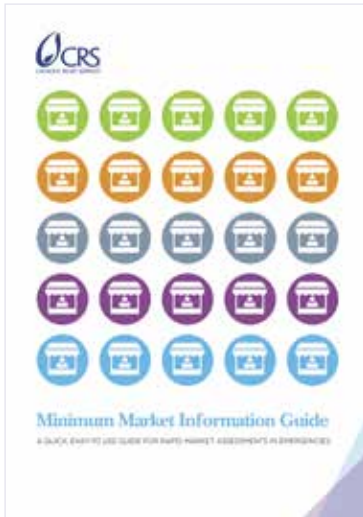


Minimum Market Information Guide

A QUICK, EASY-TO USE GUIDE FOR RAPID MARKET ASSESSMENTS IN EMERGENCIES



Noun Project icons: Goods by Adrien Coquet | Quality by Gregor Cresnar | Raised hand by kareemovic1000 | Product cycle by Gregor Cresnar | Map by bmijnlieff | Price by Arthur Shlain | Point by MRK | Explosion by Marwa Boukarim | Stall by Vectorstall | Community by Adrien Coquet | Rice by Anna Bearné | Timber by Made by Made | Man with wheelbarrow by Gan Khoon Lay

Catholic Relief Services is the official international humanitarian agency of the United States Catholic community. Our relief and development work is accomplished through programs of emergency response, HIV, health, agriculture, education, microfinance and peacebuilding. CRS eases the suffering of and provides assistance to people in need in more than 100 countries, without regard to race, religion or nationality.

Contents

1. What is a Rapid Market Assessment and Why Do One?	1
2. The CRS <i>Minimum Market Information Guide</i>	3
3. When to Use the CRS <i>Minimum Market Information Guide</i>	5
4. Minimum Market Information Methodology	8
Annex: Minimum Market Questions	18
1. Stakeholder key informant interview questions	18
2. Community focus group discussion questions	19
3. Trader questions	21



Acronyms

CaLP	The Cash Learning Partnership
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
EMMA	Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FGD	focus group discussion
GBV	gender-based violence
HRD	Humanitarian Response Department
KII	key informant interview
PIN	project idea note
MEAL	monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning
MISMA	Minimum Standard for Market Analysis
RMA	rapid market assessment
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene

1. What is a Rapid Market Assessment and Why Do One?

What is a rapid market assessment?

A rapid market assessment, or RMA, is a simple exercise that humanitarian practitioners undertake to get a quick snapshot of how markets are working in a given context.

Market assessments, whether rapid or in-depth, are an integral part of program quality in a response, and should be carried out before designing any program that involves resource transfers or procurement, not only for potential cash and voucher assistance programs. All market assessments contain the same basic information about **market functionality** and **market access**, collected from a variety of sources.







Market assessments can look into marketplaces or market systems. Almost all RMA approaches are primarily concerned with **marketplaces** and how they have been affected by a shock, and these are impacted by the **market systems** that connect these markets to other supply and demand markets.

Market functionality: A market is functional if traders of all types and sizes are able to sell their goods and services at fair prices, whether or not demand for them changes. *For example, market functionality is based on elements like the availability and quality of goods and services sold and the number of market actors.*

Market access: A market is accessible if all types of buyers and sellers can travel to the market safely and afford its goods or services. For example, market access is based on elements such as cultural access, affordability of goods and services, and transportation options.

Marketplaces: Physical places where people buy and sell a variety of goods.

Market systems: Specific networks of actors for a specific good or service (see below).

Goods	Services
Rice 	Casual labor 
Timber 	Transport services 
Soap 	Financial services 

Why do a rapid market assessment?

Generally speaking, RMAs are less time-consuming for field teams than more in-depth market system assessments, and conducting an RMA may be more appropriate if:

- The intervention being planned is relatively small in scale and/or short in duration;
- The key goods to be delivered to the crisis-affected population are already known to be widely available in local marketplaces; and/or
- Markets in the intervention area are known to be robust and functioning well (for example, in a bustling urban center or in a middle-income country).¹

However, varying available time, resources and information may lead teams to consider several types of rapid market assessment—either an assessment that merely ‘scopes’ the market (i.e., collects observations or topline information in a very short timeframe) or one that collects minimum information (which can form the basis of a modality decision and an eventual response) (see Table 1).

A rapid market assessment and analysis can inform **short-term strategies and interventions**. A more in-depth assessment may be required for longer-term strategies or subsequent phases of the response, in particular around whether a response should use a [cash, voucher or in-kind response modality](#) or a mixture of these, and what the risks associated with each modality are.

Rapid market assessments are part of accepted **humanitarian standards**, such as [Sphere](#) (2018) and [MISMA](#) (CaLP 2018). In addition, an increasing number of **donors require basic market information** in concept notes and proposals. If we don’t have a minimum understanding of key markets in our areas of implementation before designing a response, the **potential harmful impacts** can be market distortions caused by:

- a significant change in the price or availability of certain essential goods or services
- OR**
- a significant fall in the demand for the goods or services of local market participants

These undermine the future viability of local livelihoods, jobs or businesses.

1. Market Information Framework (International Rescue Committee 2018).

2. The CRS Minimum Market Information Guide

To meet the minimum information requirements of donors and humanitarian standards for a rapid market assessment to inform modality choice, CRS has created the *Minimum Market Information Guide*. It outlines the minimum basic information required for a rapid market assessment to meet basic agreed standards for project design.² All the **minimum basic information** is outlined in Table 1 on Page 8.

The guide can help teams:	The guide is not:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand all the basic information they need to collect for donors and to meet humanitarian standards. ▪ Use the editable key question sets as ready-to-use tools to collect market information in the first days or weeks of a response. ▪ Along with additional contextual information (e.g., around needs, organizational capacity and government policies), support quick modality and cash feasibility decisions in the early stages of an emergency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>It is not a needs assessment tool.</u> An assessment outlining the key basic needs expressed by populations should be conducted before you collect market information. ▪ <u>It is not a market assessment tool.</u> There are optional key questions provided that can be used as part of an assessment tool, but this is a guide on the process to follow to meet minimum market information standards.

