

# 2014

HUMANITARIAN  
NEEDS OVERVIEW

# GUIDANCE

## BACKGROUND

The IASC Transformative Agenda calls for a more evidence-based, strategic and prioritised humanitarian response. To facilitate this, it proposes stronger coordination around the “Humanitarian Program Cycle” – from the assessment and analysis of needs, to the planning of the strategic response, resource mobilization, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of operations.

Building on the achievements and lessons of the past, it is recommended that prior to engaging in strategic planning, each response operation prepare a **humanitarian needs overview**. This document outlines the shared understanding of the humanitarian community of the humanitarian needs in a humanitarian context. It informs the country team’s strategic response.

The following guidance focuses on the preparation of the humanitarian needs overview. It is developed via a coordinated approach to assessment and analysis, bringing together the data, information, and expertise of different actors. The humanitarian needs overview identifies priority humanitarian needs to be addressed in the next stage of the program cycle: strategic planning. It also highlights information gaps and country plans to address these gaps.

A template for the humanitarian needs overview is attached to this guidance. A word version of the template and an annotated template may be accessed at:

<http://assessments.humanitarianresponse.info/guidance#needsoverview>

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the humanitarian needs overview is to develop a shared understanding of the impact of a crisis on humanitarian needs and to inform the country team’s strategic response plan. The information presented should be developed ahead of strategic planning and should reflect the consensus of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT).

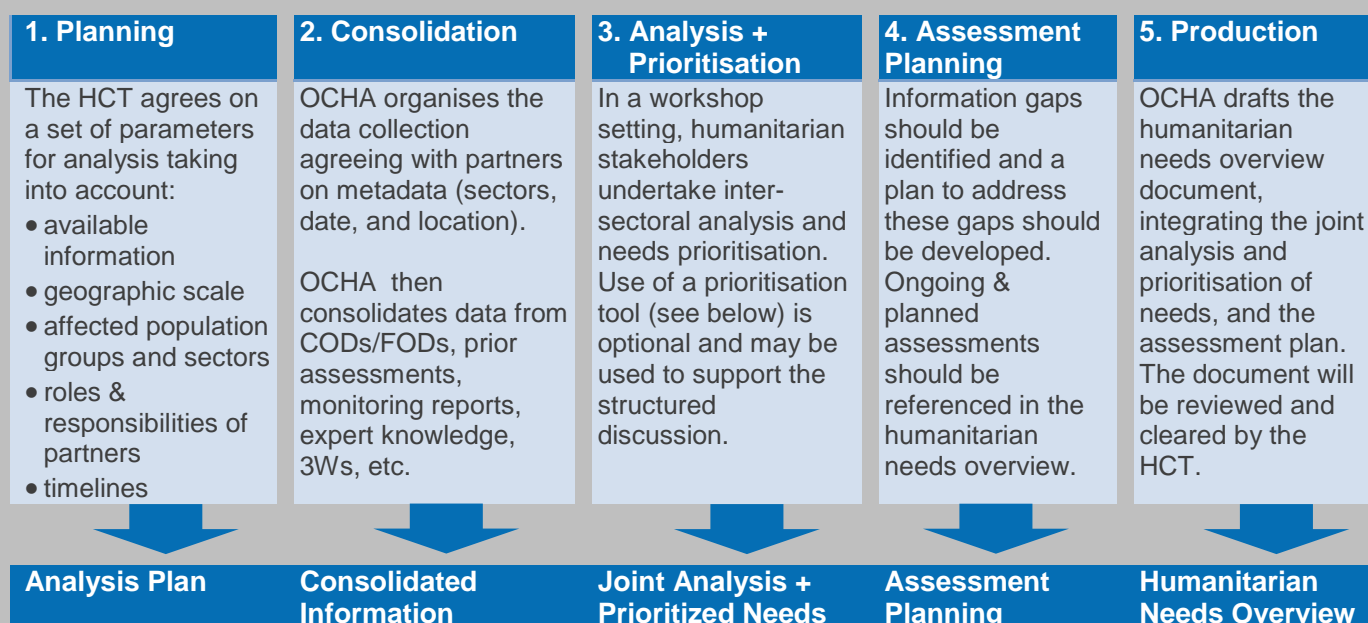
## AT A GLANCE: DEVELOPING A HUMANITARIAN NEEDS OVERVIEW

**1. Purpose:** The humanitarian needs overview is designed to support the HCT in developing a shared understanding of the impact and evolution of a crisis and to inform strategic response planning. This is to ensure that credible evidence and a joint analysis of needs underpins an effective and prioritised humanitarian response. The development of a humanitarian needs overview is a discrete step in the implementation of the programme cycle and should be done ahead of strategic response planning.

