

What you need to know about Assessment in Emergencies

The role of assessment in an emergency is a critical in order to determine humanitarian needs and plan operations. Assessments help to identify the most appropriate response options to an emergency and what added value CARE can bring to an emergency response. Through assessments, humanitarian organisations gain accurate data about the needs and operating context, and engage with local communities and other humanitarian actors in the affected area. Assessments provide an understanding of the disaster situation and a clear analysis of threats to life, dignity, health and livelihoods to determine in consultation with the relevant authorities, whether an external response is required, and if so, the nature of the response.

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For **CARE detailed guidelines and tools for Assessment** see

<http://www.careemergencytoolkit.org/assessment/>

For the **CARE Emergency Management Protocol on Assessment** see

http://www.careemergencytoolkit.org/needs_assessment/

What to do:

Initiating the assessment:

- ☑ Initiate the assessment as quickly as possible
- ☑ Take a good enough approach and be accountable
- ☑ Coordinate with Government, community representatives, other local and international NGOs- consider joint assessments
- ☑ Provide assistance at the same time as assessing if you can

Preparing for the assessment:

- ☑ Establish clear objectives and methodology in a terms of reference
- ☑ Choose areas assess to based on needs, impact and capacity
- ☑ Form the right team considering skills, expertise and diversity including gender and language
- ☑ Ensure clear leadership, roles and responsibilities
- ☑ Analyse the situation and put measures in place to assure the safety of the assessment team
- ☑ Ensure the right support: eg permits, transport, cash, equipment
- ☑ Ensure the team is briefed on country office capacity and strategic issues before deployment

Collecting information in the assessment in the field:

- ☑ Get the right information on: humanitarian situation, response to date and operating conditions
- ☑ Involve disaster affected people in the assessment
- ☑ Gather information from as many sources as possible
- ☑ Use appropriate data collection methods including interviews, focus groups, observation etc
- ☑ Use checklists and assessment formats as tools to help

Using the information collected:

- ☑ Ensure the data collected is analysed!
- ☑ Apply quality lenses including do no harm, conflict sensitivity and gender analysis to the data
- ☑ Make recommendations on what CARE's response should be and how it should be implemented
- ☑ Document recommendations in a report along with proposals, operating plans, budgets etc
- ☑ Share report with other stakeholders!

What not to do (...do no harm and other common mistakes!...)

- ☒ Don't be so focused on the assessment that you fail to start providing urgent relief quickly enough
- ☒ Don't duplicate the work of other agencies and burden communities with assessment overload
- ☒ Don't collect data and fail to analyse it enough to make the best recommendations