The *Minimum Market Information Guide* is designed on the principle that there are nine core pieces of information needed in the early stages of a response to plan for any type of market-based programming from a Do No Harm perspective. If a project is designed and a modality chosen based on information across all nine points, it meets this standard. See Figure 1 on the next page.

2. As per [MISMA](#) (CaLP 2018), [Cash and Voucher Assistance Feasibility Checklist](#) (CRS 2020), BHA Emergency Application Guidelines - Annex A - Technical Information and Sector Requirements (USAID 2021), [Market Information Framework](#) (IRC 2018).

Figure 1: Minimum nine items of market information



3. When to Use the CRS Minimum Market Information Guide

Rather than an in-depth market systems analysis, the *Minimum Market Information Guide* is primarily a hybrid marketplace/market systems analysis enabling teams to understand what basic critical goods are being traded in local markets and whether traders can increase supply to meet demand, where markets seem to be recovering from a shock. All teams designing proposals should aim to collect minimum market information—through primary or secondary sources—to inform project design. The decision tree in Figure 2 on the next page outlines how you can decide what type of information you need to collect. The parameters of this information are outlined in Table 1 on Page 8.

Market systems analysis: Takes an in-depth look at the specific connections, actors and conditions for the purchase and sale of one particular good or service at a time (e.g., rice, water, etc).

Figure 2: Decision tree to decide what information to collect

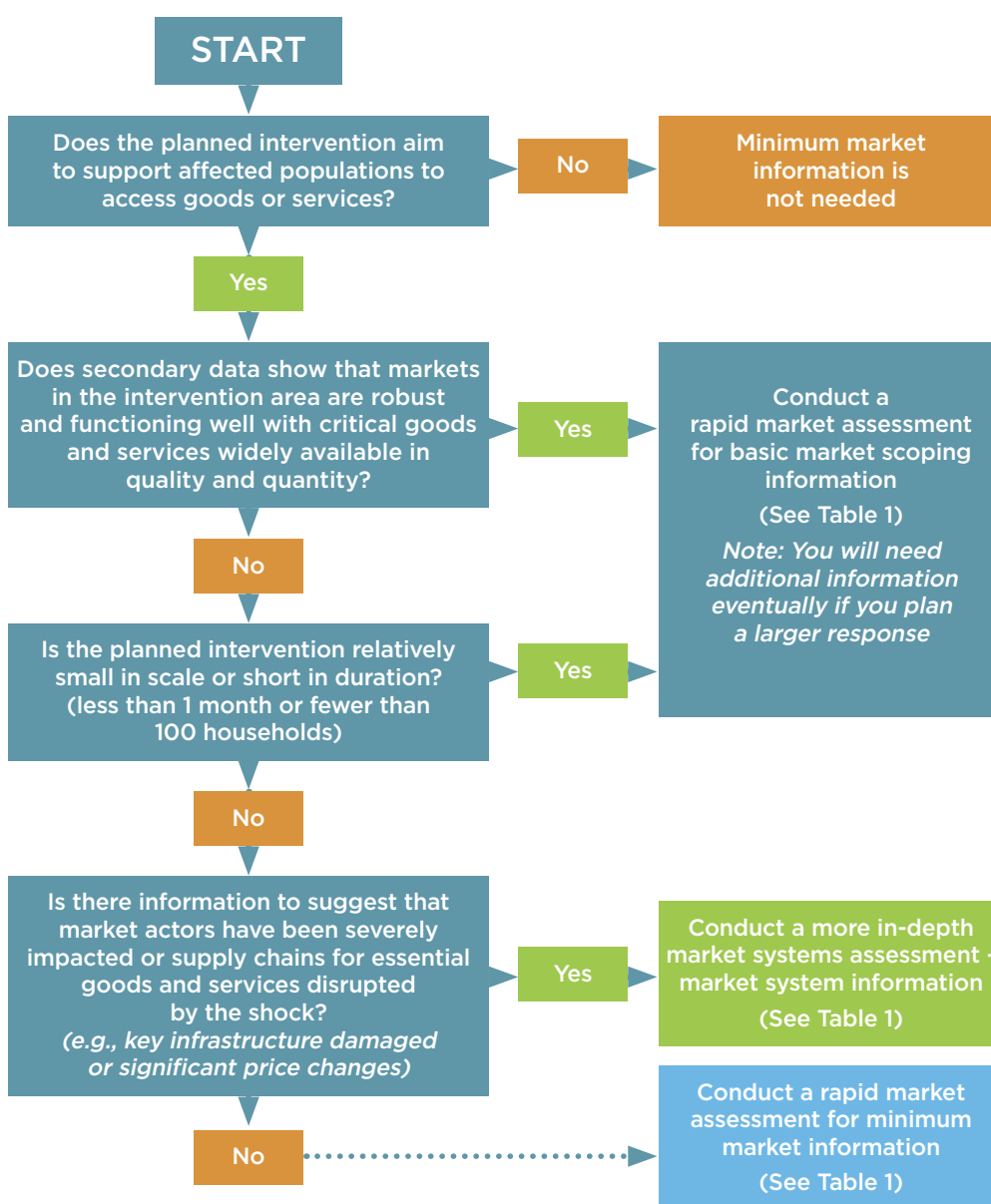
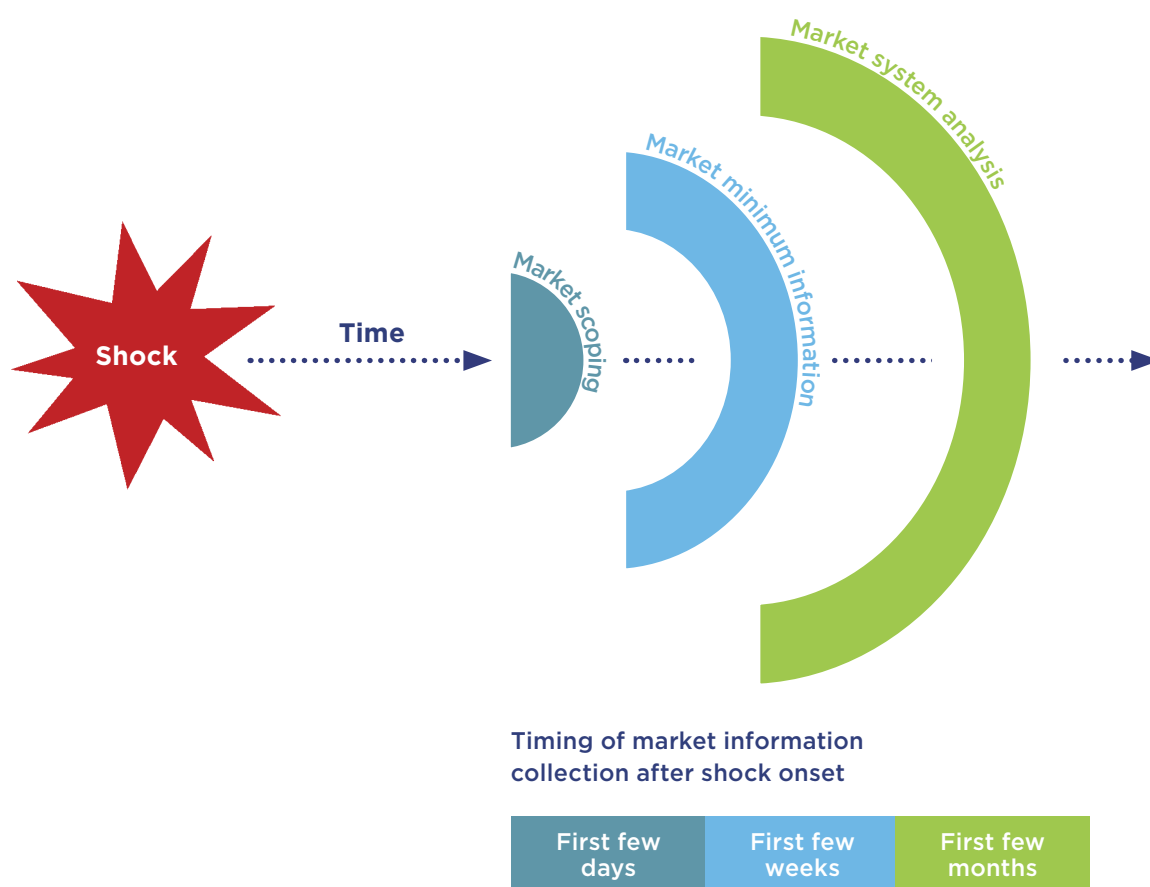