**2. Structure:** The humanitarian needs overview<sup>1</sup> is structured in the five following sections (see attached template):

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Priority needs</li> <li>2. Impact of the crisis</li> <li>3. Response capacity</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Humanitarian access</li> <li>5. Assessment planning</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

**3. Process:** At a minimum, a first analysis using the above proposed structure should be compiled; soliciting inputs from partners, and ensuring cluster leads are consulted for the finalisation of the document ahead of the strategic response planning phase. The following steps are recommended i) a planning step in which partners tailor the analysis requirements to the country context; ii) a data consolidation phase; iii) an analysis step in which partners agree on a common understanding of the situation and prioritisation of needs; iv) development of an assessment plan how information gaps will be addressed during the next cycle and lastly, v) the drafting of the humanitarian needs overview.



Ensuring consensus on prioritised needs is essential to the humanitarian needs overview process. At a minimum, country teams should engage in a structured discussion to agree on inter-sectoral priority needs to inform strategic planning. Country teams that wish to deepen their needs analysis and prioritisation process may opt to use a prioritisation tool. A standard prioritisation tool, derived from field examples and based on a “vulnerability ranking approach” is available to support needs prioritisation. The tool provides a method and structure to prioritise needs by weighing and categorising indicators. It can be adapted to data-poor or data-rich contexts. Use of the prioritisation tool is optional in preparing a humanitarian needs overview.

<sup>1</sup> Based on the analytical framework developed for the MIRA approach

## DESCRIPTION

The **humanitarian needs overview** is intended to describe the overall humanitarian dimensions of a crisis situation including the agreed priority humanitarian needs. It replaces the needs analysis section of previous CAP documents. It is based on information derived from secondary/existing data, multi-cluster and sectoral assessments, monitoring information and expert knowledge. The humanitarian needs overview is informed by clusters/sectors sharing and collating this data and information and developing a joint analysis.<sup>2</sup>



The development of the humanitarian needs overview is not dependent on the availability of uniform and high-quality data – in many countries data will be partial or incomplete. Part of the process should include identifying information gaps that can be subsequently filled by assessments or strengthened monitoring systems. Significant information gaps and plans to fill these should be highlighted under the assessment planning section in the template.

Depending on the context, some countries will have the means to undertake more extensive and rigorous needs analysis, while others face more constraints. **This guidance provides tailored approaches for shared analysis and prioritisation dependent upon the level of complexity of the humanitarian context, availability of reliable data and capacity of stakeholders to collect information in a structured manner.**

## FREQUENCY

The humanitarian needs overview should be produced in advance of strategic response planning. This allows sufficient time for the HCT to review existing assessment data, undertake multi-cluster or sectoral assessments to fill information gaps, and then analyse and prioritise humanitarian needs.<sup>3</sup> This is usually occurs twice a year in most complex emergencies. However, it can be conducted on a more frequent basis depending on the fluidity of the humanitarian situation.

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to the attached humanitarian needs overview template.

<sup>3</sup> For more information on how to coordinate humanitarian assessments, refer to the “IASC Operational Guidance on Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises”.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The humanitarian needs overview is developed through a collaborative process led by the HC/HCT and facilitated by OCHA. Clusters/sectors play a strong role in its compilation. All efforts should be made to include the views of crisis-affected people and to involve a wide-range of humanitarian partners in the development of the humanitarian needs overview.

