

TC Pam Initial Rapid Needs Assessment Data Collection Methodology

In general, humanitarian assessment teams have limited control over who they interact with. The initial contact with an affected community is usually with community leaders. These members become key informants (KIs) and provide information on behalf of the community when the following expectations are operational:

- When the assessment team expects the KIs to know local conditions and have the authority to share this information.
- When the community expects the KIs to handle the contact with the assessment team for the benefit of the community.

Similar to other assessments that have been conducted in the Pacific region the direct observation and key informant interview methodology is the proposed methodology to be used to collect (predominantly) quantitative primary data for the TC Pam IRA:

1.1 Direct observation, where the observer is looking for a specific behaviour, object or event, or, conversely for its non-existence. For example, the observer is looking to see whether or not the population does or does not have access to local markets. To guide a structured observation, a checklist is normally developed to function both as a reminder and a structured recording tool.

1.2 Key informant interview (KII), where an individual with prior knowledge of the affected community – typically a local leader – is questioned to gather key information on the impact of the situation and on priority community needs. Community leaders - a balanced number of women and men - participate in the interview so that the needs of both can be reflected, enhancing the accuracy and impartiality of the assessment. The local leader should lead the interview with support from other community leaders, for example, local health nurse, local teacher etc. to respond to technical questions.

2. Assessment teams are responsible for performing data entry into the simple excel database upon return from the field.

The objective of primary data collection for the TC PAM IRA

- *Gather information not available through the review of secondary data.*
- *Confirm or refute information provided by secondary data.*
- *Provide qualitative picture of humanitarian impact and identify risk factors.*
- *Identify priority groups and locations requiring immediate humanitarian response.*
- *Ensure the affected population participates in identifying priorities.*
- *Identify priority sites for further data collection and/or monitoring*

TC Pam Initial Rapid Assessment Objectives/Information Needs/Scope

1. The NDMO, together with UN agencies and NGOs, are working together in the EOC to coordinate the response, collect information, are now plan for a joint initial assessment.
2. This initial assessment will take place at the provincial level on Tues 17 March (situation/resources permitting).
3. The aim of the initial rapid assessment is to get a more detailed overview of the humanitarian situation in at the provincial level. It is will give a strategic overview of the current situation, to reach a shared understanding of the humanitarian situation, its scale and severity, and to target our response accordingly.
4. The information gathered will be used as a baseline to inform both further response decisions and funding appeals. The information of the initial assessment should be shared with all actors as appropriate.
5. The assessment team will be composed of personnel from provincial authorities - they are best-placed to discuss these issues for the entire province - and intersectoral experts for Port Vila. In practice, the assessment team members should come from a wide variety of organizations and backgrounds.
6. Assessment team members should be ready to seek information on all areas (not only on their area of their expertise), ensure the findings cover a thorough cross-section of the population (elderly, women, children, persons with disabilities) and track visual observations using the pre-defined data collection templates.
7. The assessment should not be exhaustive, consisting of a group discussion on the general sections of the form and smaller group discussions on specific areas, such as education, health. The discussion will be followed by a one-hour visual observation tour.
8. A further, more detailed sector specific assessment should follow to identify specific interventions required, for example a technical assessment of the shelter situation.

TC Pam Initial Rapid Assessment Schedule

T1	Task	Sub Task	Responsible	By when
1	Assessment Design			
	1.1	Objectives, information needs and scope	NDMO/VHT	11:00, 17 Mar
	1.4	Tool design	See NDMO/VHT IRA questionnaire	
	1.5	Secondary and Primary Analysis	NDMO/VHT/UNDAC	ongoing
	1.6	Assessment pre-departure briefing	NDMO/UNDAC	11:00, 17 Mar
2	Data collection			
	2.1	Data gathering in the field	NDMO/VHT/UNDAC	11:00, 17 Mar
	2.2	Debriefing process	NDMO/VHT/UNDAC	08:00 18 Mar
	2.3	Data entry and cleaning	NDMO/VHT/UNDAC	18:00 18 Mar
3	Analysis			
	3.3	Primary data analysis	NDMO/VHT	10:00 19 Mar
	3.4	Joint analysis	NDMO/VHT	18:00 19 Mar
4	Reporting			
	4.1	Report structure & template	UNDAC	08:00 18 Mar
	4.2	Report writing	NDMO/VHT/UNDAC	ongoing
	4.4	Presentation of the key findings	NDMO/VHT/UNDAC	08:00 20 Mar
	4.5	Report finalization	NDMO/VHT/UNDAC	12:00 20 Mar
	4.6	Report dissemination	NDMO	18:00 20 Mar

