TERMS OF REFERENCE

EVALUATION OF THE ADEQUACY, APPROPRIATENESS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF ASSESSMENTS IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS TO GUIDE THE RESPONSES TO ASSIST PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THE TSUNAMI

1.0. Background

The Tsunami catastrophe that struck Asia on 26 December 2004 is one of the worst natural disasters in modern history. Although the major impact was felt in India, Indonesia, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, several other countries were affected including Myanmar and Somalia, or touched by the tsunami including Bangladesh, Kenya, Malaysia, Seychelles, and Tanzania. In total, more than 170,000 people are thought to have died. Overall, an estimated 2 million people have been directly or indirectly affected of whom 1.7 million are internally displaced[1]. Damage and destruction to infrastructure destroyed people's livelihoods, and left many homeless or without adequate water, sanitation, food or healthcare facilities.

The world - both governments and people - responded with unprecedented generosity, in solidarity with the rescue and relief efforts of the affected communities and local and national authorities. This has been instrumental in reducing or mitigating the consequences of the disaster, and in boosting the current recovery and rehabilitation efforts.

2.0. Purpose and Scope

This evaluation is undertaken as part of the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition.

The present joint evaluation will look at the extent to which responses to the Tsunami disaster were informed by timely, transparent, comprehensive, accurate and coordinated impact and needs assessments. This would be most appropriately analysed jointly through a multi-sectoral approach. Indeed, most disaster assessments carried out in the past have focused on the use of sectoral/sub-sectoral or agency approaches to emergency crises, with a subsequent reduction in their effectiveness to respond to the affected population’s real needs. Reality on the ground calls for a more holistic and integrated analysis and thus, response.

"Needs assessment" is categorised as: immediate assessments carried out during the first seven days and more structured assessments carried out during the subsequent three months.

The **purpose** of the evaluation is as follows:

- To assess the extent to which immediate and longer-term agency and donor responses and strategies were guided by timely, relevant and adequate needs assessments (what was done well and why, and what could have been done better and how);
- To assess the extent to which information from needs assessments was brought together and available in a form which could be used by the main actors;
- To determine whether the needs assessments were well-coordinated and complementary;
- To make recommendations to humanitarian agencies and donors for improving how needs are assessed in sudden onset emergencies;and

[1] Figures for numbers dead and missing taken from Guha-Sapir, Van Panhuis, *“Health Impact of the Tsunami: Indonesia 2005”*. Brussels Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, July 2005

- Within the larger system-wide evaluation effort, the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition, to serve as a pilot and possible future model for system-wide interagency evaluations.

The users of the evaluation results are humanitarian actors (UN, NGOs and donors) and possibly the affected national governments.

The **scope** of this evaluation is as follows:

The emphasis of the evaluation will be on the needs assessments carried out by agencies/actors involved and their priority setting for immediate and longer-term responses.

The evaluation will look at the needs assessments carried out during the first three months of the humanitarian response, from 26 December 2004 to 31 March 2005 to determine the effect on people's lives and livelihoods and their needs. The study will also take into account supplies provided and needs addressed/met prior to any needs assessments conducted (for example, local actors and military).

The evaluation will include two levels of analysis. On the one hand, the evaluation will examine the extent to which needs assessments guided the decision-making on the planning and programming of the response. On the other hand it will also look at country level to extent to which needs assessed were reflected in the response and met the actual needs of the affected populations.

Assessments of needs of the humanitarian response will be reviewed, taking into account such aspects of the response as: shelter, food, security, health (including malnourishment, malnutrition and morbidity), protection issues (including sexual and gender-based violence), livelihood recovery and targeted longer term solutions for the most affected groups (including orphans and the aged).

The evaluation will carry out four case studies: two in Aceh, Indonesia (one that was easily accessed and the other that was accessed only after some days) and two in Sri Lanka (one that was easily accessed and the other that was accessed only after some days).

The evaluation is expected to provide examples of good practice: practice-to-be-avoided as well as targeted recommendations to the humanitarian community on how to adopt the lessons and insights identified by this evaluation.

3.0. Evaluation Criteria

Each of the key issues shall be evaluated using the following evaluation criteria as appropriate: **Timeliness, efficiency, effectiveness, appropriateness, coherence, value-added, and connectedness**. Gender perspectives will be systematically included throughout the evaluation.

