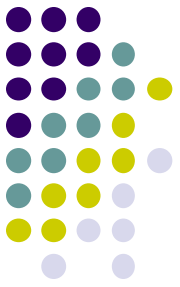➤ **Assessment planning**

➤ **Assessment tools**

Significance of Needs Assessments

- **Understand problems, sources of those problems and their impact on affected populations**

- **Evidence-based decision-making & planning process**

- **Allows us to prioritize aid**

Important Things to Establish in a Needs Assessment
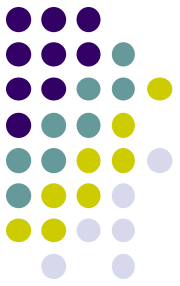
1. What are the **causes** of problems?

2. What is the **impact** of the problem? (Including who is **most affected**?)

3. What are the **community's coping mechanisms**?

4. What are the **community's own priorities**?
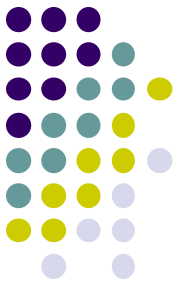
When should you do a needs assessment?

- Start of an emergency

- Change in an ongoing emergency

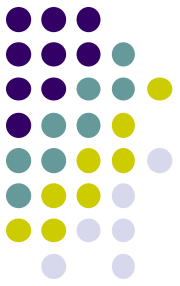- Beginning of the programming cycle or when decisions are being made

Main types of Needs Assessment

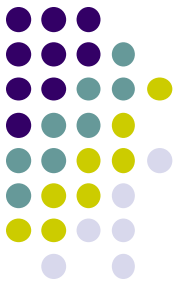- Initial
- Rapid
- In-depth
- Monitoring

How do we determine what type of assessment to do?

Protection Principles and Assessments

- Do no harm and protect information sources
- Sensitivity
- Integrity
- Confidentiality and informed consent
- Safeguard recorded information

Participatory Approaches and Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD)

"Refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees must be at the centre of decision-making concerning their protection and well-being."

UNHCR Tool for Participatory Assessment

Why is participation of affected populations important?
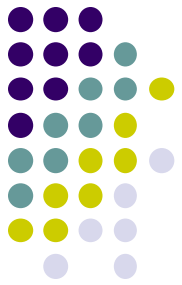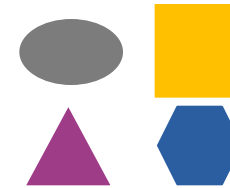
NEEDS ASSESSMENT COORDINATION

Coordinated Assessments

Increasing Coordination

Uncoordinated

★ Multiple assessments
★ Multiple methodology – datasets not 'interoperable'
★ Multiple reports

Harmonised

★ Multiple assessments + **common key indicators**
★ **Single methodology** – data comparable
★ Single or multiple reports from **joint/shared analysis**

Joint (common)

★ Single assessment form / data collection process
★ Single methodology and analysis process
★ Single report

redr uk
people and skills for disaster relief

NRC
NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL

Coordinated Needs Assessment 2013

SNAP
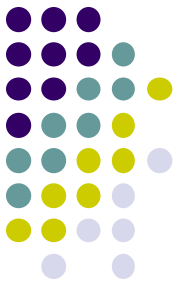**Syria Needs Analysis Project**

Coordinating Needs Assessments

What are some consequences of NOT coordinating needs assessments?

- ➢ **Over-assessment**

- ➢ **Gaps in coverage**

- ➢ **Wasted resources**

- ➢ **Conflicting statistics and data**

- ➢ **Different interpretations of the situation**

Needs Assessment Coordination

Different situations have different needs assessment coordination mechanisms.

In **REFUGEE** situations

UNHCR's role is to:

- **Coordinate needs assessments among all partners across sectors**

- **Facilitate dissemination of refugee needs assessment reports**

- **Provide IM support and guidance to needs assessment activities, including facilitating agreement among the humanitarian community on data standards**
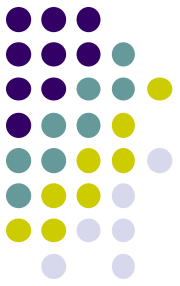
Coordinating Needs Assessments

In an <u>IDP situation</u>

UNHCR's role is to:

- **Liaise with OCHA on cross-cluster needs assessment coordination**

- **Coordinate needs assessments within UNHCR-led clusters**

- **Facilitate dissemination of needs assessment reports within the cluster**

- **Share assessment data/reports in operational sectors**

Coordinating Needs Assessments

In an IDP situation

OCHA should:

- **Coordinate needs assessments among clusters (MIRA)**

- **Cross-analyze needs assessment data from many sources**

- **Facilitate dissemination of needs assessment reports**
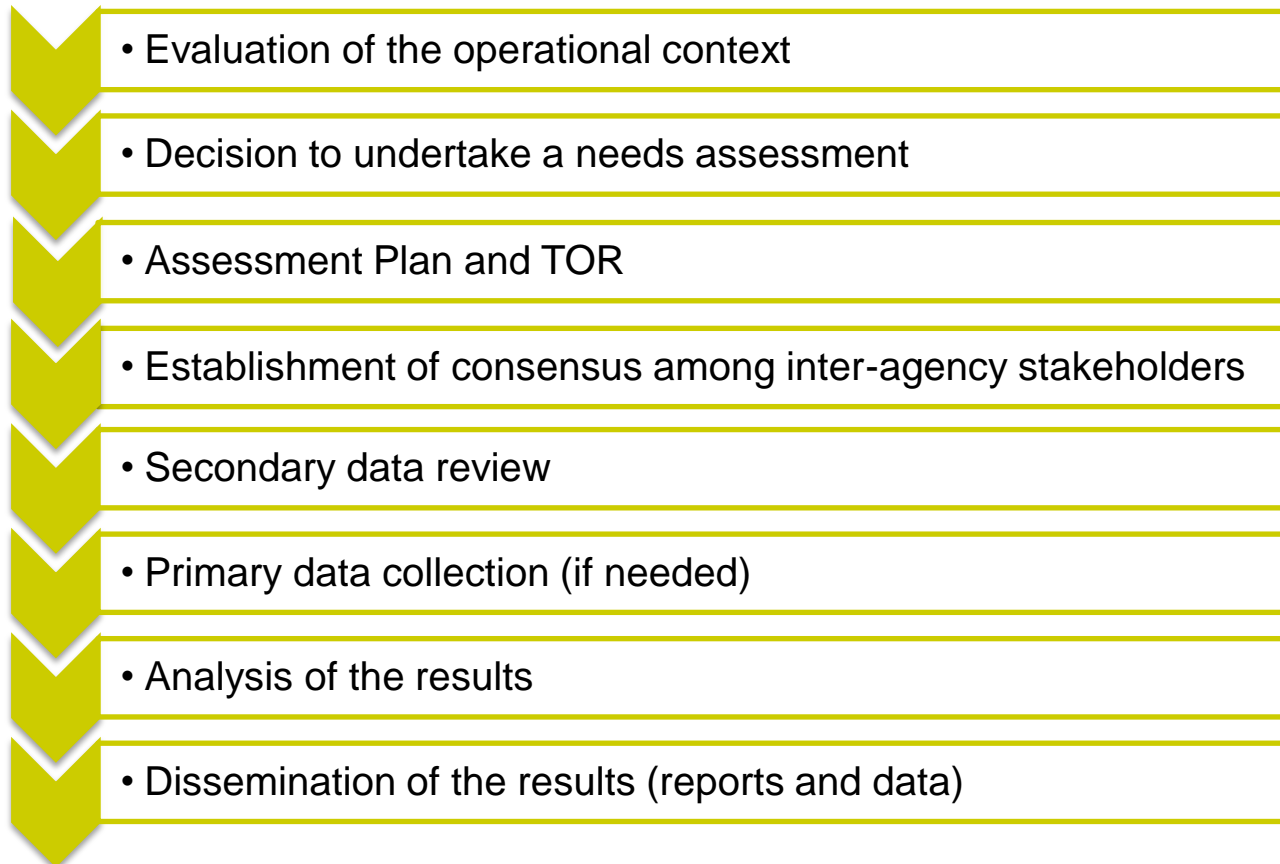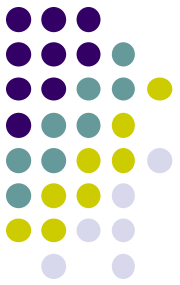
What do you think your role as Information Management Officer is in needs assessment?
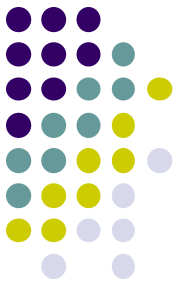
COORDINATED NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Coordinated Needs Assessment Process at a Glance

