

Household Assessment Tool – Main Components (Background Document 3 to the Prioritisation Tool)

This tool has been developed as a guideline for agencies to use in developing household assessment forms and scoring criteria. It is designed to be flexible to be adapted to the needs of the agency and the community, but to include the main components of vulnerability analysis. This tool is designed to be used at the Barangay (community) level in the selection of vulnerable households to receive assistance (not in the selection of vulnerable communities).

Among the affected population, vulnerable persons and households are those who will face increased difficulties to recover from a shock (such as Typhoon Yolanda) due to the negative interaction between personal and contextual (environmental) factors. These individuals will typically face increased difficulty assistance, and if not explicitly targeted, their needs will frequently be overlooked in the humanitarian response.

Household assessments for shelter need to take into account a person's level of vulnerability in order to provide assistance to **those who need it most**. The use of this tool in developing assessments and scoring criteria can assist agencies in ensuring their services target these individuals.

The tool is broken down into three main components:

1. Scoring Criteria: Data to be collected that should be collected and scored in order to determine a household's level of vulnerability. This will establish a quantitative score upon which to determine which households will receive assistance and to prioritize household for immediate response.

2. Relevant Information to Gather: Other relevant information to gather which may be used in a qualitative analysis. This data may need to be considered prior to selection/exclusion of beneficiaries based on scores obtained in the first section.

3. Analysis

1. Scoring Criteria

Three (3) main components which can be assessed to determine the level of vulnerability and the ability of the household to recover will be scored. These three components are:

A. Household Characteristics: Pre-existing vulnerabilities and number of persons in the household. Household characteristics are important to assess as they determine the factors inherent to the household which may make it more difficult for the household to recover from the disaster and reconstruct their shelter.

B. Socioeconomic Status: Evaluation of the household's income, assets, and other means to allow the household to recover. Socioeconomic status is important to assess as it provides both direct and indirect measures of the household's resources to recover from the disaster and some of the positive/ negative coping mechanisms the household may be using in order to recover.

C. Housing Conditions: Status of the shelter and land. Analyzing the condition of the shelter is important in determining the need for a shelter and the appropriateness of the land in which the family resides.

A. Household characteristics

Household characteristics are divided into 2 categories: composition and pre-existing vulnerabilities.

Household composition

The larger the family size increases the higher the risk of the family, with an increased risk for families with younger children.

- Number of people in the household
- Number of children under 5
- Number of children between 5 and 16

Head of household with the following criteria:

A head of household meeting any of the following criteria is more likely to have difficulty in attaining the means (financial, etc.) to recover from the shock without putting themselves or their household at increased risk. They may also have more difficulty in physically reconstructing the shelter.

Scoring for these criteria should be compounding, meaning that a head of household who meets more than one criteria receives a higher score with each criteria met.

- Older person (>60)
- Person with a physical disability or injury or reduced mobility
- Person with a sensory impairment (visual or hearing impairment)
- Person with a mental or learning disability
- Pregnant or lactating woman
- Person with chronic health condition
- Single/widowed/separated head of household
- Child (<16) head of household

Other family members with the following criteria:

Households with family members meeting any of the following criteria are more likely to have difficulty recovering due to extra resources (financial, time) needed to meet the specific needs of these individuals.

Scoring for these criteria should be compounding, meaning that a household can receive a higher score for an individual who meets more than one criteria and for more than one individual who meet the same criteria.

- Older person (>60)
- Person with a physical disability or injury or reduced mobility
- Persons with a sensory disability (visual or hearing impairment)
- Person with a mental or learning disability
- Pregnant or lactating woman
- Person with chronic health condition

Persons of marginalized groups (ethnicity, religion, political association, migrants, indigenous persons, etc.).

Marginalized groups may be less likely to receive community support to recover from the disaster and may be more likely to be excluded from service provision.

The appropriateness of criteria for marginalized groups needs to be determined based on characteristics of the community.

B. Socio Economic Status

Indicators of Socio Economic Status should be measured by both

- Change in status between directly before the disaster and the time of assessment
- Status at the time of assessment.

Socio Economic status is divided into two categories:

- Indicators reflecting increased vulnerability
- Indicators reflected increased capacity/decreased vulnerability (reverse scoring)

Indicators Reflecting Increased Vulnerability:

Security of Income

- Fixed Salary
- Seasonal
- Daily Income
- None

Household income per month by number of family members

Figures and scoring to be determined based on levels of poverty in the community.

- > #
- Between # and #
- < #

Access to WASH & other services:

Access to services is an indirect measure of a household's socioeconomic status and the means a family has to recover from a disaster.

- Lack of access to household latrine of appropriate standard (by Sphere guidelines)
- Lack of access to clean water of appropriate standard and quantity (by Sphere guidelines)
- Children not attending school (when there is a school present in the community)
- Family members in need of medical/rehabilitative care who are not able to access (when appropriate medical facilities exist).
- No access to electricity when present in community.