HC/HCT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Leadership:</b> The HC/HCT is responsible for <u>initiating</u> the humanitarian needs overview process and <u>endorsing</u> it as the key reference for establishing priority needs and informing the development of the objectives of the strategic response plan.</li> </ul>	
OCHA	Cluster Coordinators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Coordinate the development of the humanitarian needs overview:</b> Facilitates (on behalf of the HC/HCT) the process of developing the humanitarian needs overview.</li> <li>• <b>Establish caseloads:</b> Develops the Humanitarian Profile<sup>4</sup> (the number of affected people, including displaced and non-displaced, disaggregated by sex and age).<sup>5</sup></li> <li>• <b>Consolidation:</b> Brings together information and data from different sources, including from an “assessment registry” (an overview of conducted and planned assessments with help of an assessment registry).</li> <li>• <b>Define key indicators:</b> Maintains a list of key emergency indicators (or establishes process in country to identify these).<sup>6</sup></li> <li>• <b>Facilitate joint analysis:</b> Convenes an analysis workshop to agree jointly with partners on priority needs.</li> <li>• <b>Summarize the shared understanding:</b> Prepares draft humanitarian needs overview document based on workshop results and inputs from the clusters/sectors.</li> <li>• <b>Dissemination:</b> Finalises the humanitarian needs overview and submits to the HCT and HC for approval.</li> </ul>	<p>Cluster Coordinators are responsible for consolidating data from monitoring and sectoral assessments and contributing to the joint analysis and prioritisation of needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Coordinate member inputs:</b> Engage with sector/cluster partners on the humanitarian needs overview to ensure inclusiveness of all partners.</li> <li>• <b>Participate in the process:</b> Participate in the process of introducing and developing the humanitarian needs overview (review the guidance, adapt templates/guidance, agree timelines, etc.).</li> <li>• <b>Gather existing data/information:</b> Summarise key findings of sectoral assessments and monitoring.</li> <li>• <b>Provide expert analysis:</b> Participate in joint analysis exercise leading to prioritisation of humanitarian needs.</li> <li>• <b>Take ownership:</b> Review and input into draft humanitarian needs overview.</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> <http://cod.humanitarianresponse.info/about-codfod>

<sup>5</sup> IASC Guidance on the Humanitarian Profile may be found at: <http://cod.humanitarianresponse.info/HPGuidance>.

<sup>6</sup> The Global Indicator Registry provides a bank of indicators agreed by the global cluster leads: [ir.humanitarianresponse.info](http://ir.humanitarianresponse.info).

# KEY STEPS

This guidance suggests five main steps:

1. Planning		2. Consolidation		3. Analysis & prioritisation		4. Assessment planning		5. Production	
Under the leadership of the HC/HCT, OCHA brings together humanitarian stakeholders...		Each cluster / sector extracts and structures their data based on the parameters defined in step 1...		Based on the consolidated information from step 2, OCHA facilitates a discussion to analyse and prioritise needs, (potentially using an optional prioritisation tool)...		At inter- sector / cluster level, an assessment plan to fill information gaps will be developed...		OCHA drafts the humanitarian needs overview document, integrating the shared analysis and prioritisation of needs...	
Cluster Coordinators	Information Managers	Needs Assessments	Monitoring Data	<b>Categories for prioritisation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem / Risk</li> <li>• Size of affected population</li> <li>• Underlying factors</li> <li>• Security + Access</li> <li>• Response Capacity</li> </ul>		Information gaps and lack of disaggregated data identified during the consolidation of data and analysis during step 2 and 3 of the process.		Priority Needs	Impact of the Crisis
HCT Members	NGO Coordinators	Secondary Data	CODs / FODs	<b>Components for analysis:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analytical framework</li> <li>• Prioritised needs</li> <li>• Expert judgment</li> <li>• Sectoral analysis</li> </ul>		Assessment Registry		Response Capacity	Humanitarian Access
Heads of Agencies	Sectoral Experts	Humanitarian Presence / 3W	Expert Knowledge					Assessment Planning	
...and together set the parameters for the needs analysis.		...and generates the inputs for the needs analysis and prioritisation.		...in order to achieve a common understanding of the humanitarian situation.		...to lay out how information gaps on needs will be addressed during the next cycle.		...for review and clearance by the HCT	



Analysis plan	Consolidated information	Joint analysis and prioritised humanitarian needs	Assessment planning	Humanitarian needs overview
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## Step 1: Planning for analysis

The first step in generating the humanitarian needs overview is to develop an **analysis plan** that fits the country context, stakeholders' capacities and the information resources available. This involves convening a working session of cluster coordinators (and their information managers) and other relevant stakeholders to collaboratively set the parameters and

boundaries for the needs analysis and prioritisation that will support the development of the humanitarian needs overview.