Figure 3: When different types of information might be collected after a shock



It is advisable to **always aim for minimum market information in your rapid market assessment in an emergency response**. Figure 3 above shows how, as time passes after a shock, you may wish to collect more in-depth information should you have more time and resources. Table 1 on the next page outlines the parameters of quantities or qualities of information you could gather depending on the resources and objective you have.

Table 1: Types of market information collected through assessments

	Rapid market assessments		In-depth market assessments ³
	Market scoping	Minimum market information	Market system analysis
Purpose	Make quick ‘go/no-go’ decisions on whether to intervene or help decide where to conduct a rapid assessment	Determine whether markets have the capacity to meet priority needs of affected populations or to inform modality choice	Determine whether additional support is needed to facilitate a market-based response, to reassess and adjust an ongoing response or design a follow-on response
Timing after onset	Within first few days after a shock	Within first few weeks after a shock	Within first few months after a shock
How long it could take	1 to 3 days	1 day to 1 week (depending on scope)	1 week to 1 month
Staffing needs	A mixed team of 1 or 2 people, including those with operations and program skills	A mixed team of 2+ people including those with operations and program skills	A large mixed team including those with operations, program and MEAL skills
Method of primary data collection	Short surveys with key informants, e.g., local partners. These could be via telephone using questions in the Annex. If possible, quick ‘drive-by’ market site visits to speak to a few traders	Basic primary data collection using trader surveys, community focus group discussions or key informant interviews	Semi-structured interviews with a variety of market stakeholders or variety of market actors (traders, wholesalers, transporters, etc.); household questionnaires; market mapping; potential for representative samples
Use of secondary data	Secondary data review essential – existing market baseline data is preferable. Relies on sufficient secondary data being available, so scoping only needs to validate assumptions	Some secondary data is available but additional data is needed to have a ‘good-enough’ understanding of the situation	Some secondary data is available but additional data is needed for an in-depth understanding of the situation
Decisions/ use of information	Go/no-go decision for response; determine where to conduct rapid assessment; writing basic project idea notes (PINs)	Writing standard humanitarian donor concept notes and proposals; confirm a “go” decision on a particular modality; start providing immediate lifesaving relief; talk to donors	Inform actual response (adjust immediate relief, initiate additional interventions); inform (subsequent) concept notes and full proposals, research and advocacy

3. There is a wide range of market system tools available, including lighter-touch ones like the [ICRC RAM](#) or more detailed ones like the [EMMA](#). For information on market systems approaches, visit the [BEAM exchange](#).

4. Minimum Market Information Methodology

There are **six basic steps** for collecting minimum market information for project design:

Step 1 Determine the scope of your rapid market assessment

Step 2 Identify minimum market information gaps

Step 3 Prepare and plan rapid data collection

Step 4 Conduct rapid data collection

Step 5 Conduct rapid data analysis

Step 6 Write rapid market assessment report

Step 1: Determine the scope of your rapid market assessment

1. Hold a discussion with the core field team to decide what program-related information is missing, what decisions you need to make (see Table 1) and what the objectives of your market assessment should be. Decide whether you just need market scoping or minimum market information.
2. If you decide you need the minimum market information—either to determine whether markets have the capacity to meet priority needs of affected populations or to inform modality choice—first find out what the priority needs are. Decide on the key goods and services that you want to assess based on the ones that are central to meeting households' basic and/or recovery needs. Limit these to three items for a rapid assessment.
3. Agree on the basic questions you want answered and the geographical area you will assess. Note that the geographical scope of the assessment should include populations and market actors directly affected by the emergency. Focus on the key market actors and relationships that are crucial to the target group's needs.

