

Certification Exam Content Outline: Certification in Humanitarian Needs Assessment

FINAL (15 September 2017)

Domain 1: Understanding humanitarian needs assessments

Humanitarian practitioners conducting needs assessments must be able to:

1.1 Recognize the definitions, objectives, and components of humanitarian needs assessments.

- 1.1.a Recognize the main ways of defining humanitarian needs assessments.
- 1.1.b Formulate the aim of a needs assessment (the research objective).
- 1.1.c Recognize common components in different approaches to humanitarian needs assessments.
- 1.1.d Recognize the components of the “assessment cycle.”

1.2 Recognize types of needs assessments and their appropriate uses.

- 1.2.a Recognize the types of needs assessments by timeframe, scope, and level of coordination.
- 1.2.b Recognize the main types of joint needs assessments.
- 1.2.c Recognize the main differences in approach between organizational assessments and cluster/multi-cluster/inter-agency assessments.

1.3 Recognize global standards that guide and inform humanitarian needs assessments.

- 1.3.a Recognize global standards that guide and inform humanitarian needs assessments.

1.4 Recognize the ways that core humanitarian principles (humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence) inform needs assessments.

- 1.4.a Recognize the overall role of humanitarian principles in guiding humanitarian needs assessments.
- 1.4.b Recognize common types of dilemmas related to humanitarian principles faced in humanitarian needs assessments.
- 1.4.c Identify other common principles and ethical considerations in humanitarian needs assessments.

1.5 Recognize the relationship between timeliness and accuracy in needs assessment and how this impacts decision-making.

- 1.5.a Recognize the relative need for accuracy in information at different stages of an emergency.
- 1.5.b Recognize differences in approach for needs assessments for sudden onset, slow onset, and protracted crises.
- 1.5.c Recognize the implications of conducting a “good enough” assessment.

1.6 Recognize ways in which preparedness can strengthen needs assessment processes.

- 1.6.a Identify information management tools that can strengthen preparedness for needs assessments.
- 1.6.b Identify other measures that can strengthen preparedness for needs assessments.

1.7 Identify common criticisms of humanitarian needs assessment and how these criticisms can be addressed.

- 1.7a Identify the main criticism related to lack of coordination, bias, relevance, unsound methodologies, and accountability and ethics.
- 1.7b Identify strategies to address the criticism related to lack of coordination, bias, relevance, unsound methodologies and accountability and ethics.

Domain 2: Planning needs assessments

Humanitarian practitioners conducting needs assessments must be able to:

2.1 Recognize which data is essential or non-essential for a specific research objective.

- 2.1.a Recognize which data is essential or non-essential for a specific research objective.
- 2.1.b Estimate time and resources required to collect and analyze different kinds of data.

2.2 Identify the roles of stakeholders involved in needs assessments.

- 2.2.a Recognize the roles of the main types of stakeholders relevant to needs assessments.
- 2.2.b Recognize stakeholder identification tools.

2.3 Identify the main types of secondary data relevant to a needs assessment and the support services for secondary data review.

- 2.3.a Identify common categories and sources of secondary data.
- 2.3.b Identify support services for secondary data review.
- 2.3.c Recognize factors that affect the trustworthiness of secondary data.

2.4 Recognize the uses for historical data, trends, and baselines in humanitarian needs assessments.

2.4.a Recognize the uses for historical data, trends, and baselines in humanitarian needs assessments.

2.5 Recognize techniques for primary data collection and their purposes, strengths, and limitations.

2.5.a Identify the main techniques for primary data collection in humanitarian needs assessments.

2.5.b Recognize the purposes, strengths, and limitations of different techniques.

2.5.c Recognize the main challenges in reconciliation of data from different techniques.

2.6 Identify the financial and human resources necessary for data collection, analysis, and dissemination.

2.6.a Identify the financial and human resources required for primary data collection, secondary data collection, analysis, dissemination, and community engagement and feedback.

2.7 Recognize common categories for disaggregating data and the implications for data collection and analysis.

2.7.a Recognize common dimensions for disaggregating data and how they can be operationalized.

2.7.b Recognize the impact of the disaggregation approach on both data collection/analysis timing and required resources.

2.8 Identify methods to involve stakeholders in the design, data collection, and analysis.

2.8.a Identify methods to involve stakeholders in assessment design, data collection, and analysis.

Domain 3: Data collection for needs assessments

Humanitarian practitioners conducting needs assessments must be able to:

3.1 Identify relevant ICT tools for humanitarian needs assessments and their implications for data collection.

3.1.a Identify commonly used data collection platforms and the critical factors related to platform choice.

3.2 Recognize appropriate sampling techniques for humanitarian needs assessments.

3.2.a Identify the different types of sampling used in humanitarian needs assessments and their implications for data collection and analysis.

3.2.b Recognize key considerations for mapping out and selecting key informants.

3.3 Recognize implementation considerations when conducting direct observation data collection.

3.3.a Recognize which data needs are suitably addressed by direct observation.

3.3.b Recognize the different forms of direct observation for data collection and the main considerations for carrying them out.

3.3.c Recognize considerations when triangulating direct observation results.