The output of this should be an analysis plan that defines:

- The questions that will guide the analysis. The structure of the humanitarian needs overview provides a broad frame, but this may require adaptation.
- The information and data that is available (e.g. gender and age disaggregation, market prices, mobile network operators).
- The geographic areas that the analysis should cover (geographic scale) and how granular the analysis should be (administrative level).
- The sectors to be reviewed.
- The contextual risks that need to be considered, such as those relating to the security and protection of the affected populations and partner staff.
- The population groups, gender and age, that should be taken into consideration (demographic scale) and the likelihood of the groups to change over time.
- The roles and responsibilities of each partner in this process.
- The projected timeline for providing information, convening for a joint analysis, drafting and clearance of report, etc.

## Step 2: Data consolidation

Based on the parameters set during the planning stage, OCHA (for multi-sectoral data and information) and cluster leads (for single sector data and information) will be tasked with extracting relevant data, information and key points from assessments, monitoring systems and other sources of data. Once extracted, the information data will be organised so it can be used for a joint inter-sectoral analysis. Below is a suggested set of categories that could be used to help structure the data collection:

Information Category	Description	Example
<b>Key findings</b>	Should describe the observed main problem	Over 50% of grazing land is inaccessible due to conflict
<b>Geographic location and admin level</b>	Area for which the key finding applies	50% of grazing land in <i>District A</i> is inaccessible due to conflict
<b>Population group</b>	A division of the population by livelihood, ethnicity, living arrangement, gender and age etc.	Over 50 % of grazing land is inaccessible in <i>District A</i> due to conflict, severely impacting <i>pastoralists</i> who traditionally use this resource
<b>Caseloads</b>	Groups of (as identified above) or all of the affected people, in need or at risk due to a given problem	Over 50% of grazing land in <i>District A</i> is inaccessible due to conflict, severely impacting 350 <i>pastoralist households</i> who traditionally use this resource
<b>Response capacity</b>	Available and relevant information concerning international and national response capacity for the given problem, and/or coping strategies of the affected	Local authorities have agreed on an emergency budget to compensate households for selling cattle at low prices
<b>Response to date</b>	Any information or data concerning recent or planned interventions	Local authorities have compensated 50 households for selling cattle at low prices
<b>Date of information</b>	Date when the information was collected (not when it was made public)	As 1 August 2012 50% of grazing land was reported to be inaccessible due to conflict
<b>Reliability of information</b>	Reliability of the information recorded	1=reliable 2=partially reliable 3=not reliable

An Excel sheet or simple table can be used to collect this information. It is recommended that all partners use a similar format so that the information can be easily compiled (above table can be easily exported into Excel for this purpose).

### Basic information management tools to support data consolidation

Working practices in assessment coordination, information management and monitoring vary significantly between contexts. Having basic elements in place to help manage data will greatly facilitate a successful needs analysis and prioritisation process. These include:

**CODs / FODs:** (Standardized place names and baseline data)

CODs are common baseline datasets that all humanitarian actors require for operational purposes and ideally come from a local source (i.e., the national government). There are two types of CODs: spatial (*administrative boundaries, settlement places, hydrology, hypsography, transport*) and demographic (*population statistics*). The CODs can be found at:

<http://cod.humanitarianresponse.info/about-codfod>

**Humanitarian Profile:** (subset of CODs featuring overall numbers of people at risk/affected/in need)

OCHA is responsible for compiling the Humanitarian Profile dataset following IASC guidance. The Humanitarian Profile is the only dynamic and non-GIS specific data set of the CODs. Agreeing on overall caseloads is not automatic, but rather the result of analysis and consultations with partners and the host government. It should be based on evidence and a transparent methodology. Additional information on Humanitarian Profile can be found at:

[http://assessments.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/iasc\\_guidelines\\_on\\_the\\_humanitarian\\_profile\\_common\\_operational\\_dataset\\_2012-08-07.pdf](http://assessments.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/iasc_guidelines_on_the_humanitarian_profile_common_operational_dataset_2012-08-07.pdf)

**Assessment Registry:** (List of all the assessments / surveys during the reporting period)

OCHA, with cluster leads, should ensure all relevant assessments and other information is compiled at an inter-sectorial and sectoral level. Typically OCHA maintains an assessment registry. It should ensure the registry is up to date and includes the latest assessment results. If the assessment registry is not available or incomplete, OCHA, with cluster leads, should compile a list of all known and completed assessments. In many cases data will be largely qualitative. Nonetheless, this data should be regularly updated so that effective assessment planning can be carried out to fill information gaps. Guidance can be found at:

<http://assessments.humanitarianresponse.info/files/Draft%20Guideline%20on%20Survey%20of%20Surveys.doc>

**Indicators:** (Data from monitoring systems / framework)

Data from monitoring systems can provide quantitative elements to the needs analysis process as well as help to suggest trends in humanitarian situations. The HCT should agree on a limited set of indicators that will be measured throughout a humanitarian emergency. Wherever possible these indicators should be referenced throughout the data consolidation and joint analytical process. A draft list of recommended humanitarian indicators per cluster and outcome indicators may be found at

<http://ir.humanitarianresponse.info>.

**Humanitarian Presence (3Ws):** (the registry of all humanitarian projects / interventions)

On-going identification of who is doing what where (3Ws) is an important tool to help identify capacity and response caps. Clusters/sectors are responsible for providing this information to OCHA, which is responsible for aggregating and maintaining it on an on-going basis. Use the 3Ws to inform analysis and refer to them in the humanitarian needs overview document.

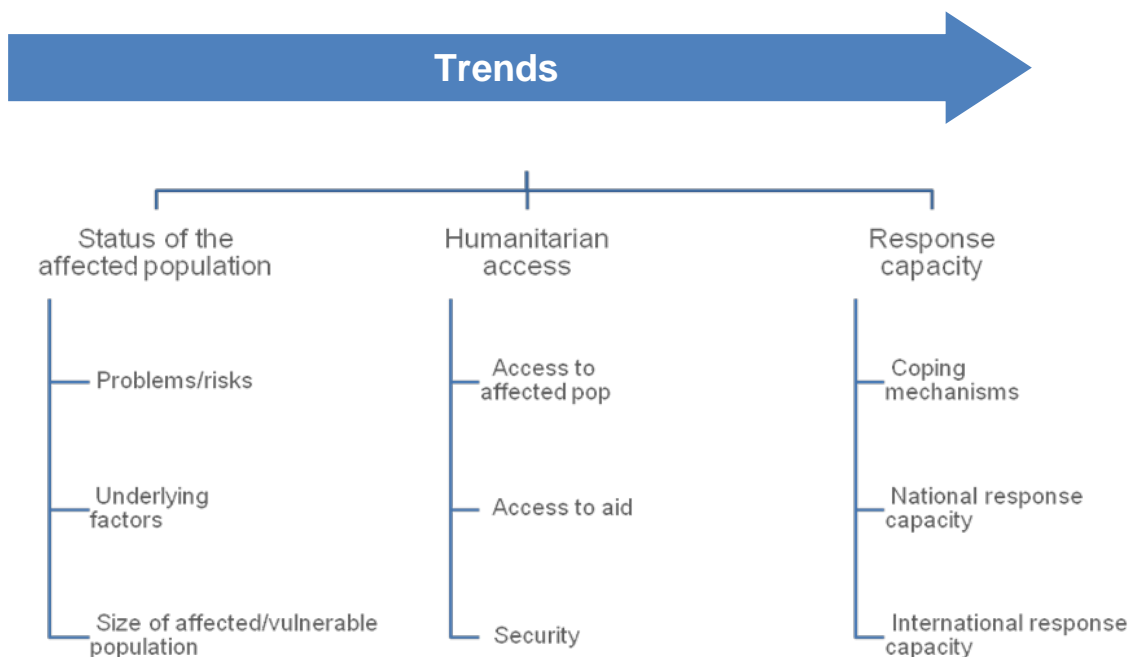
### Step 3: Prioritisation and joint analysis