- Evaluation of the operational context
- Decision to undertake a needs assessment
- Assessment Plan and TOR
- Establishment of consensus among inter-agency stakeholders
- Secondary data review
- Primary data collection (if needed)
- Analysis of the results
- Dissemination of the results (reports and data)
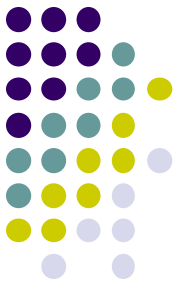
Assessment Plan Components
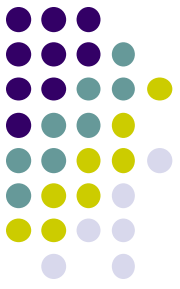
- Objectives
- Prioritized information needs
- Analysis plan
- Assessment team composition
- Budget, resources, timeline
- Information sharing and dissemination plan

Assessment TOR

Assessment Objectives

| Topic	Examples
General objectives	*To obtain data on*: ▪ Priority needs ▪ Coping mechanisms ▪ Host communities' capacity ▪ Risks and threats to population
Scope, geographical coverage	• Affected areas vs. non-affected areas • Administrative units (provinces, departments, districts, etc.) • Camp vs. out-of-camp populations
Targeted groups	• IDPs/refugees in camps/outside of camps • Urban IDPs/refugees • Stateless persons • Host communities
Clusters/ sectors included	• Protection, education, food and nutrition, health, shelter and core relief items (CRI), WASH, livelihoods
Timeframe, Outcomes	• Analysis • Reports

Prioritized Information Needs
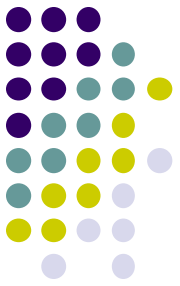
Strategic

✓ Target population for intervention and/or assessment

✓ Definition of key priorities

✓ Intervene or not? If so, where and how?

✓ Need for further assessment and response

✓ Activate sectors or clusters

Focus on the results...

GET ALL THE INFORMATION YOU CAN, WE'LL THINK OF A USE FOR IT LATER.
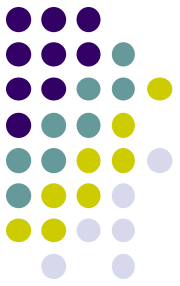
...not the data.

Prioritized Information Needs
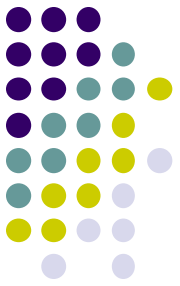
Operational

- ✓ Resources needed

- ✓ Types of programmes (shelter, food, WASH, health)

- ✓ Specific locations, target populations

- ✓ Timeframe for the intervention

Analysis Plan

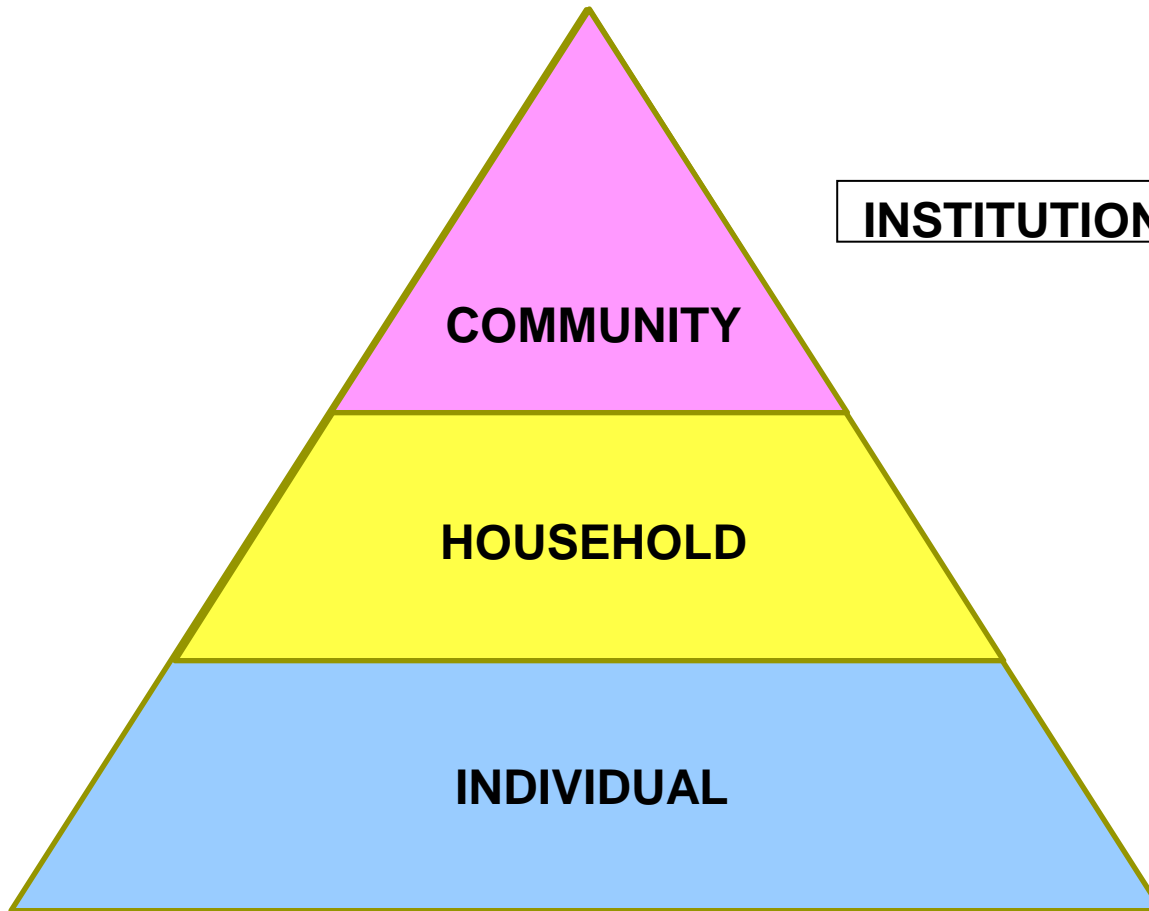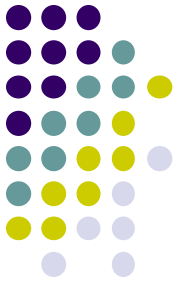*If you don't know where you are going, you will probably end up somewhere else.*
~Lawrence J. Peter