TC Pam Initial Rapid Needs Assessment Checklist and Direct Observation Summary

Site of Assessment :		Date of Assessment: (MM/DD/YYYY)				
Assessor :		Time of Assessment:				
Sector Questions						
WASH		Yes	No	Not applicable	Not observed	Comments/details/observations
	Is garbage/waste seen where people are staying?					
	Are there communal latrines at the site?					
	Are the latrines functional? (<i>visit the latrines to decide</i>)					
	Are there separate latrines for males and females?					
	Do households have clean covered water storage containers?					
	Is there a water source in the site?					
	Is there queue at the main water point/tanker?					
	Is there queue at the latrines?					
	Do people at the site appear to have access to soap and other hygiene items?					
	Is there a suitable place for women to bathe?					
	Do vectors appear to be a problem at the site?					
	Is stagnant water or blocked drainage a problem?					
	Other...					
Food		Yes	No	N/A	Not observed	Comments/details/observations
	Are markets functioning? (<i>visit the market</i>)					
	Is there food available?					
	Other....					
Protection		Yes	No	Give details		
	Are there protection risk observed at the site?					
	Are there any groups absent from public places ?					
	Boys (under 12 years)					
	Girls (under 12 years)					
	Male youth					
	Female youth					
	Women					
	Men					
	Older women (60 years and above)					
	Older men (60 years and above)					
	Persons with disabilities					
	Ethnic minorities					
	Religious minorities					
	Other (specify)					

TC Pam Initial Rapid Needs Assessment Checklist and Direct Observation Summary

Education		Yes	No	N/A	Not observed	Comments/details/observations
	Are school aged girls observed out of school during school hours?					
	Are school aged boys observed out of school during school hours?					
	Is there a school functioning at the site?					
	Other....					

Damage Questions	List main types of shelter	Describe conditions
What types of shelter are observed in the site now? (house, tent, collective centre, public building etc.)		

Walk from one end of the site to the other and record any damaged infrastructure observed and in what condition – add comments where appropriate. (eg destroyed, damaged, functioning, not observed)

Infrastructure	Comments
School buildings	
Health centres	
Religious buildings	
Bridges	
Roads	
Main Water Points	
Other....	

Other observations

TC PAM Initial Rapid Needs Assessment

Technical Brief – Dos and don'ts of direct observation

Do

- ❑ **Avoid pre-conceived notions and fixed expectations.**
- ❑ **Note what is seen and what people say even if the subject is not of immediate concern. Follow the advice of people met during the visits. Use the opportunity to observe things that were not planned.**
- ❑ **Walk around the community outside of predefined roads, paths or natural boundaries to have a balanced view of conditions.**
- ❑ **Record contradictory or unexpected information.**
- ❑ **Keep focused and active during observation.**
- ❑ **Be curious! Observation is not just about seeing, but also about hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling and touching.**
- ❑ **Be aware of what has not been seen. Record the lack of services and infrastructure.**
- ❑ **Respect local culture. Assessors are observed as much as they are observing. Follow local rules of behaviour. Be aware of gender dynamics and make sure that the assessment team reflects the same dynamics.**
- ❑ **Be sensitive to local concerns. For example, assessor should not eat or drink in public if there is a shortage of food and water.**

Don't

- ❑ **Begin with expectations of what is going to be seen or record data chiefly to prove a pre-existing hypothesis.**
- ❑ **Rely on memory but write down observations on a checklist or record sheet. Record both what is seen and what was expected but not seen.**
- ❑ **Focus solely on misery and destitution. Be aware of capacities, opportunities and social capital within the affected community.**
- ❑ **Be intrusive. Take steps to be as sensitive and respectful as possible: observation should be as discreet as possible.**
- ❑ **Take a picture without asking permission first.**