At minimum, it is recommended that OCHA convene a workshop (ideally a full day) to facilitate joint analysis and prioritisation of humanitarian needs. The objective of the workshop is to reach a shared understanding of the humanitarian situation. Participants should include members from the cluster lead agencies, coordinators, sector experts, and information managers as well as other relevant humanitarian stakeholders such as gender advisors and cross-cutting experts.

**Inter-sectoral Analysis:** Clusters/sectors will typically analyse needs within their particular domain to support operational planning. The humanitarian needs overview seeks to capture the results of an inter-sectoral analysis to determine priority needs across sectors, in particular, to support strategic response planning. At an inter-sectoral level, analysis should focus on problems/risks, underlying factors, size of affected population, access, security, and response capacity to address humanitarian needs.

This process is largely based on judgment, expert knowledge of the humanitarian context and experience. Three main areas of analysis are recommended when engaging in this process:

- *Impact of the crisis, in particular status/conditions of populations living in affected areas*, determined through the identification of main problems or risks faced by the population<sup>7</sup>, their underlying factors and the size of the affected or vulnerable population.
- *Humanitarian access*, measured through an understanding of the access of humanitarian actors to the affected population, access of the affected population to humanitarian aid, and security conditions.
- *Response capacity*, measured through an assessment of the national and international response capacity as well as an assessment of the population's coping mechanisms.



<sup>7</sup> In identifying and prioritising needs, a gender analysis must be undertaken to ensure the needs, access and participation of women, girls, boys and men, are adequately identified and addressed.



**Prioritisation:** The identification of priority needs is an integral part of inter-sectoral analysis. In previous CAP processes, some countries found it helpful to use indicator-based prioritisation tools to categorise and weigh the identified problems.

To support country teams with the prioritisation of needs, a tool has been developed to provide a method and structure to identify where the needs are the highest by weighing and categorising indicators along geographical areas, sectors, inter-sectoral aspects and demographics.

Use of such a prioritisation tool can help condense large amounts of humanitarian information into a format that assists comparison, ranking and discussions. It can also reduce the introduction of bias into decision-making. It provides a composite of multiple qualitative and quantitative indicators that via an agreed formula, delivers a single numerical output. As a result, it allows the combination of diverse issues into a single framework thereby making comparisons possible.

This prioritisation tool can be used in sudden onset and protracted crises, as a one-off initiative or as continuous situation monitoring tool. The tool can be adapted to either data poor or data rich contexts.

The end product is a heat map which highlights geographic and sectoral accumulated needs, which can then be used to guide the discussion further on priority needs. Findings derived from applying this tool should be included under Chapter 2 'Impact of the crisis', sub-header 'Status of the population living in affected areas'.

The use of a prioritisation tool is optional in the development of the humanitarian needs overview. Detailed guidance on how to use the prioritisation tool and technical support worksheets may be accessed at: <http://assessments.humanitarianresponse.info/guidance#needsoverview>

#### Step 4: Assessment Planning

Developing a humanitarian needs overview is an opportunity to systematically identify information gaps. These gaps may be sectoral, geographic, or relate to the quality of assessment and monitoring data (i.e. a lack of sex and age disaggregated data). Both the assessment registry and the prioritisation tool can help pinpoint where information is lacking or weak.

In order to be better prepared for the next joint needs analysis and strategic planning exercise an assessment plan should be developed based on the identified information gaps. The plan will indicate the assessments planned by the humanitarian community and guide the implementation of assessments during the next cycle. The plan should be included in the humanitarian needs overview.

#### Step 5: Production of the humanitarian needs overview

Based on the outputs of the joint analysis workshop, and inputs from the clusters/sectors, OCHA will prepare the first draft of the humanitarian needs overview which should be succinct, focused and short (maximum 15 pages). The document should include the key inter-sectoral information (priority needs, situation analysis, Humanitarian Profile, etc) required to inform the development of strategic objectives in the strategic planning phase.