4.0. Key Issues

4.1 Quality of Impact and Needs Assessments

- Quality of the assessment: was the coverage of the needs and damage assessment sufficiently comprehensive? Did the assessments lead to an adequate understanding of who was affected, where they were and what their immediate needs were?
- How adequately were anticipated risks assessed (vulnerabilities, potential for outbreaks, etc)? Were assessed needs and risks accurate?
- To what extent was local knowledge and capacity used in carrying out the needs assessments?

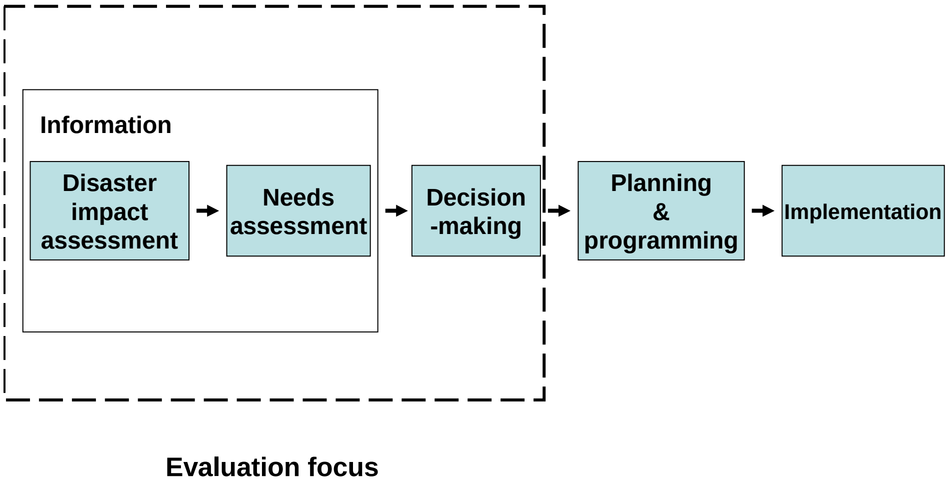
- To what extent were local capacities (e.g., local expertise, family ties and support, etc.) taken into account in identifying the needs for assistance?
- Were there any unassessed needs (either in terms of geographic coverage or population groups)?
- Did the assessed needs correspond to the actual needs of the populations?
- Was the timing of disaster impact and needs assessment appropriate?
- Were the assessments (and recommendations) appropriately grounded in an analysis of contexts, e.g., social issues (cast, illegal immigrants, conflict, politics, gender issues, etc.)?
- To what extent did analysis reflect a longer term perspective?
- What assessment mechanisms were put in place after the immediate rapid assessments?
- How adequate were the surveillance mechanisms and other subsequent assessments or surveys in directing/adjusting the responses?
- Were there distinct differences in the assessment processes between the most important affected countries?

4.2 Complementarity and Coordination

- Did assessment methodologies make use of existing frameworks for needs assessment in emergencies, such as: the Needs Analysis Framework (NAF) developed for the Consolidated Appeals Process; the UNDG Framework for Multilateral Needs Assessments in Post-conflict Situations; the Standardized Monitoring & Assessment of Relief & Transitions (SMART) Initiative; and frameworks and approaches developed by NGOs addressing sectoral needs (e.g., CARE, Oxfam food security and agricultural needs or other national and international standards to determine appropriate interventions like the Sphere handbook). Were these methodologies reconciled for commonality of use?
- Did any of the assessment methodologies use any guidelines prepared from a gender sensitive perspective?
- To what extent assessments by sector and by beneficiary group were comprehensive?
- To what extent overlapping assessments were consistent or contradictory?
- How did needs assessments relate to those done by national governments? Were findings similar or different? Why, if at all, were they different?
- Were the needs assessments coordinated and complementary to the extent feasible in the aftermath of the disaster?

4.3 Effectiveness and Use of Needs Assessments

- Were there coherent and effective mechanisms for the sharing and dissemination of the results of needs assessment in place?
- Use and users of assessment(s): who are the user(s)? What information/ analysis did they particularly value? What were the gaps?
- To what extent were assessments useful to formulate responses including alternative options (relief/recovery)? Were assessments used to formulate clear strategies on what needed to be done as priority to deal with the direct consequences (loss of shelter, the injured and the dead, etc.)?
- Who made the strategies, based on what information, to what effect? How did these assessments relate to the planning of flash appeals?
- Did the needs assessments inform the design and targeting of emergency and early recovery responses? If not, why not?
- To what extent were funding decisions (pledges and commitments) based on the needs assessments?



