Global Surge Capacity Trainings

Humanitarian Information Analysis Capacity Course

Audience: Operations decision makers, Assessment Specialist, and Information Managers of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Network & Movement, including CEA, IM, PMER, PGI, Anticipation Risk Financing, and Sector Specific Delegates

Duration and methodology: 5 days face to face training with mandatory online pre-training sessions

Location: Berlin, Germany

Dates: April 25-29, 2022.

Language: The course will be delivered in English, including all materials

Participants: 25 Participants maximum

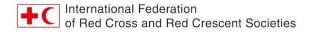## Background

The Global Tools Review of the IFRC's Surge response tools (2013-2016) identified assessment and planning in emergencies as one of the 7 core areas for improvement1. A dedicated reference group has been created to propose a revised IFRC's approach to Leading Emergency Assessment & Planning (LEAP), aiming to improve evidence based decision-making and plans of actions. The document highlights NS' and IFRC unique position to provide timely identification of inter-sectorial priority needs after a disaster or crisis or by anticipating it, to inform the DREF, Emergency Appeal, Plan of Action – and their revision process.

The proposed approach builds on existing strengths and lesson learnt from experience, increases the analysis and use of primary and secondary data while aligning with assessment strategies applied and recommend by IASC and Humanitarian Country Teams. It also recognizes the need to increase our collective competencies in assessment and planning in emergencies, looking at multi- and inter- sectoral dimensions with a recovery lens to better respond to the needs of affected communities in their early recovery process. There is strong consensus that IFRC and National Societies' key strength in Emergency Needs Assessments (ENA) is their proximity and access to affected populations and locations. National Societies are well positioned to provide reliable primary data to the humanitarian community. However, there are still gaps regarding our ability to systematically collect, manage and analyse secondary and primary data and document the evidence that informs our collective decision-making process and key planning outputs.

The revised approach for Assessment & Planning in Emergencies is now being finalized. Complementing the key resources that IFRC has developed over the last 10 years such as guidelines or training, this approach aims to:

Strengthen the analytical process while aligning and improving our current work with existing best practices

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[1] *IFRC Surge Optimisation process video*

Provide a competency framework to support analysis competency development, recruitment, learning and appraisal of information analysts.

This approach will also enhance IFRC surge capacity to support National Societies for the assessment design and planning in case of large-scale disaster and crisis (orange and red emergencies) or on request of NS for smaller scale disaster (white or yellow emergencies) as well as to conduct more robust and effective anticipatory analysis.

Introduction to the training

In complex, often large-scale humanitarian emergencies, decision-makers are challenged in using available information to make the best possible informed decisions. In many situations there is simply more information and noise than anyone can handle. Information available is often of varying quality, coverage, timeliness, and accuracy, challenging even further our ability to make sense of the data at hand. Substantive analysis is not well-established in the humanitarian sector. Existing "analysis" trainings tend to be aimed at technical, computer-based skills in statistics, focusing mainly on data summaries and visualization. Many assume that knowledge of data analysis software is synonymous with skilled analysis. Knowledge of tools and skilled at data analysis, however, are not the same. Analysis is a human process that requires the application of cognitive functions, the use of targeted analytical approaches, and an inquisitive mind-set. What often is presented as analysis is little more than collating information and manipulating software to produce data visualisation products.

To improve IFRC and NS's ability to differentiate signal from noise and focus on the important pieces of information required for strategic decision making, the IFRC proposes the Humanitarian Information Analysis Capacity Course (HIAC) for **Information Analysts**. The course curriculum will contribute to the development of the surge assessment competencies framework to be considered for future deployments within the **Assessment Cell** of the IFRC or equivalent in the NS.

Training Aim and key objectives

The training aims to introduce and equip IFRC and NS staff and volunteers with the basic, skills, attitude and knowledge required to answer strategic and relevant questions and make sense of available information in humanitarian emergencies, through exposure to most relevant processes, tools, and techniques. As an introduction, the course focuses only on fundamental skills, however the package provides colleagues with reading lists, materials, and recommendations to further strengthen the participant's ability to use and analyse information in humanitarian settings.

