



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation



United Nations

Standard Operating Procedures for Coordination of Emergency Response to Internally Displaced Persons

28 May 2019

1. Basis and objective of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

This procedure has been developed by the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR) in cooperation with the Office of State Minister for Disaster Management (ANDMA), Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), and the humanitarian community, based on the National IDP policy.

In view of the National IDP policy,¹ this procedure outlines how activities (assessment, survey and provision of assistance to IDP households) shall be coordinated and carried out between MoRR, local authorities and humanitarian organizations who are responding to the needs of people displaced by conflict or natural disaster events throughout the country.

In accordance with the National IDP policy, ANDMA is the institutional lead for addressing the urgent and short-term needs of people affected and displaced by natural disasters. ANDMA is responsible for responding and organizing the emergency affairs for the first 72 hours and for the declaration of the end of the emergency situation. If needed, ANDMA, in consultation with MoRR, can extend the emergency response period. Following the initial 72 hours, the primary responsibility shifts to MoRR.

MoRR together with national institutions and humanitarian organizations aim to coordinate alert, verification and assessment procedures to ensure appropriate responses to new IDPs.

The United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator, supported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and, where appropriate, delegated humanitarian partners, coordinates the response of non-governmental humanitarian organizations to the needs of the displaced, in collaboration with MoRR and other organizations.

Moving forward, the system of receiving petitions from IDPs will no longer be the sole and primary basis for the provision of emergency humanitarian assistance. The new mechanism is an alert-based system for emergency assistance explained below under section 2. The petition system will remain a mechanism for the registration of longer-term displaced population by the provincial Directorates of Refugees and Repatriation (DoRR) to support sustainable solutions. Under these SOPs, all assessments and responses must be carried out in accordance with humanitarian principles.²

2. Notification of New Displacement: Establishment of an Alert System

According to this new model of identifying and responding to IDPs, it is expected that information on newly displaced people will come from a variety of sources including the following:

¹The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, National Policy on Internally Displaced Persons <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/document/afghanistan-national-policy-internally-displaced-persons>

²See sections 4.5b, 6.2. and Principle 25.2 of the National IDP Policy for further information on adherence to international humanitarian law and respect for humanitarian principles. Government authorities should not be involved where partners have concerns that violations of humanitarian principles will occur (such as interference with households assessed or appropriation of sensitive beneficiary data). No sensitive data should be shared with government actors, unless populations of concern have given informed consent.



- Contact centers at the community level
- MORR and ANDMA provincial offices
- District and provincial government offices
- Security organizations
- Humanitarian and development organizations
- The IDPs themselves, including through the inter-agency call center (AWAAZ)

Information will be collected by DoRRs, OCHA and humanitarian partners based on the information provided by the sources above. Based on their capacity and local information, these actors can verify the information or refer the case to a partner organization. The concerned provincial DoRR, OCHA or implementing humanitarian organizations will collect information about the date, location and humanitarian consequences of an incident and will try to verify them through different sources in the locality.³ Other reliable sources that can verify the reports about IDPs include humanitarian organizations, NGOs or organizations based in an affected area where they were previously or are currently engaged in providing assistance to IDPs.⁴

Once the veracity of an alert is established, organisations will report it to the relevant DoRR and OCHA offices (or the UN Humanitarian Coordinator's delegate where appropriate). While acknowledging the leading role of MoRR in responding to the needs of recent IDPs, an Operational Coordination Team (OCT) meeting will be called within three days of a verified alert. Joint assessment teams will subsequently be formed to assess the needs of the affected population. In provinces where OCHA does not have presence, another representative organization will be nominated to help expedite response activities. The TORs and membership of OCTs are currently being reviewed and will be shared with relevant organizations once revised.

3. Joint Assessments

At the initial OCT meeting, humanitarian organizations should be notified that a verified alert has been received. An emergency assessment team involving available partners from DoRR and humanitarian organizations will be arranged, recognising the primary responsibility and lead role of MoRR. It is preferred that assessment teams are co-led by DORR and humanitarian organisations. If DORR is not able to be involved, assessments can proceed with humanitarian organisations only and DORR will be informed by email of this plan. To support maximum participation of the concerned DoRR/ANDMA staff in the assessment teams, the regional OCHA field offices should, within their scope of work, make early planning arrangements together with

³ During the first few months of the introduction of this system and by the time the humanitarian organizations assume a more active position regarding the identification and verification of the internally displaced persons and creation of information networks, there is a need for a phased process. Since this process is based on verification system in which local councils play an important role, awareness should be created among district development councils and other councils about the humanitarian principles and standards with regard to IDPs. Responsibility for creating awareness will lie with the partner humanitarian organizations operating in the particular geographic area, with support from OCHA and MoRR. It is predicted that the partner humanitarian organizations will benefit from contacting with other active organizations which implement development programs of the Citizens' Charter and the organizations which work with the National Disaster Management Authority.