Goods and services

E.g., Typhoon-affected households need **tools** and **bamboo** to make shelters, as well as casual **labor** to support home construction. You need to know how you can help households access these goods and services, and whether cash modalities are appropriate. You decide to collect minimum market information from typhoon-affected households and traders in the local market they usually buy from.

Criteria for selecting three critical goods and services. They should be goods and services that:

- Respond to critical needs outlined by affected populations.
- Can usually be bought or sold in the local market.
- Align with agency sectoral mandates (e.g., for shelter, WASH, etc.) or are being prioritized by a planned intervention.
- Align with the main goods in the staple food basket.
- Affected populations are likely to spend cash or vouchers on if provided with these.

Selecting your geographic area

- Markets where affected populations normally buy the goods and services they require.
- Markets affected by the emergency.
- Markets that are safely accessible by data collection teams or where remote or secondary data can easily be gathered.
- Area aligned with your organization’s response strategy.

For additional information on setting the scope of a market assessment, see [MISMA](#).

Step 2: Identify minimum market information gaps

Do a quick scan of secondary data sources to see whether any of your nine key pieces of minimum market information are already available. Your program team or partners should be first informants for this, followed by other potential secondary data sources.

Use the checklist in Table 2 below to do a quick run-through of each minimum data point to see whether you have existing data and where you need to collect primary market data as part of a rapid assessment. This will help avoid under- or over-collection of data.

Potential secondary data sources

Existing market baselines, situation reports, logistics assessments, partner assessments, national statistics agencies, inter-governmental agencies, private commodity information sources, United Nations, NGOs, marketplace monitoring products, [FAO Food Price Index](#), Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), [Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis \(EMMA\) Toolkit](#), commodity indexes.

Table 2: Minimum market information gap checklist

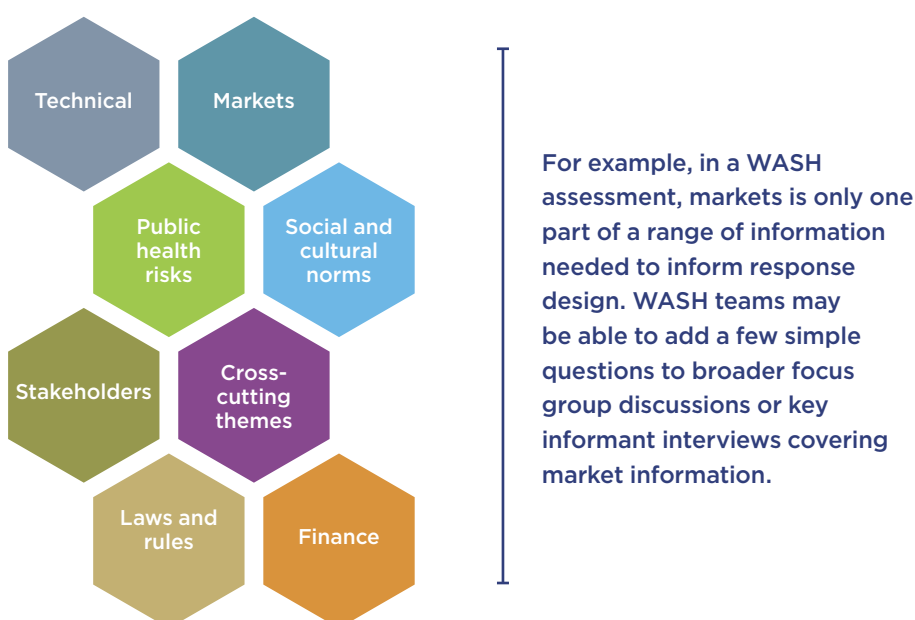
	Minimum market information	Is this information available already?			
1	Item availability and quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No/Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially	Market functionality
2	Trader willingness	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No/Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially	
3	Trader capacity to restock	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No/Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially	
4	Market integration	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No/Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially	
5	Power dynamics	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No/Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially	
6	Prices	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No/Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially	
7	Household market access	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No/Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially	Market access
8	Target population needs and preferences	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No/Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially	
9	Protection and gender-based violence concerns	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No/Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially	

Step 3: Rapid data collection preparation and planning

Once you have identified where you have minimum market information gaps, plan to fill them.

Each rapid assessment conducted in the first few days or weeks after a shock takes a different form. You may therefore choose to integrate minimum market questions into sectoral needs assessments, as part of your situational analysis, or collect your minimum market information through a separate rapid market assessment. Discuss with operations and program teams the easiest and quickest way to collect your market data.

Figure 4: Example WASH situational analysis information



- Take note of the critical needs outlined by households BEFORE you speak to traders, as you should ask the traders some basic questions about prices, availability and their capacity to restock the key goods that align with these basic needs.
- Decide on the timeframe you will ask about for your minimum market information (e.g., ‘prices this past week’ and ‘prices since the earthquake’ can be very different things). You may want to choose pre/post crisis timeframes or compare the current situation to the same period last year.
- Design your data collection tools. Remember that the MISMA (CaLP 2018) guiding principles for doing any rapid market assessment are:
 - Purposive sampling⁴
 - Data saturation (i.e., collecting data from a range of sites and stakeholders until you start receiving the same information)
 - Qualitative analysis
 - Semi-structured interviews with market traders
 - Semi-structured interviews with formal and informal community leaders
 - Focus group discussions with community members

4. For additional advice and support on sampling, interview techniques and methodology, contact the [HRD MEAL team](#)

- You may wish to use the key questions outlined in the Annex. **These qualitative survey questions are designed to cover all the minimum market information required across all three sources.**

They are available in an editable Word document and easily contextualized. You can also use them as a guide to design your own questions, ensuring they fill the gaps you found in your information.