Access to NFI's & Food:

Access to NFI's is an indirect measure of a households' socioeconomic status.

- Lack of appropriate number of (based on number of members in the household):
 - Mats

- Blankets
- Cooking utensils
- Hygiene supplies
- Food:
 - % of household income spent on food
 - Frequency and quality of meals
 - Main source of food
 - Availability of food

Negative Coping Mechanisms:

Use of these coping mechanisms may make a family appear to be in a better condition and mask vulnerabilities.

- Selling productive assets
- Children leaving school to work
- Borrowing with interest
- Restricting food intake
- Prostitution or selling of family members

Indicators Reflecting Increased Capacity (Reverse Scoring):

Positive Coping Mechanisms:

These coping mechanisms will reduce the household's level of vulnerability thus having a reverse score.

- Selling of non-productive assets
- Reduction of non-essential spending
- Borrowing without interest
- Seeking and receiving family/community support
- Seeking and receiving outside assistance (NGO, government, etc.)

Assets:

Ownership of assets is considered a resource which can help a family recover (through the use of productive assets or selling of non-productive assets) and thus have a reverse score.

- Cash/savings
- Productive assets (farming equipment, sewing machines, etc.)
 - Farming equipment
 - Sewing machines
 - Other
- Livestock
- Means of transportation
- Furniture

Additional Sources of Income:

These are factors which will help the household recover, thus having a reverse score.

- Remittances
- Cash for Work
- Unconditional Cash
- Other

C. Housing Conditions

*** It is important to measure both the current condition of the housing situation and the change in condition of the housing situation post-disaster.*

Housing Situation

- Living in bunkhouse
- Living with host family in inappropriate living conditions (Crowded place, dignity issues, protection issues, inaccessibility for a person with reduced mobility....)
- Living under make-shift shelter
- Living in own shelter

Current House Condition (condition of own house)

- Completely/partially damaged and not rebuilt
- Completely/Partially damaged and insufficiently rebuilt
- No/minimal damage

Land Tenure

- Living on own land
- Squatting on land
- Risk of Eviction

Capacity to Reconstruct House

- Labour capacity of household/community to reconstruct house
- Knowledge/Access to information on build back safer and accessibility
- Access to building materials on local market
- Access to recyclable materials

2. Relevant Information to Gather (Not Scored)

House Location

This information is important to gather so as to determine if relocation assistance may be necessary prior to provision of shelter assistance. Households living in high-risk situations may be most in need of assistance, however, construction on the current land may not be a sustainable long term solution and may even place the household at increased risk.

- Living in flood prone area/close to riverbank
- Risk of eviction/relocation (no security over house/land)
- Living in no-build zone

Household Ability to Reconstruct Shelter if Provided with Resources

Depending on the type of shelter program, the household may need to be assessed to see if provided with the resources they are capable of rebuilding their house independently. Households composed primarily of children, people with disabilities/injuries, older persons, pregnant/lactating women or single headed households may require assistance in reconstructing their shelter.

Availability of materials on the local market and labour to reconstruct houses should be assessed to determine the type of assistance which needs to be provided. Community knowledge on build back safer and accessibility should be assessed to determine need for community awareness and training on these topics.

Previous Humanitarian Assistance Received

If the household has previously received targeted humanitarian assistance which was not provided to the entire community but still left them with a high score indicating a high level of vulnerability (ex. CGI sheets for roofing provided but received no other assistance and still high level of vulnerability) additional explanation may be needed to the community to increase community acceptance of this family receiving assistance again.

Change in condition of the shelter

If the household has started to rebuild after the disaster they may have constructed a shelter which was of lower quality than the one previously constructed or made inadequate repairs to the shelter. These persons may appear to have recovered, but in reality, are now more vulnerable to the next shock.

Individual Needs:

Some households may require specific household assistance (labour, some building materials, accessibility modifications) and some households may not require all the components of a shelter project provided by the agency. Case by case analysis of needs should be done to ensure that provision of assistance meets the needs of the population without providing assistance the population does not need (thus reducing existing coping mechanisms and wasting resources).

3. Analysis

A scoring mechanism can be assigned to select beneficiaries based on the data gathered. The scoring mechanism should take into account the three components of the scoring criteria (household characteristics, socioeconomic status, housing conditions).

Inclusionary and exclusionary levels should be determined to provide the cut-offs for those who will automatically be considered the most and least vulnerable based on analysis of the scoring criteria. For the remaining households, cases would be ideally looked at on a case-by-case basis to determine eligibility to receive shelter assistance. This will accommodate for discrepancies made in the reliability of the quantitative figures allocated in the scoring system.

The scoring system set by the agency should ideally be piloted and checked to ensure that the most vulnerable and most in need are being selected by the assessment before being used for assessment of the agency's entire project.

Attention should be paid to households meeting criteria gathered under the section on other relevant information, for examination on a case by case basis.

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