3.4 Recognize the main considerations for carrying out interviews.

3.4.a Recognize which data needs are suitably addressed by different types of interviews.

3.4.b Identify different interview types and their implications.

3.4.c Recognize the risk of bias in interviews and methods for minimizing this risk.

3.4.d Recognize the risk of gate-keepers and methods to avoid them.

3.4.e Recognize considerations in triangulating interview results.

3.4.f Recognize best practice for seeking consent and respecting confidentiality in interviews.

3.4.g Recognize the appropriateness of questions for specific research objectives.

3.5 Recognize the different forms of participatory assessment methods and the associated considerations.

3.5.a Recognize which data needs are suitably addressed by participatory assessment methods.

3.5.b Identify different types of participatory assessment methods.

3.5.c Identify tools to assist with participatory assessments.

3.5.d Recognize considerations in triangulating participatory assessment results.

3.6 Recognize methods for compiling and organizing data.

3.6.a Recognize best practice for compiling and organizing data.

3.6.b Identify methods for consolidating datasets using different indicators and levels.

Domain 4: Analytical frameworks and assessment reporting

Humanitarian practitioners conducting needs assessments must be able to:

4.1 Summarize data and compare subgroups using descriptive analytics.

- 4.1.a Identify key descriptive statistics and when to use them.
- 4.1.b Develop an analysis plan for quantitative data.

4.2 Recognize methods for interpreting and analyzing results.

- 4.2.a Recognize how explanatory, interpretive, and anticipatory analysis can be used to interpret assessment results.
- 4.2.b Recognize methods for involving other stakeholders in the analysis and interpretation of results.

4.3 Recognize methods for validating assessment results with those affected by crisis.

- 4.3.a Recognize methods for validating assessment results with those affected by crisis.

4.4 Describe an analysis in an easily understandable manner.

- 4.4.a Recognize different audience needs and modify presentation and analysis accordingly to maximize effective communication.
- 4.4.b Recognize appropriate ways for simplifying descriptions of methodology and limitations for different audiences and different types of assessments.

4.5 Recognize appropriate channels for dissemination of results.

- 4.5.a Identify common opportunities for dissemination.
- 4.5.b Recognize how results can feed into online data sharing platforms.

Domain 5: Sector-specific needs assessments

Humanitarian practitioners conducting needs assessments must be able to:

5.1 Recognize key terminology, indicators, thresholds and methodologies for assessing needs related to nutrition.

- 5.1.a Identify key terminology and concepts related to nutrition needs assessments.
- 5.1.b Identify key sources of information relevant to indicators, thresholds, and methodologies for assessing needs related to nutrition.
- 5.1.c Identify key sources of expertise for nutrition needs assessments.
- 5.1.d Recognize common challenges related to nutrition needs assessments.

5.2 Recognize key terminology, indicators, thresholds and methodologies for assessing needs related to food security.

- 5.2.a Identify key terminology and concepts related to food security needs assessments.
- 5.2.b Identify key sources of information relevant to indicators, thresholds, and methodologies for assessing needs related to food security.
- 5.2.c Identify key sources of expertise for food security needs assessments.
- 5.2.d Recognize common challenges related to food security needs assessments.

5.3 Recognize key terminology, indicators, thresholds and methodologies for assessing needs related to health.

- 5.3.a Identify key terminology and concepts related to health assessments.
- 5.3.b Identify key sources of information relevant to indicators, thresholds, and methodologies for assessing needs related to health.
- 5.3.c Identify key sources of expertise for health needs assessments.
- 5.3.d Recognize common challenges related to health needs assessments.

5.4 Recognize key terminology, indicators, thresholds and methodologies for assessing needs related to water, sanitation, and hygiene.

- 5.4.a Identify key terminology and concepts related to WASH assessments.
- 5.4.b Identify key sources of information relevant to indicators, thresholds, and methodologies for assessing needs related to WASH.
- 5.4.c Identify key sources of expertise for WASH needs assessments.
- 5.4.d Recognize common challenges related to WASH needs assessments.

5.5 Recognize key terminology, indicators, thresholds and methodologies for assessing needs related to shelter.

- 5.5.a Identify key terminology and concepts related to shelter assessments.
- 5.5.b Identify key sources of information relevant to indicators, thresholds, and methodologies for assessing needs related to shelter.
- 5.5.c Identify key sources of expertise for shelter needs assessments.
- 5.5.d Recognize common challenges related to shelter needs assessments.

5.6 Recognize key terminology, indicators, thresholds and methodologies for assessing needs related to education.

- 5.6.a Identify key terminology and concepts related to education.
- 5.6.b Identify key sources of information relevant to indicators, thresholds, and methodologies for assessing needs related to education.
- 5.6.c Identify key sources of expertise for education needs assessments.
- 5.6.d Recognize common challenges related to education needs assessments.

5.7 Recognize key terminology, indicators, thresholds and methodologies for assessing needs related to protection.

5.7.a Identify key terminology and concepts related to protection.

5.7.b Identify key sources of information relevant to indicators, thresholds, and methodologies for assessing needs related to protection.

5.7.c Identify key sources of expertise for protection needs assessments.

5.7.d Recognize common challenges related to protection needs assessments.