- Agree on a data collection plan and timeframe to collect your minimum market information from stakeholder key informants, communities and traders. The sequence is key; remember to **speak to communities first to understand their basic needs** and triangulate trader data later, if time allows and/or there are inconsistencies from different stakeholders.
- When collecting information from communities and other stakeholders, it is essential to seek out the opinions of diverse groups—e.g., by age, sex, disability and other factors as relevant in the context—and analyze the data according to these factors. This helps us better understand whether, for example, markets are more or less accessible for different profiles of recipients, or which groups may experience what risks or benefits related to cash or in-kind assistance.

Figure 5: Who to speak to



Step 4: Rapid data collection

See Table 3 below for specific guidance on who to speak to, how long the surveys should take, and key considerations when collecting data from these three sources. **Remember these tips are for a process that is ‘good enough’ and indicates whether certain modalities might be appropriate; it is not a statistically thorough (i.e., representative) approach.**

Rapid data collection: Vietnam case study

CRS Vietnam participated in an initial joint needs assessment as part of the Typhoon Molave response in 2020/1. The assessment collected basic scoping information from key informants about markets only, but did not explicitly cover aspects such as market access for households, or protection and GBV concerns. In order to collect minimum market information for a donor proposal, CRS undertook an additional rapid market assessment, conducting three FGDs and eight trader surveys per district. This took two days per district and enabled CRS Vietnam to successfully win an emergency grant to support flood-affected households.

“It is more important to have a small quantity of good data than large amounts of poor and unreliable data.”

CaLP MISMA

Table 3: Data collection tips

	Stakeholder key informant interviews	Community focus groups	Trader surveys
Objective	Get high-level information on trends in relation to specific markets in a certain area. Triangulate with community and trader information.	Understand whether all people can safely travel to, buy from, and afford items in specific markets. Triangulate with key informant and trader information.	Understand from traders in markets whether they are running as normal and will be able to support a response. Triangulate with community and key informant information.
Minimum market information from this source	Market integration; power dynamics; household market access; prices; target population needs and preferences; protection and GBV concerns	Item availability and quality; household market access; prices; target population needs and preferences; protection and GBV concerns	Item availability and quality; trader willingness; trader capacity to restock; market integration; power dynamics; prices
Who to ask	<p>Male and female stakeholders, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market committee members or trader cooperative representatives. Local government departments of trade or commerce. UN agencies (World Food Programme, Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, etc.) and other NGOs with potential market knowledge operating in the areas. Banks and other financial institutions (if considering cash assistance). Local leaders and community representatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Households affected by the shock. Conduct separate focus groups with men and women of different ages, with and without disabilities, and of different ethnic origins or religions (different diversity factors may be relevant in different contexts). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small/medium retailers (men and women) in specific local markets affected by the shock where populations buy critical items identified in needs assessments. Focus on traders of key basic goods, such as food, hygiene items, shelter repair materials, etc. Identify wholesalers or large traders if they are available.
Sequence	Visit key informants first. This may help you know where to plan FGDs and trader surveys, as well as what secondary data may be available.	Speak to communities before traders to identify critical goods that households need.	Traders will likely be the last surveys you conduct after KIIs and FGDs.
Duration (NB: these can be added to ongoing assessments)	About 30 minutes.	About 30 minutes.	About 30 minutes. (Keep surveys short as traders will be busy selling and may have limited time.)

	Stakeholder key informant interviews	Community focus groups	Trader surveys
Where to go	Areas affected by the shock, including urban and rural communities and marketplaces. Regional or national markets where stakeholders and informants may be located. Trade hubs, warehouses and government head offices can also be considered.	Shock-affected communities that CRS wishes to assist.	Specific local or downstream marketplaces in the shock-affected area you want to assess. These should be marketplaces that populations are accessing, or access in normal times.
Recommended indicative number of surveys per community of interest	At least 2 KIIs per marketplace of interest.	At least 1 FGD with men, 1 FGD with women, and 1 FGD according to relevant vulnerability or diversity factors per area or context of interest.	At least 5 trader surveys per marketplace of interest (e.g., 5 x 2 markets in local area = 10).
Key things to consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you already have any of this information from secondary sources? Can key informants give you information about other geographic areas or markets? If so, try to gain a broader overview from these interviews. Take key informants' telephone numbers, in case you have more questions in future. You may be able to identify new market actors and key informants during the assessment process as recommendations and introductions are made, a technique known as 'snowballing.' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review CRS' focus group guidance. Are there particular issues around market access in the community that need to be explored (for certain groups), e.g., due to conflict, may internally displaced people be refused service or are roads cut off in a certain area? If so, conduct separate FGDs with relevant groups and disaggregate results by group (for example, access for refugees and access for host communities). Technical teams are likely also conducting focus groups. To avoid interviewing people twice, try to integrate questions into multi-sector or other rapid needs assessments that are planned (rather than doing a standalone exercise). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you involve supply chain staff in your trader assessments? They may have basic price information on key goods in local markets that you can use. Has WFP Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) or a local government body already collected price data? Have you checked seasonal calendars to see whether prices may be affected by any seasonal changes (FEWS NET, etc.)? Make sure price data collection is done systematically, using consistent measures of weight, and quality standards. Aim to translate local price data into standard units (liter, gram, etc.) on the spot, if possible. Speak to traders who sell at least one of the identified key goods. Not all traders will sell all goods, but you can always collect information on different goods from different shops. Probe your information. If traders offer more information than the survey allows for, take notes and observations to justify responses.

Step 5: Rapid data analysis

A relatively quick data analysis can be undertaken if, following your rapid market assessment, your minimum market information shows or appears to show:⁵

- Short intervention time frame or urgent needs
- Low relative scale of the planned intervention⁶
- Visible abundance or supply in the marketplace
- Short or simple supply chains
- High trader capacity (finance, networks)
- Good information flows in the market system
- Simple market systems with few actors
- Expenditure markets (i.e., goods or services bought by the target group)
- No obvious or major market problems

A ‘good enough’ approach can be taken to rapid market assessment data. However, if, during the data analysis, any of the above criteria do not appear to be true, you may wish to collect additional data as part of a more in-depth market analysis to understand challenges and blockages, as well as market support activities that can be implemented. Triangulate collected data using different methods and different sources, as well as with field team observations to identify unreliable data and inconsistencies. Look at what households, traders and key stakeholders have said about market access, or availability of goods, for example. Interrogate inconsistencies and return to collect further data if you need to. Table 6 on Page 17 can support you to interpret your data and combine it across your three sources to reach conclusions. Involve both programs and operations teams in your data analysis stage to reach consensus on what the information is suggesting.