It should follow the structure outlined below:

1. Priority Needs	3. Response capacity
2. Impact of the crisis	– National and local capacities and response
– Drivers and underlying factors	– International capacities and response
– Scope of the crisis + demographic profile	4. Humanitarian access
– Status of populations living in affected areas	5. Assessment planning

- a) The humanitarian needs overview is a public document and should include graphics such as maps illustrating relevant coverage, capacity and access. The document should also include a web link to the assessment registry to demonstrate the evidence-base.
- b) The humanitarian needs overview should be shared with cluster leads for additional inputs and then submitted to the HCT and HC for endorsement. The findings will be used to support the development of the strategic response plan.

**THE PRODUCTION OF THE HUMANITARIAN NEEDS OVERVIEW SHOULD BE FOLLOWED BY THE NEXT STEP IN THE HUMANITARIAN PROGRAM CYCLE: STRATEGIC RESPONSE PLANNING.**

# 2014

## HUMANITARIAN NEEDS OVERVIEW

Country name

November 2013



Prepared by OCHA on behalf of the Humanitarian Country Team



## PRIORITY NEEDS

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Priority needs .....	1
Impact of the crisis .....	3
Drivers and underlying factors..	3
Scope of the crisis and demographic profile of the affected .....	4
Status of populations living in affected areas .....	6
Response capacity .....	8
National and local capacity and response .....	8
International capacity and response .....	8
Humanitarian access .....	9
Assessment planning.....	10

**Assessment registry:**  
[www.xxxxxxx.org](http://www.xxxxxxx.org)



Source: UNCS, Government.  
 The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.

# IMPACT OF THE CRISIS

## HIGHLIGHTS

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## Drivers and underlying factors

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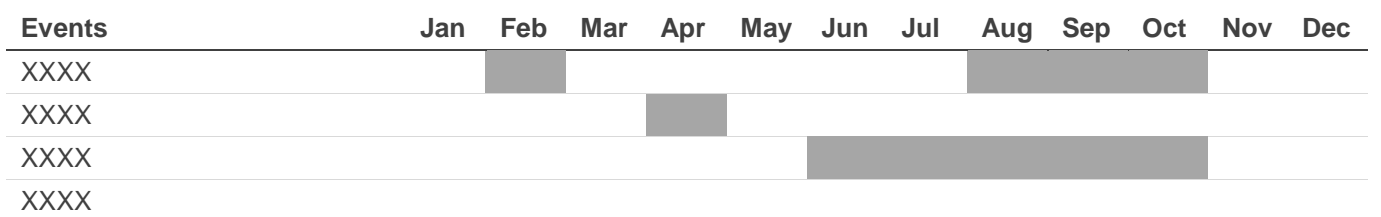
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**Figure 1:Critical events timeline**



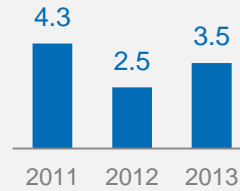
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### Scope of the crisis and demographic profile of the affected