By the end of the course, participants should be able to:
- Support NS and participate in the **design, planning and implementation phases of the Emergency Needs Assessment process**, ensuring adequate linkages with response planning, within and across IFRC, from the design phase to the end-product.
- Support and participate in other **coordinated assessment and joint analysis processes** (National Societies, humanitarian organisations/agencies and sector/clusters) including **anticipatory analysis**.
- Recognize and select amongst a range of resources and techniques to **design and implement quality analysis plans and processes** that lead to improved needs assessment that fit the requirements of delivering while considering speed, cost, and scope.

- **Assess the quality of analytical products** and existing assessments and their relevance for strategic/programmatic decision-making in emergencies.
- Reflect on their own individual skills and competencies and know how they can improve their knowledge and best contribute to ENA processes through the exposure to analytical processes, tools and techniques.

Specific objectives include:
- Describe the different steps, skills, resources, and strategies required to **design and plan for quality, timely and credible analysis** during emergencies.
- Identify individual and organisational barriers or **cognitive processes** that can impact the quality of analysis, and strategies to minimize their influence.
- Describe the **analytical spectrum, from descriptive to anticipatory and prescriptive analysis,** the different information focuses it includes, and the skills and resources required for each level.
- Recognize the **importance and promote the use of analytical frameworks** when undertaking needs analysis.
- **Assess different types of information products** to judge their usability and suitability for decision making as well as their limitations.
- Develop strategies to **overcome inherent uncertainty in analysis** and be able to communicate limitations appropriately.
- Demonstrate an **ability to undertake analytical and critical thinking** through appropriate use of reflexivity and analytical rigor.

Audience and participants' profile

The course is designed for **Information Analysts,** or any other profile tasked with analysing and interpreting information from others, leading, or supporting a team of analysts and preparing information products for higher level decision making, i.e. donor's representatives, head of delegation, programme officers, disaster managers etc. The participants should function in a role where it is required to collate information from different sources, assess its credibility and trustworthiness and prioritise needs, recommend resource allocation and programme strategies.

Information analyst's primary role is to lead needs analysis and technically support other team members in delivering timely, quality, and credible analytical products. The profile is the interface between the assessment coordinator and the field and secondary data profile. Information analysts need an in-depth knowledge of analytical processes, tools and techniques as to ensure the best available answers can be provided in a timely way and inform strategic decision making. They ensure that all efforts are made in reducing the impact of cognitive bias and errors on the results. Their role is to:
- Assess information landscape and gaps and recommend adapted assessment approaches to NS and assessment coordinator
- Develop analysis framework and plan adapted to decision making and planning in emergencies
- Support, advise or lead the assessment design, analysis and reporting based on the analysis framework
- Coordinate, support or advise on primary and secondary data collection, management, storage, and archiving
- Process, reconcile and compare all secondary and primary data
- Select and implement structured analytical techniques to improve the quality, credibility, and rigor of the analysis.

- Communicate clearly and graphically key messages of the assessment(s) as well as the confidence in the results
- Technical focal point for remote and in country technical support.
- Oversee timely development and usability of ENA outputs for planning purposes, in liaison with PMER team
- Ensure lessons learnt are captured and feed into country and global level guidance or assessment preparedness activities

It is also recommended (not mandatory) that participants have previously attended the IFRC Mobile Data Collection and Survey Design Training and/or the IFRC Emergency Needs Assessments and Planning Training. However, in order to join the Humanitarian Information Analysis Capacity Course (HIAC) it is mandatory to have completed the online pre-training course that will be made available to invited participants after the selection process is completed.