Table 5: Key analytical questions

	Minimum market information	Key analytical questions to consider
Market functionality	1 Availability/quality of items	Are the basic items that people need available in sufficient quantity/quality in local markets? What are trader lead times and stocks?
	2 Trader willingness	What are trader attitudes? Are they able and willing to adapt to an increased demand?
	3 Trader capacity to restock	What are trader capacities? Can traders restock basic items? If so, within what timeframe?
	4 Market integration	Are markets well integrated to adjust to fluctuations in supply and demand? Are there any significant barriers to trade?
	5 Power dynamics	Are markets competitive, with a variety of traders who can meet the need for the relevant goods/services? What are the relevant social and power dynamics that may affect market relations?
	6 Prices	Are the critical basic items that affected populations need available at reasonable prices? Are these prices likely to remain stable?
Market access	7 Household market access	What is the affected population’s social, physical and financial access to markets? Is this access safe for all groups?
	8 Target population needs and preferences	Do affected populations or groups within them prefer one modality and delivery mechanism over another?
	9 Protection and GBV concerns	How do gender, age, ethnicity or disability impact physical, financial and social access to markets? Might certain modalities mitigate or exacerbate protection concerns (e.g., GBV)?

5. CaLP MISMA.

6. As a basic principle, a more in-depth analysis is needed when an intervention is expected to increase the total demand for relevant goods by more than 25 percent in urban areas or by 10 percent in more remote and rural areas.

Step 6: Rapid market assessment report writing

Your rapid market assessment report should use the following format at minimum:

1. Executive summary	A short paragraph explaining the overall findings to the reader.
2. Context/background	The crisis, needs of the population and the background to the assessment.
3. Methodology	How many surveys were done, who was interviewed, where and when.
4. Key findings/results of the market analysis	The most important and useful findings on prices, market access and market functionality. <i>See Table 5</i>
5. Main recommendations and conclusions⁷	What the market information indicates may be the most appropriate modality and why.

Key findings/market analysis component

In simple terms, market analysis can be divided into three parts:

- 1. Market access**
- 2. Market functionality**
- 3. Price data**

Below in Table 6 is an easy breakdown of the three key sections you need for the analysis component of your report; where to find this information in your trader surveys, FGDs and KIIs by question number; and how to write the information up with simple sentence starters. E.g., power dynamics are part of market functionality. To make a statement about this, you can find the information in responses to Trader Question 5 and Key Informant Question 8.

Consider the following when writing your report:

- **Audience** Use brief, convincing, visually accessible formats. Ten pages is usually the absolute maximum for a rapid market report.
- **Charts and graphs** to highlight the most compelling information.
- **Triangulation** Be sure to back up analytical statements using multiple sources. (e.g., “households, traders and key informants all said ...” or “Men and women both said ...”)
- **Templates** There are excellent [CRS report templates](#). Use these for a professional look.
- **Images** Add at least one image taken during your assessment, or of the markets assessed, if possible. CRS photo guidance is available [here](#) and [here](#).
- **Disaggregation** Be sure to compare any similarities or differences in the findings according to age, sex, disability and other diversity factors as relevant in the context. If you have covered multiple markets or geographic areas, be sure to present these separately as well.

Find modifiable versions of the three questions sets [here](#).

⁷ Note that these are key recommendations based on market information alone – a final decision on a modality considers other factors, such as operational capacity, government policies, etc. The CRS [Cash and Voucher Assistance Feasibility Checklist](#) outlines nine criteria for deciding whether cash is feasible.

Table 5: interpreting your data and reaching conclusions

Market information		Traders	HHs	KIIs	Possible interpretations of data	Key statements to write
Market functionality	Item availability and quality	Q10/14/19	Q7	Q12	If volumes traded or availability of items are significantly reduced, this could indicate supply chain problems. Volumes traded are not a cause of market disruption in themselves, but indicative of supply-side issues. Changes in brand, material, size, etc., of a good or service can also indicate supply-side issues.	According to ... most/some/all/no items were available. In particular ... Regarding the quality of items in markets, traders/households/stakeholders said ...
	Trader willingness	Q25			Trader willingness to work with humanitarian actors is indicative of their ability to do business and respond to a demand increase as well as a sign of whether you could consider local procurement or voucher options. Traders may be unwilling if supply chains have been affected badly and if it is not profitable, or there are potential financial or security risks involved in supporting the response.	All/some/no traders interviewed expressed a willingness to work with humanitarian actors to provide assistance due to
	Trader capacity to restock	Q10/12/13/ 15/ 20/21 22/23/24		Q7	If traders indicate a quick restocking time, it means that supply chains may be functioning normally. If disruption has occurred to key transport links or market infrastructure, this indicates supply-side issues.	Traders indicated restocking times of ... due to ... The main challenges noted by traders in doing their business were ...
	Market integration	Q6/7/8/9/ 10/11			When linkages between local, regional and national market actors are working, price changes in one location are consistently related to price changes in other locations, and market agents are able to interact between different markets and enable critical items or food to flow from other surplus regions. This is a good sign that markets may be functioning, and market-based programming is possible.	Markets do/do not appear to be well integrated because ...
	Power dynamics	Q5		Q8	If there are few traders or a small group of traders has more power, this may reduce competition. If there is no competition in markets, collusion between traders can cause prices to rise (or stay high), even though supplies are available, and the market system is otherwise performing well. A competitive market where there are healthy power dynamics usually results in lower prices or better quality for consumers.	The market does / does not appear to be competitive because ...

