On-the-spot Needs Assessment Training

**Needs Assessment**

**Preparation and questions to be answered ahead of time**

* For what type of assessment are you preparing the participants? ( 3 phases)
* The assessment tool should already be developedDoes it need fine tuning?

**Objectives: PPT slides 2-3 or handout of slides**

* To recognize the importance of conducting a rapid initial assessment before deciding whether and how to respond to an emergency.
* To identify information needs required to make key decisions in an emergency response.
* Participants are able to identify stakeholders in a disaster situation and to identify who should take part in an assessment
* To reflect on biases and prejudices that exist in any emergency assessments and identify ways to overcome
* To know what to do and what not to do when conducting an interview

**Key Messages:**

* The aim is to confirm how urgent the needs are and **whether** a CRS/Partners response is required. If so, field assessments should trigger the decision on **what type** of emergency response to start.
* The assessment information should provide information on **where** to conduct an initial response.
* Emergency assessments should be focused and time bound - one tool should be developed and used with a well defined period of time.
* Focus on collecting timely, reliable information that you will use.
* Biases and prejudices can influence our understanding of a situation. Bias is natural. We are all biased by whom we are. There is little we can do to prevent it. The issue is how to mitigate it. Recognizing our biases and prejudices is the first step in overcoming them.
* Triangulation reduces the risk of bias in a needs assessment. Triangulation means the assessment is conducted by a diverse, multi-disciplinary team, using multiple tools and techniques, with individuals and groups of people who represent the diversity of the community.
* To do a good interview one must: be prepared and use a checklist; introduce oneself to the community leaders; ask permission to conduct the interview; sit, behave and dress in a culturally appropriate manner; empathize with the interviewee; be polite; avoid raising expectations; avoid leading questions.
* Decide carefully who to interview, according to the information required and cultural considerations, for example interviewing women and men separately and in appropriate surroundings.

**Materials:**

* Handout of PPT slides
* Handout “Tips on Assessment Methodology and Key Messages”
* Handout of Assessment tool that will be used
* Handout “Interview Techniques”
* Handout “Good Enough Guide: Individual Interviews”
* Flipchart

**Facilitation:**

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| **Time** | **Method** | **Facilitation notes** |
| 10 min | Presentation  Q and A | Brief PowerPoint (**Slides 4-6 or on handout)** presentation on “Why do we do Assessments? And Assessment Tips”  Handout “Tips on Assessment Methodology”  Question and answer on the presentation and intro. |
| 10 min | Plenary | Handout Assessment tool that will be used  Explain how this tool fits into a particularly assessment phase   * 1st phase –To understand the scale of the disaster and whether there is a need to respond – “Quick and Dirty” * 2nd phase – To determine WHAT are the priority needs for our response * 3rd phase – To collect more in-depth information (for sectoral or early recovery planning   Review tool and Q & A |
| 10 min | Plenary | Stakeholder Analysis  In plenary, **ask**: What are stakeholders? What does the term mean?  -> Stakeholders are persons, groups or institutions, who may have *interest* in or *influence* over a project.  -> Interest refers to what people may gain or lose, expectations or resources invested  -> Influence refers to power due to decision-making authority, ability to influence activities or other stakeholders in a positive or negative way.  Discuss particular stakeholders for this assessment  1) identify different groups who may have interests or influence on the possible project; and  2) investigate relationships among different groups and anticipate potential conflict (Do No Harm). |
| 10 min | Plenary  Q and A | Bias and Triangulation  Introduce the concepts of Bias and Triangulation in Needs Assessments ( work off key messages)  “What are the different biases and prejudices that may affect our post disaster needs assessment?”  Write them on a flipchart: Examples might include - past experience; gender bias; language or dialect bias; age bias; cultural bias; religious bias; political bias; ethnic bias; seasonal or time bias (visiting when the fields appear fertile or visiting in the morning when men are out looking for work) area bias (only visiting accessible places, e.g. more prosperous villages close to the main road); superiority bias (talking to the better educated and assuming the poor have few skills or capacities).  “How can we minimize biases and prejudices?” |
| 15 min | Pairs  Plenary | Interview Techniques  **Ask** participants to think in pairs. “What should you do to conduct a good interview (DOs)? What should you not do (DON’Ts)?”  Ask participant to jot down ideas  In plenary, **ask** each pair to share ONE idea for Do’s and Don’ts to conduct a good interview, without repeating any ideas that have already been shared.  **Write** them on the flipchart to create a list of DOs / DON’Ts.  Make sure all ideas are understood by the participants. Provide explanations when necessary. For example, clarify the difference between closed and open ended questions:  *Closed ended questions are those (“Do you eat millet?”) that can be answered by yes or no. These questions should be avoided whenever possible because they result in very stilted interviews. It is better to ask open ended questions (e.g. “What grains does your family eat?”) which encourage the respondent to answer more expansively and lead more naturally to follow up questions.*  Handout “Interview Techniques”  Then handout “Good Enough Guide: Individual Interviews” |
| 20-30 min | Plenary | Role Play: Interview Practice  In groups of 4 act out an interview, 2 as NGO workers, 2 as family members (1 man, 1 woman) affected by flood. They should imagine that they have already introduced themselves to the community leaders and are now interviewing displaced family members.  If time allows:  Ask one group to act out in front of all.  Facilitators should prep the IDP actors:  Give the NGO workers a hard time if they don’t introduce themselves properly  Try to get the NGO workers to promise something  Women stays away and rejects first attempt to speak with her  Once complete ask the group to **comment** on the role play and compare with the checklist of Do’s and Don’t s.  Discuss gender: were questions directed at the man and woman together or separately?  Were the man and woman given equal opportunity to speak? How can gender sensitive interviews be conducted?  Key Messages PPT Slides 7-9 or look at Handout |