A maximum of 25 participants will join this event, with the following pre-requisites being mandatory:
- Relevant field disaster and crisis response experience including RC/RC Movement emergency field mission exposure.
- Experience with Project cycle management, planning and monitoring.
- Relevant knowledge related to disaster management frameworks, disaster hazards and consequences, humanitarian structure, and humanitarian standards.
- Relevant knowledge of multi-sectorial and joint needs assessments and:
- Demonstrated personal traits and behaviours, including:
  - ✓ Demonstrated Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement principles and values.
  - ✓ Flexible, adaptable, and comfortable with ambiguity.
  - ✓ Sensitive to individual and cultural differences.
  - ✓ Effective work and support of others in high stress and changing environments.
  - ✓ Willingness and ability to both lead and follow.
  - ✓ Proven conceptual, problem solving, decision making, and analytical skills.
  - ✓ Effective written and spoken communication and presentation skills in English.
  - ✓ Interpersonal soft skills.

Course approach

The course should be considered as an introduction to humanitarian information analysis. It is designed as a five-day intensive face-to-face training, requiring a high degree of interaction and active participation. Beforehand, mandatory online pre-training sessions will be conducted, and a final exercise will be requested to be completed by all participants. This course combines theory and practice, and will include both individual and group exercises, with the use of real-life information as case studies.

The curriculum focuses on five elements crucial to successful analysis:

1. Sense making frameworks, processes, competencies, and tools for production of high-quality analytical products in complex and fluid environments.
2. Processes, steps, and principals involved in turning data into actionable insight.
3. Key features of analytical products that can be used to judge their quality and credibility.
4. The role of collaboration in developing and improving the quality and trustworthiness of information products, including anticipatory analysis products.
5. Strategies and techniques to minimize the impact of cognitive biases on the quality of conclusions.

Participants will be exposed to a five-day scenario and will have to select among different design and planning options to ensure simple, yet compelling and insightful analytical end-product are delivered on time, using the most appropriate analytical approaches, and respecting analytical rigor.

Evaluation

The facilitators will collect data along various levels outlined in the overall key objectives and specific learning objectives. Findings will be used to improve future iterations of the training package and demonstrate the validity of the approach. The training package will be revised and refined to reflect feedback and recommendations provided by the group.

The evaluation will collect data at two levels:

- Reaction and planned action focus on measuring the impact of the training. The participant reaction measures will focus on content, the learning environment and, to a lesser extent, on the performance of the workshop delivery team. This will be done through written on-line surveys, designed around the specific learning objectives and provide an opportunity for the participants to assess own knowledge and skills, to identify areas for further development.
- Learning and confidence focuses on measuring how much learning has occurred. The main tool will be a formal start and end-of-training knowledge test which participants will conduct individually. This method will be complemented by holding quizzes, or other recap activities, after each key step of the training. This will allow for measuring both learning after the pre-course programme and after the course. Course participants will fill a daily evaluation and feedback form which will be used for i) immediate course correction but also ii) feed into post-mortem course appraisal and review.

Course Faculty and Resources

The course facilitation will combine the following skills:

- Course management, for overall course flow, contact with host/partner, and course administration
- General analysis and emergency coordination, technical competencies in data analysis and interpretation.

- A team of experienced and highly skilled facilitators will deliver the course.

Facilities and learning tools required are:

- Classroom set up in modular tables/groups of 4-5
- Ability to project course visuals for plenary viewing
- *[Optional]* One break-out room per group
- Flipcharts or white boards (one per group) and markers
- Post its of four (Green, yellow, pink, and red), two packs per table.
- Course facilitation supplies, e.g., name tags, markers, paper, workshop-cards in various colours/sizes, masking tape, etc.
- Common break and meal area, as applicable

Methodology and Resources

The methodology of the training will include:

- Pre-training online sessions.
- Lectures and Presentations in plenary.
- Participatory approaches using facilitated discussions.
- Group work, laptop, and discussion-based exercises.
- Scenario-based exercises to allow for practical application of information and concepts presented.
- Roleplay.

Focal Points for the coordination of the event

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Agenda (5 days course)

See annex.