Market information		Traders	HHs	KIIs	Possible interpretations of data	Key statements to write	
Prices	Q16/17/18	Q9	Q9/10	Prices are a symptom of market issues not a cause. If prices are particularly high or low, it could be due to a number of factors including seasonality, the impact of humanitarian assistance, inflation or fuel prices. If prices are abnormally high or low, consider doing more in-depth analysis to understand why. The CRS MARKit guidance can support this. If prices are rising or falling, this is usually indicative of demand-side problems.	Prices were collected for ... items from ... traders from ... markets. Generally speaking, prices are normal/high/low for this time of year. This might be due to ... Prices were particularly low/high for some goods, in particular ...		
Market access	Household market access	Physical access	Q1/4	Q1/2/ 3/4	Q2/3	If households have restricted access to market locations where essential goods and services are available, this is a demand-side issue.	Regarding whether all people can travel safely to markets ... Regarding the state of roads/bridges and market infrastructure ...
		Financial access		Q5/8	Q11	Household ability and willingness to buy goods and services with either cash or credit is an indicator of demand in a market. If households cannot afford items, this is a demand-side issue.	Regarding affordability of goods and prices for transport to markets... Regarding the number of customers, traders said ...
		Social access	Q2	Q6	Q4	Not all people are quoted the same prices, provided the same quality or given the same treatment in markets. It is important to understand social access so we know whether certain groups' experience of a market is better or worse than others due to discrimination.	Regarding whether all genders, backgrounds, ethnicities, and religions can access markets ...
	Target population needs and preferences		Q 11/13	Q13	We should always consider our programming from the perspective of affected populations and the needs and preferences of men, women, boys, girls and vulnerable groups. If there is a preference in the community for one modality, this may be due to market access or functionality issues (e.g., a preference for in-kind goods if prices are high, a preference for cash if markets are accessible).	Target populations prefer ... because Men prefer ... Women prefer ... Regarding whether cash would cause problems / benefit household dynamics or relations ...	
	Protection and GBV concerns	Q 3	Q10/12	Q5/6	From a Do No Harm perspective, we need to understand and mitigate any potential risks we may expose households or traders to.	Regarding general security in the market, women/men said ... Regarding risks of tension in the marketplace, women/men said ...	

Annex: Minimum Market Questions

These three sets of questions cover all the minimum market information required across all three data sources. Be sure to:

- Select the three key goods for the trader questions, highlighted below as [INSERT ITEM]
- Contextualize your reference period, highlighted below as [INSERT SHOCK]
- See these as part of a wider needs/market assessment tool, where appropriate

Stakeholder key informant interview questions

Name of interviewer:

Date of interview:

Name of key informant:

Position:

Gender: Male / Female

Contact details:

Market access for households

1	Are markets still functioning since the [INSERT SHOCK]? If yes, which ones? (name the markets) If no, why are markets or shops not functioning?	
2	Which markets are households using to buy basic food and household items at the moment? How far are they and do you think all people can access these markets safely?	
3	What are the challenges community members face to access markets at the moment?	
4	Since the [INSERT SHOCK], can people from all ethnic, religious and social groups access this market? If not, why not?	
5	Since the [INSERT SHOCK], are there any tensions related to social, ethnic or religious affiliations in this marketplace?	
6	Are there any security concerns related to the marketplace itself? If yes, what?	

Market functionality

7	Do you think there are any particular challenges for traders in these markets at the moment? If so, what are the challenges?	
8	Has the number of traders in these markets changed as a result of [INSERT SHOCK]? If so, in what way?	
9	Do you think prices in these markets have changed since the [INSERT SHOCK]? If so, how? (increased/decreased)	
10	Have prices of specific items changed? If so, indicate which items.	
11	Are prices affordable to most people since the [INSERT SHOCK]? If not, specify who cannot afford which items.	
12	Do you think there is a change in the quantity or quality of goods available in the local market at the moment? If so, how?	
13	Do you think humanitarian actors should consider a particular type of assistance, e.g., In-kind support (physical goods or services), vouchers (coupons which are only to be used for certain items at certain shops) or cash (money that can be spent on any items)? If so, why?	

Observations

Community focus group discussion questions

Name of interviewer:	
Date:	
Location:	
Number of attendees:	
Male FGD group <input type="checkbox"/>	Female FGD group <input type="checkbox"/>
Discussion with vulnerable groups <input type="checkbox"/> (Specify)	Other <input type="checkbox"/> (Specify)

Welcome the group and introduce the facilitator, notetaker and participants.

- Explain, in the language understood by the participants, the purpose of the data collection effort and the discussion, how the participants were selected to be part of the discussion, and the future use of the data.
- Explain the roles of facilitator, notetaker and participants; the expected duration of the discussion; the ground rules (e.g., mobile phones off); and the way the discussion will progress, emphasizing the importance of participants' honest responses and interaction, and that there are no right or wrong answers.
- Explain ethical considerations, including confidentiality and its limitations, voluntary participation, and the right to refuse or withdraw, emphasizing no consequences for either.
- Give instructions for obtaining the participants' written or oral consent.

Market access

1	At present, are there markets within an acceptable distance (on foot or by local transport) of your community? What is the name of the main market where households buy basic food, household items, and services? ⁸	
2	Since the [INSERT SHOCK], are women and men of all ages safe in the market and would they be safe to visit at all hours? If not, why not? When would they be safe? Are there any other groups who are not safe accessing the market? If yes, who and why?	
3	Since the [INSERT SHOCK], what is the transportation cost to these local markets or shops for a return journey? Is this the same/higher/lower than before the shock?	
4	Is there any particular group of people in this community that might have challenges <u>physically accessing markets</u> since the [INSERT SHOCK]? In particular, consider men, women, those with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups.	
5	Is there any particular group of people in this community that might have challenges <u>affording basic food, household items and services</u> in this market since the [INSERT SHOCK]? Consider men, women, those with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups.	
6	Since the [INSERT SHOCK], have there been reports about <u>discrimination</u> or do you think there is <u>discrimination</u> in this market? Who is discriminating against whom (Consider men, women, boys, girls, certain ethnic or religious groups, people with disabilities, older men, older women, younger men, younger women, other (specify)). Is it common and systematic or are these only isolated incidents?	