5.0. Links to Other Thematic Studies

There are linkages with the other thematic studies. In particular, this evaluation covers issues of coordination (complementarity) in needs assessments processes and uses. It also addresses issues relating to funding and the extent to which donors' decision-making and strategy formulation/setting of priorities was guided and informed by objective needs assessments. Finally, the evaluation links with the LRRD thematic group in respect of connectedness issues in carrying out needs assessments.

6.0. Management

The needs assessment evaluation will be managed by the SDC, WHO and FAO (the "Steering Committee") together with guidance from the "Working Group" (comprising various agencies and donors. The Steering Committee main tasks are to:

- Ensure an inclusive process to finalize the TOR
- Assist in the mobilisation of resources (financial and in-kind)
- Participate in the selection of team members (identifying the team and ensuring quality throughout the process)
- Consult on key issues regarding this evaluation
- Advise their own agencies and staff on this evaluation as well as coordinate agency internal substantive feedback to the group
- Participate in any workshop that may be planned once the draft report has been received
- Ensure ongoing communication with the working group
- Ensure integration into and coherence with the wider TEC evaluation

Financial and administrative aspects of the evaluation will be managed by WHO.

7.0 Evaluation Team and Methodology

It is proposed that the evaluation team would consist of three international evaluation experts, covering between them expertise in assessments of immediate needs including those for food, shelter, health, water, restoration of livelihoods and food security, public health, infrastructure, security and cross-cutting issues of gender. One of the three consultants will be Team Leader. A Research Assistant will carry out the background and preparatory work. National consultants will join the core team during each of the country case studies.

The team will make use of the following methodologies:

- Inventory, categorisation and selection of the most important needs assessments made during the first three months; In addition to comprehensive multi-sector assessments, attention will be given to assessments relating to health, food security , agriculture and fisheries;
- Desk review of the quality and methodologies of the assessment reports based on an agreed set of criteria;
- Consultation of beneficiaries in the three affected countries;
- Identify and interview key stakeholders, and in particular decision-makers, in the three affected countries as well as in donor and agency headquarters;
- Visits to the disaster-affected areas in Sri Lanka and western Sumatra. It is proposed that in Sri Lanka and Indonesia, the team will do an in-depth study in two respective locations: one that was reached by the international community during the first days, and a second where it took a week or longer for the first international assessment and response teams to arrive; and
- Focus group discussions with stratified opinion sampling will be part of the methodology.

For comparison purpose, it is important that a consistent methodology be applied in the two countries visited.

8.0 Tentative Time Schedule

Starting Date (desk review): September
Field missions: October

Time Schedule for the Research Assistant: Early September
2 days briefing in Rome or Geneva with the Steering Committee
4 weeks desk review, including inventory, identification of interviewees and missions preparation

Time Schedule for the Team Leader: September
2 days briefing in Rome or Geneva with the Steering Committee
2 day workshop in London with the TEC Evaluation Advisor and Coordinator, and the other study team leaders
3 weeks desk review including an inception report
2 weeks Sri Lanka (including a national workshop)
3 weeks Aceh (including a national workshop)
2 weeks writing reports
2 days London participating in synthesis report workshop

Time Schedule for the Two Evaluators: September
2 days briefing in Rome or Geneva with the Steering Committee
2 weeks desk review including an inception report
2 weeks Sri Lanka (including a national workshop)
3 weeks Aceh (including a national workshop)
1 week writing reports

Draft report submitted end of November

Debate on draft report in the December ALNAP biannual
Finalise report
Integration in TEC synthesis report end December

9.0 Outputs

A report of no more than 30 pages, excluding an executive summary of no more than 3 pages and annexes. For further guidance for the report, see ALNAP guidance.
The final report will be made available on the dedicated website, and disseminated through all appropriate channels.

10.0 Use of the evaluation report

The evaluation report will be a stand alone report. Preliminary findings and recommendations will be presented to the Steering Group and the Working Group. It will also be discussed with agencies.

Findings will inform the dialogue shared between humanitarian partners in forums such as the SMART initiative, the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative, the Sphere Project, etc.

Findings will enable donor agencies to better analyse, prioritise and assess proposals project received from humanitarian partners.

Finally, the report will be presented at relevant inter-agency fora, e.g., the November IASC meeting and the December ALNAP meeting. The report will also feed into the TEC synthesis report – planned to be available in draft form by late December 2005.

Total costs rough estimate 160,000$