Type of data: Qualitative, Quantitative
Unit of Measurement: Community, Household, Individual, Institution
Analytical outputs: Profile, Scenarios, Sample Report

Units of Measurement

INSTITUTION

COMMUNITY

HOUSEHOLD

INDIVIDUAL

Data Volume

- **Think about the VOLUME OF DATA you will get when designing a needs assessment**
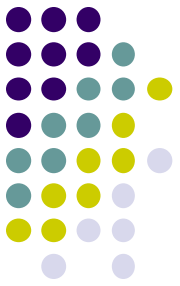
DATA VOLUME =

# of Forms Collected x Number/Type of Questions x Periodicity (Frequency of data collection)

- **Unit of measurement affects data volume; e.g. normally HOUSEHOLD level data produces more data than COMMUNITY level data**

- **High volume of data will usually require a DATABASE instead of manual analysis**

Assessment Team Composition

- **Assessment Coordinator**
- **Assessment/IM Working Group**
- **Field Data Collection Team(s)**
- **Data Processing Team**
- **Analysis/Reporting Team**

Budget

- **Resources needed (human, financial, material, logistical, etc.)**
- **Source of those resources**
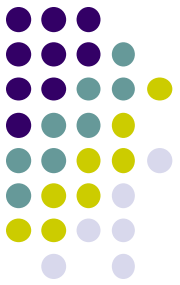
Information Sharing and Dissemination Plan
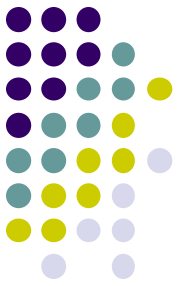
- **What outputs are to be produced and for whom?**

- **Who will approve them?**

- **Who will have access to (which) data?**

- **Data security/information sharing concerns**

COORDINATED NEEDS ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Needs Assessment in Refugee Emergencies (NARE) Checklist