Market functionality: Availability/quality of goods

7	Are basic food, household items and services ⁹ that households need available in enough <u>quantity and quality</u> in local markets as of today? Which items are not available or of poor quality?	
----------	--	--

8. This question can be adapted to be more specific depending on priority needs identified (e.g., 'to buy shelter items').

9. This question can be adapted to be more specific depending on priority needs identified (e.g., 'to buy shelter items').

Market functionality: Prices and affordability

8	Do people in this community have <u>enough money</u> to buy the basic food, household items and services they need in this market?	
9	How are prices generally in the market (high/low/normal for time of year) compared to before the [INSERT SHOCK]. Which items are particularly expensive now? Why do you think this might be?	

Participant preferences and social relations¹⁰

10	Are there any tensions related to social, ethnic or religious affiliations in this marketplace?	
11	<p>If you were to receive humanitarian assistance at this time, please rank your preference for how you would like to receive this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-kind support (physical goods) ▪ Vouchers (coupons that are only to be used for certain items at certain shops) ▪ Cash (money that can be spent on anything) <p>Why have you ranked them in this way?</p>	<p>1. 2. 3.</p>
12	Do you think any particular modality (e.g., cash, vouchers or in-kind) will cause problems in household dynamics or relations? (e.g., between men and women, younger and older household members, others)? Why? Do you think any particular modality could benefit household relations? Why?	

If there is a preference for cash modalities, ask Q13

13	If you were to receive cash at this time, how would you prefer to receive it (in envelopes, through mobile money, through bank transfer, etc.) and why? How often is best to receive the transfer? Why?	
----	---	--

Observations

10. For additional FGD questions on risks and cash, see Tool 1.2 in [JRC's Safer Cash Toolkit](#).

Trader questions

Name of interviewer:
Date of interview:
Name of market:
Type of marketplace (e.g., local/district/regional/urban center):
Name of trader's shop:
Type of trader (small retailer, medium retailer, wholesaler, etc.):
Gender of trader: <input type="checkbox"/> Male / <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Critical/key goods (variety/type/specifications):
(see Table 4 for logic on selection)
1. [INSERT ITEM]
2. [INSERT ITEM]
3. [INSERT ITEM]

Market access

1	Since the [INSERT SHOCK], do you believe it is safe for your clients to travel to and from the local marketplace with cash and goods on their person?	Yes / No / Don't Know
1a	If not, why and for whom?	
2	Since the [INSERT SHOCK], do you think people from all ethnic, religious and social groups are accessing this marketplace?	Yes / No / Don't Know
2a	If not, why not?	
3	Are there any security concerns related to the marketplace itself?	Yes / No / Don't Know
3a	If yes, what?	
4	How has your number of daily customers changed since the [INSERT SHOCK]?	Increased / Decreased / Stayed the same / Don't know

Market functionality: General

5	About how many other traders of your size are in the market, selling similar goods?	
6	What is the name of the market where most of your suppliers are located?	
7	Since the [INSERT SHOCK] how have your buying prices from your nearest suppliers in this market changed?	(Increased / Decreased / Stayed same)
8	How are goods being transported from this large market to the market where you are since [INSERT SHOCK]?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By truck ▪ By motorbike ▪ By boat ▪ By plane ▪ Other (specify)
9	Is this transportation being impacted by any border, road or port closures?	Yes / No / Don't Know
9a	If yes, specify which border, road or port.	
10	Are you experiencing any challenges in conducting business since the [INSERT SHOCK]?	Yes / No / Don't Know

10a	If yes, what are your biggest challenges ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Items not available in quantity or supplier cannot source ▪ Items too expensive to buy from supplier ▪ Item available of poor quality ▪ Consumers do not have enough money (lack of demand) ▪ Border closures ▪ Lack of access to finance, capital or credit ▪ Humanitarian assistance has impacted local markets ▪ Government policies or market rules ▪ Lack of information ▪ Limited storage or warehouse space ▪ Availability of fuel ▪ Cost of fuel ▪ Availability of rented transport ▪ Cost of rented transport ▪ Distance from wholesaler, producer or importer ▪ Other (specify)
11	Do you import any goods?	Yes / No / Don't Know
11a	If yes, which goods and from which country?	
12	How many days ago did you last restock your shop?	
13	Generally, in normal times, how much time would it take for stock to arrive at your shop after you had made an order?	
14	Have there been any shortages of specific goods in this market since the [INSERT SHOCK]?	Yes / No / Don't Know
15	If you were to buy more stock now, would you be able to use your usual suppliers?	Yes / No / Don't Know

Now I want to ask you about how [INSERT SHOCK] has affected your ability to sell some specific goods. These goods are [insert the three goods you are interested in]. Please refer to the cheapest available variety of the item you sell.

Critical goods information		E.g. rice	1. [INSERT ITEM]	2. [INSERT ITEM]	3. [INSERT ITEM]
16	Current selling price per unit	10 USD per kg			
17	Selling price before shock occurred per unit	5 USD per kg			
18	How do you anticipate today's price will change over the next two weeks? (Increase/Decrease/Stay the same)	Increase			
19	Approximately how much stock on hand do you have at present?	250kg			
20	Could you increase your stock of this item if demand doubled? (Yes/No/Not sure)	Yes			
21	If yes, how long would this take	1 week			

Goods information: Additional If traders have indicated an ability to respond to an increase in demand for any good

22	If there was an increase in demand generally, would you have sufficient capital or funds to respond to this yourself?	Yes, I have my own capital or funds. No Don't know
23	If no, can you easily access credit (either financial loans or by delaying payment to traders)?	Yes / No / Don't Know
24	With access to credit, could you increase your supply?	Yes / No / Don't Know

Trader willingness

25	<p>Would you be interested in working with NGOs to provide humanitarian assistance either through a voucher program* or by supplying goods directly? If yes, how? If not, why not?</p> <p>*a voucher program is where affected households are provided with coupons with which they can only buy from selected shops</p>	Yes / No / Don't Know
-----------	--	-----------------------

Observations



Catholic Relief Services | 228 W. Lexington Street, Baltimore, MD 21201, USA
For more information, visit crs.org