Adapted from Trocaire, *Needs Assessment Checklist,* and GPC (2017). Key Informant Interviews Methodology*,* [*Protection Mainstreaming Toolkit*](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/news/2017/protection-mainstreaming-toolkit-launch.html)

HO D1.7 Checklist for needs assessments



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| **DESIGN** |
| **1** | Identify the purpose of the needs assessment  |  |
| **2** | Check if someone else has done an assessment that can provide you with the same information you are looking for |  |
| **3** | Coordinate with other organisations, government, and community representatives to avoid duplication and reduce the burden on affected communities. Consider a joint assessment with other agencies |  |
| **4** | Set clear aims for the needs assessment and methodologies to be used in the terms of reference |  |
| **5** | Be clear on what information you need to collect and what it will be used for  |  |
| **6** | Agree how the needs assessment process will work and develop a realistic timeline and budget |  |
| **7** | Work closely with the affected community on the planning and implementation of the assessment  |  |
| **8** | Ensure different groups[[1]](#footnote-1) in the community are represented in the assessment (planning, implementation, analysis)  |  |
| **9** | Set up a feedback mechanism for the community to raise any issues/ problems that might arise during the Needs Assessment |  |
| **10** | Use methods that allow quick analysis of results e.g. daily debriefs, online analysis tools, digital data collection |  |
| **PREPARATION** |
| **1** | Consider how to balance the make-up of the assessment team—gender, age, sector expertise, logistics, finance, knowledge of the context and technical issues, gender sensitivity and language etc… |  |
| **2** | Analyse security risks and take steps to keep the assessment team and target communities safe |  |
| **3** | Prepare information materials to share with the community about your organisation and the needs assessment being carried out |  |
| **4** | Ensure the assessment team, including translators, are fully trained on the purpose and process of the needs assessment and have practiced using the tools in a pilot phase e.g. half/full day practice  |  |
| **5** | Adapt the assessment tools once the test practice/pilot phase is complete |  |
| **6** | Ensure all members of the needs assessment team, including drivers and translators, have signed the safeguarding and PSEA policy  |  |
| **7** | Clarify with the assessment team what steps should be taken if a particular case of concern requiring urgent action is brought to their attention during the assessment e.g. serious illness; unaccompanied child, disclosure of abuse |  |
| **8** | Prepare/provide referral cards to staff with information about how to refer any incidents |  |
| **IMPLEMENTATION** |
| **1** | Introduce yourself and request permission to carry out the interview. Explain the objective and anticipated outcome of the assessment. |  |
| **2** | Get vital information about humanitarian needs, responses so far, vulnerabilities, capacities and operating conditions |  |
| **3** | Give voice to all vulnerable groups (e.g. older persons, persons with disabilities, religious and ethnic minorities). In order to do so, ensure the accessibility of venues and engage people with experience in communicating with these groups to support in the assessment. |  |
| **4** | Ensure men and women are consulted separately by male or female staff (including translators) as appropriate |  |
| **5** | Collect information from as many sources as possible |  |
| **6** | Ensure participants know that they are not obliged to participate in the needs assessment—it is voluntary  |  |
| **7** | Ask people to be as honest and open as possible, reassure them that there are no right or wrong answers, if people aren’t comfortable with any of the questions they are free not to answer |  |
| **8** | Be alert to non-verbal signs and behaviours which indicate how comfortable the person is with the interview; adjust the topics and time frame accordingly. |  |
| **9** | Listen to what the affected population are saying and try to capture the key information |  |
| **10** | Provide an opportunity for the participants to ask questions or share thoughts on additional issues  |  |
| **11** | Analyse as efficiently as possible the data you collect, and make sure to save and present the data in a way that new data can be added in later |  |
| **12** | Consider ‘do no harm’, conflict sensitivity and gender analysis approaches |  |
| **13** | Share the assessment report with stakeholders including the disaster-affected communities, donors, partners and peer agencies |  |
| **DON’T** |
| **1** | Collect information you don’t need and won’t or can’t analyse |  |
| **2** | Waste time talking as a whole team to one respondent. |  |
| **3** | Mislead or misinform the community during assessment, making false promises or raising expectations |  |
| **4** | Put respondents at risk by asking unethical questions e.g. personal, highly politicised, ethnically or religiously related questions etc. |  |
| **5** |  Provide technical advice during the assessment |  |
| **6** | Substitute your direct observation for the respondent’s answer or explanation to a question. |  |
| **7** | Interrogate key informants; rather, let them talk while guiding the conversation. |  |
| **8** | Monopolize the time of individual interviewees. |  |
| **9** | Limit yourself to one respondent’s information with regards to one topic; rather, triangulate data by asking others until it is possible to confirm consensus or non-consensus on this point. |  |
| **10** | Use people’s names when collecting information. Ensure the anonymity of the data collected. |  |
| **11** | Let a translator answer a question for the interviewee or dominate the interview process. |  |

1. ‘Different groups’ signifies women, men, girls, boys, youth, and older persons, as well as persons with disabilities and people from specific minority or ethnic groups that have been excluded from other assistance and have been affected by the disaster. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)