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# People in need in million



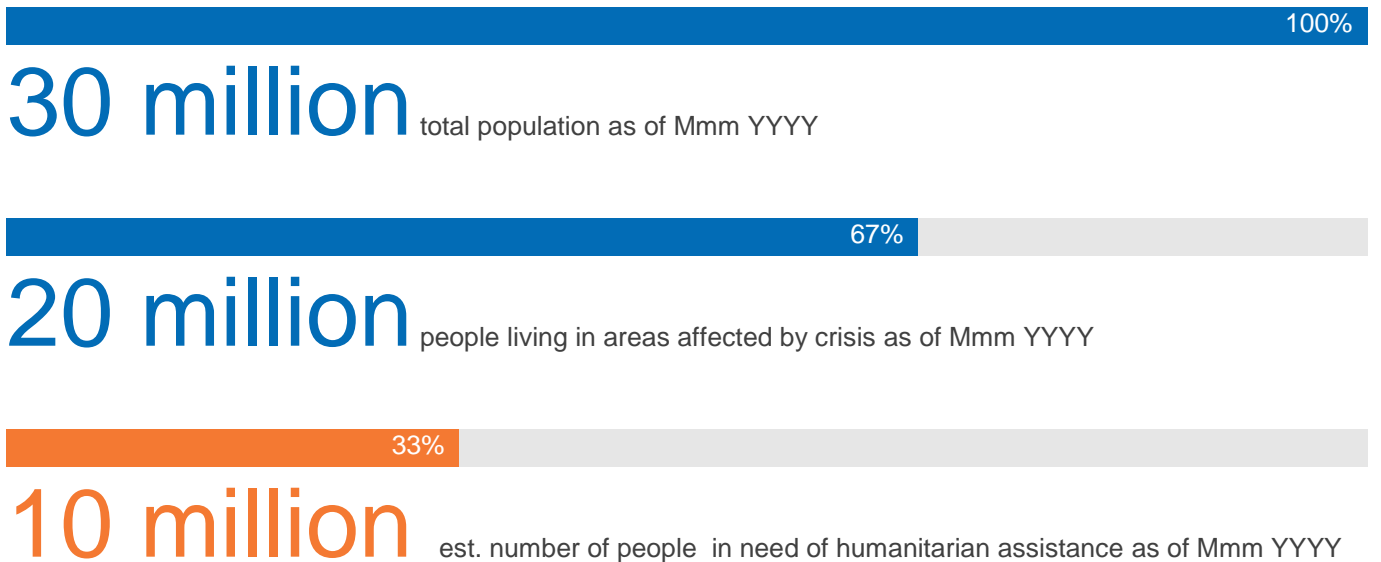
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Figure 2: Statistics of the population in XXXXX



Source: xxxx, xxxx, xxxx

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**Figure 3: Breakdown of people in need of humanitarian assistance**



Source: xxxx, xxxx, xxxx

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**Figure 4: Breakdown of people in need of humanitarian assistance by province**

Province	Male	Female	Children (<18)	Elderly (>60)	TOTAL
Province A	1,000	1,000	200	200	2,400
Province B	2,000	2,000	500	500	5,000
Province C	1,000	1,000	200	200	2,400
Province D	2,000	2,000	500	500	5,000
Province E	1,500	1,000	500	500	3,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,500</b>	<b>7,000</b>	<b>1,900</b>	<b>1,900</b>	<b>18,300</b>

Source: XXXX

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## Status of populations living in affected areas

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IDPs in Dereige camp, South Darfur, 17 March 2011. Credit: OCHA



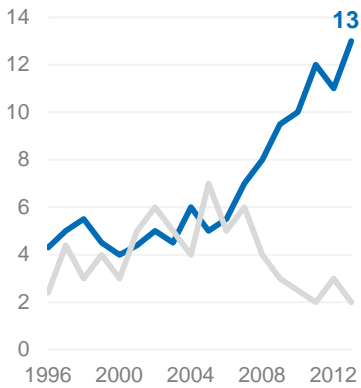
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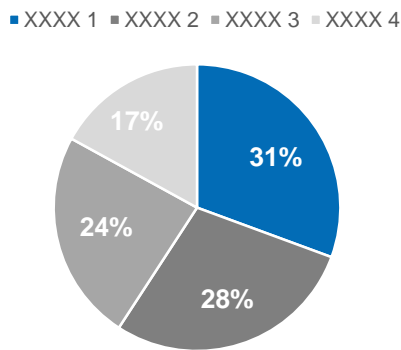
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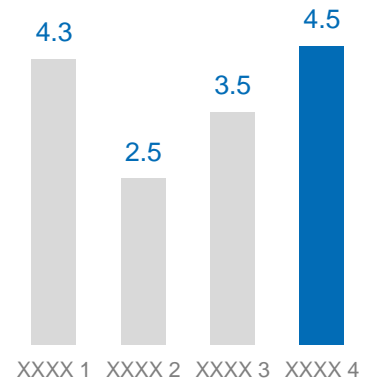
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# RESPONSE CAPACITY

## HIGHLIGHTS

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### National and local capacity and response

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### International capacity and response

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## HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

### HIGHLIGHTS

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## ASSESSMENT PLANNING

### HIGHLIGHTS

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