WASH - NARE Checklist

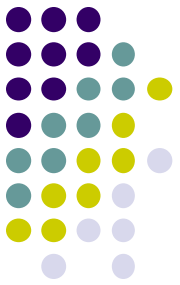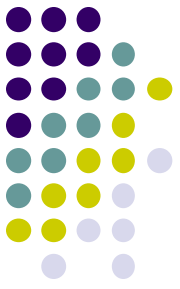| Secondary Data	Critical Background (pre-influx) Information Collection and Analysis This is information on context, pre-existing coping mechanisms and vulnerabilities.	- Rainfall patterns - Hydrological and Geological map - Identify safe infrastructure availability - Potential water providers and water sources - Availability of WASH stockpiling equipment
	Post-influx secondary data review This information can come from other sectors and/or organizations and must be compiled prior to primary data collection. Information not available in the secondary data analysis should be acquired through primary data collection.	- Assessment of available water sources - Hygiene practices of community - Identify male and female community members who may be mobilised to participate in locating and designing safe water and sanitation locations and policies - Mapping of safe locations for boreholes, water points etc.. - Identify potential site risks (e.g. areas exposed/prone to flooding)
	Review – Actions Required These are possible actions that may be informed by the secondary data analysis.	- Emergency (new/rehabilitated) drinking water supplies measures are urgently required if less than 15 litres/per person/day is available (particularly if risk factors are present such as dense population, contaminated water supply, poor hygiene etc.). - Emergency "shock" treatment of the drinking water supply is required if the existing system is still functional, but has likely been contaminated (as a result of physical damage to its infrastructure, interrupted/intermittent service provision, etc.). - Household water treatment is recommended if the quality of drinking water is poor and households understand or can be quickly taught how to use home water treatment effectively. - The need for adequate household water transport and storage facilities should be assessed in all cases. - Emergency sanitation (particularly excrement disposal) and hygiene promotion measures are required immediately if people are settled in high density areas and exposed to poor sanitary conditions and/or probable diarrheal outbreaks. - Emergency distribution of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) non-food items (NFI's) is required when acute shortage has been objectively observed.
	Community Observation These questions are intended for direct observation and are not based on interviewing. Findings from direct observation can be cross-analyzed with information from other sources for verification purposes.	- Environmental health conditions - look for signs of: a) unsafe hygiene practices (open defecation, medical waste disposal, etc.); b) contamination due to weak or absence of sanitation infrastructure including for excrement, waste water, solid waste, drainage and medical waste disposal; and c) disease transmitting vectors (rodents, mosquitoes, etc.). - Existing WASH services - look for evidences of: a) collapsed or poorly performing services; b) strain on capacity of services (lines, conflicts, etc.) c) access difficulties (distance, security, etc.) and d) vulnerability of services (potential contamination sources, natural hazards, etc.) e) queuing time at facilities. - Are refugee women and girls, men and boys seen queuing at unsafe hours for water? - Is sex-separation for latrines and bathing areas respected? - How many gender segregated latrines are there at each existing or potential site for formal and non-formal education
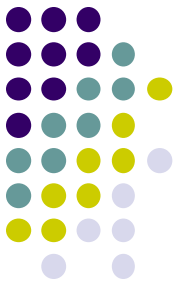
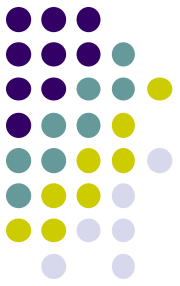# *M*ulti-Cluster/Sector *I*nitial *R*apid *A*ssessment

multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA)

Provisional Version March 2012

MIRA Approach

**Timing:** First 2 weeks of an emergency

Methodology:

- Collection, collation and analysis of secondary data
- Collection of primary data using standardized tool, purposive sampling and key informant interviews (recommended) at community level
- Joint analysis to collectively define severity of crisis and identify strategic priorities for intervention

Outputs and Application:

MIRA Report– 2 weeks

➢ Informs Strategic Response Plan

Rapid Protection Assessment (RPA)
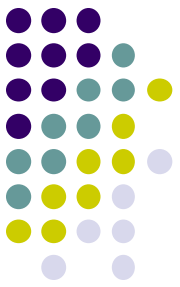
	RAPID PROTECTION ASSESSMENT					
	Auxiliary Tool 3 - Protection problems / risks, indicators and data collection methods					
Concept	Protection problem	#	Information Requirements for assessment	Indicators and *Other data for reporting (in italics)*	Disaggregation	Recommended data collection method
Life, physical security and integrity	Attacks, combats, bombings	1	Are there credible reports of armed operations affecting the population?	% of assessed locations where there are reports of attacks, combats, bombings affecting the population	Geography	Key informant + observation
			Who are the perpetrators?	% of assessed locations reporting attacks, combats, bombings by a particular perpetrators/armed group		Key informant
			How many people are estimated affected?	Number of population affected by attacks, combats, bombings		Key informant
	Killing of civilians	2	Are there credible reports of killings of civilians during armed conflict?	% of assessed locations reporting deliberate killings of civilians during armed conflict		Key informant + observation
			Who are the perpetrators?	% of assessed locations reporting a particular perpetrator for killings of civilians during armed conflict		Key informant
			What is the estimate number of persons killed?	Estimated number of persons killed per assessed location (over period)		Key informant

Exercise