⁴ In the process of verification of displacement, this fact should be established that the displaced persons are coming from the area where fighting or natural disaster has taken place.




these provincial directorates. In the interests of delivering timely assistance to IDPs, unavailability of one party (for valid reasons) should not delay assessments where others are ready and able to deploy assessors. If possible, and providing it doesn't cause unnecessary delay, the participation of women and protection staff in the joint assessment team should be encouraged. Humanitarian needs assessments should take place within eight days of the initial displacement. Where possible, distributions of assistance can take place simultaneously with assessments to ensure verified and assessed IDPs receive help as soon as possible.

The main objective of the joint assessment is to verify as soon as possible the needs of newly displaced persons in order to save lives. The inter-agency HEAT form is the standard tool to be used for collection of data on the need for emergency assistance.⁵ To support quick understanding and analysis of needs, the use of mobile phone/tablets for the collection of data is highly recommended. It is recommended that all members of assessment teams use the same modality where possible. If tablets are being used by members of the humanitarian community for assessments, it is requested that DoRR staff members are supported to get familiarized with the use of tablets and that they are provided with tablets where possible and available to build their capacity in the use of these tools. If printed HEAT forms are used, the humanitarian organization assigned as the assessment co-lead in the OCT has the responsibility to quickly computerize the assessment results to support analysis.

In all joint assessments beneficiary selection depends on the collective decision of the assessment teams.

4. Response planning

If due to access limitations, one partner organization has completed a verification and conducted an assessment and the identified needs are within their capacity, they can, subject to an agreement of the OCT, respond immediately so that affected people receive assistance as quickly as possible. However, these responding agency/ies should also inform DoRR and OCHA of the response details if this approach is taken.

If a more coordinated response by multiple actors is required, OCHA will share the assessment findings with humanitarian agencies and DoRRs and work with the relevant clusters to facilitate an appropriate response based on immediate humanitarian needs. In the ideal situation, the completion of the response planning process should not take more than 48 hours. Humanitarian actors and the Government (MoRR and ANDMA offices) should share their response capacity and capabilities to help ensure the response plan is realistic.

Except for the first 72 hours when ANDMA is responsible, according to this standard operating procedure, assistance should always be provided to newly displaced persons after their needs are assessed and confirmed by a reputed OCT partner in coordination with DoRRs and OCHA.

⁵ These operational procedures accept that the Rapid Assessment Form (RAF) is used for assessing the needs of natural disaster affected households.



OCHA and MoRR will work with the other stakeholders to ensure that the response meets the needs of the affected population and that the type and delivery of the assistance is safe and culturally suitable. This includes ensuring the safety of the distribution points. These should be away from military/ security posts and have suitable facilities like toilets and shade for the protection of health and human dignity and be as close to the affected population as possible. Specific lines should be established for prioritized distribution to vulnerable groups such as female-headed households, children, pregnant and lactating women, people with a disability, and the elderly. Waiting times should be kept to a minimum. Ethical standards for photos and videos, including obtaining informed consent should be considered before capturing and dissemination of such material by government and humanitarian actors.

5. Information sharing and monitoring

- DoRRs has the responsibility to monitor the operations of organisations working with repatriation and IDPs affairs.
- For emergency responses, information on the number of IDPs that were reported and verified, their identified needs by sector and assistance distributed, should be reflected in the common data tracking regularly produced by the humanitarian community and should be shared with MoRR. This data should be collected, stored and shared according to humanitarian standards.
- Beneficiary-specific information should be handled in accordance with the humanitarian community's data sharing policy which is currently under development. A first draft of this policy is due for completion by the end of August 2019. Informed consent must be provided by beneficiaries on use of their information.

6. Implementation

This Procedure shall be distributed by MoRR to all national and international entities following its presentation to the Displacement and Returnee Executive Committee (DiREC). National and international organizations are obliged to implement it.

Any proposed change to this SOP needs to be approved by MoRR and the UN Humanitarian Coordinator, on behalf of the humanitarian community. This procedure will be updated, as needed, to reflect new approaches in response to the needs of displaced people.



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