

# IASC Guidelines on the Humanitarian Profile Common Operational Dataset

Endorsed by IASC IM Task Force 20-Jun-2011

Dataset	Recommended Governance	Data Characteristics
Humanitarian Profile (disaggregated by admin level and populated place)	-Guardian: OCHA -Sponsor: OCHA -Source: Government, Assessments, UNHCR, IOM	See Annex A for details

## Introduction

1. The humanitarian profile is fundamentally an attempt to account for, on an ongoing basis, the number of people having humanitarian needs arising from a given emergency. It can be thought of as humanitarian caseload. It is essentially a count of the number of “affected” people in the emergency. Because people may be affected in many different ways by an emergency, different groups are identified within the humanitarian profile, such as displaced, non-displaced, injured, missing, and dead.

2. The humanitarian profile dataset is unique among the common operational datasets in its operational importance to the humanitarian community, the dynamic nature of its data and the way its composition may vary according to the operational context and priorities of a particular emergency. The humanitarian profile includes the numbers of affected, missing, dead, and injured persons, where the affected category has sub-groups of importance for humanitarian response. The purpose is to provide, in a predictable way, numbers that can facilitate humanitarian planning and needs assessment.<sup>1</sup>

3. The humanitarian profile dataset should not be confused with the various info-graphics and situation reports that can be generated from it. The CODs are datasets from which analytical products can be made, not the products themselves. As such, the typical users of the CODs are information managers or reporting staff that can use the datasets to produce decision support products.<sup>2</sup>

4. The humanitarian profile is a potentially politically sensitive dataset in that the numbers of affected people may be seen to reflect on the capacities of national governments or international actors. The humanitarian profile numbers may have financial implications in terms of donor funding. It is the responsibility of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) or delegated individual to decide how political concerns impact any Humanitarian Profile datasets that are published and address these concerns appropriately. Effectively, the HP needs not only a sound and documented technical basis but also the political approval from the HC as well as the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT).

5. This guidance is intended to complement the IASC Common Operational Dataset policy<sup>3</sup> and to provide more detailed information for the efficient and effective integration of the Humanitarian Profile dataset into emergency operations.

<sup>1</sup> IASC Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises

<http://onerresponse.info/resources/NeedsAssessment/publicdocuments/Operational%20Guidance%20for%20Endorsement%20-%20Final%20Version.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Operational Guidance Note on Information Management

<http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/downloaddoc.aspx?docID=4911&type=pdf>

<sup>3</sup> IASC Guidelines on Common Operational Datasets (CODs) in Disaster Preparedness and Response

<http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/downloaddoc.aspx?docID=5576&type=pdf>

## **Governance**

6. Unlike the other common operational datasets, the Humanitarian Profile cannot be compiled before the onset of an emergency. However, data preparedness activities should include the compilation of inputs needed to generate estimations of the humanitarian profile, particularly population statistics (itself one of the CODs). Data preparedness should also include humanitarian profile estimates for likely emergency scenarios.

7. While basic governance for the dataset is outlined in the COD policy, it is important to quickly establish field governance mechanisms and define roles and responsibilities for the active management of the Humanitarian Profile.

8. At the onset of an emergency response in a country with existing humanitarian presence, the HCT or cluster lead working group should task the IM Network (or a sub-group, see below) to:

- a. choose the humanitarian profile classes (see below) that are appropriate to the emergency and adjust definitions if needed;
- b. establish geographical reference by deciding which administrative levels or other geographic reference (populated places, IDP camps, etc.) will be used to disaggregate the humanitarian profile values;
- c. endorse methods for estimating humanitarian profile values; and
- d. actively promote the standardized use of the Humanitarian Profile COD across all humanitarian actors.

9. Note that a working sub-group of the IM Network, one comprised only of organizations collecting population statistical data, may need to be established in order to facilitate interagency agreement on humanitarian profile figures and/or the methodologies used to estimate them.

10. In countries where there is no existing humanitarian presence, the governance decisions described above may be made by remote IM support. These decisions can be modified when the IM network convenes in-country.

11. Because the Humanitarian Profile is potentially politically sensitive, the HC or a designated individual shall be responsible for the final approval of Humanitarian Profile numbers before publishing.

## **Methods and Maintenance**

12. Post event, the Humanitarian Profile dataset is initially derived from proxy indicators, rapid estimations, initial assessments and/or geospatial analysis. This dataset will need to be revised as affected population monitoring systems produce new figures and more comprehensive needs assessment information is collected and made available. The Humanitarian Profile Support Package will provide a summary of methods that can be used to produce the Humanitarian Profile.

13. The Humanitarian Profile Support Package includes:

- a. A collection of case studies on how humanitarian profile numbers have been produced in various operational settings
- b. Links to reference material

14. This material will be complemented with additional best practices as they are identified.

15. It is recognized that this guidance may require update as the use of the Common Operational Datasets in the field matures. This guidance will be evaluated and updated if necessary on an annual basis.

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## Annex A: Data Characteristics

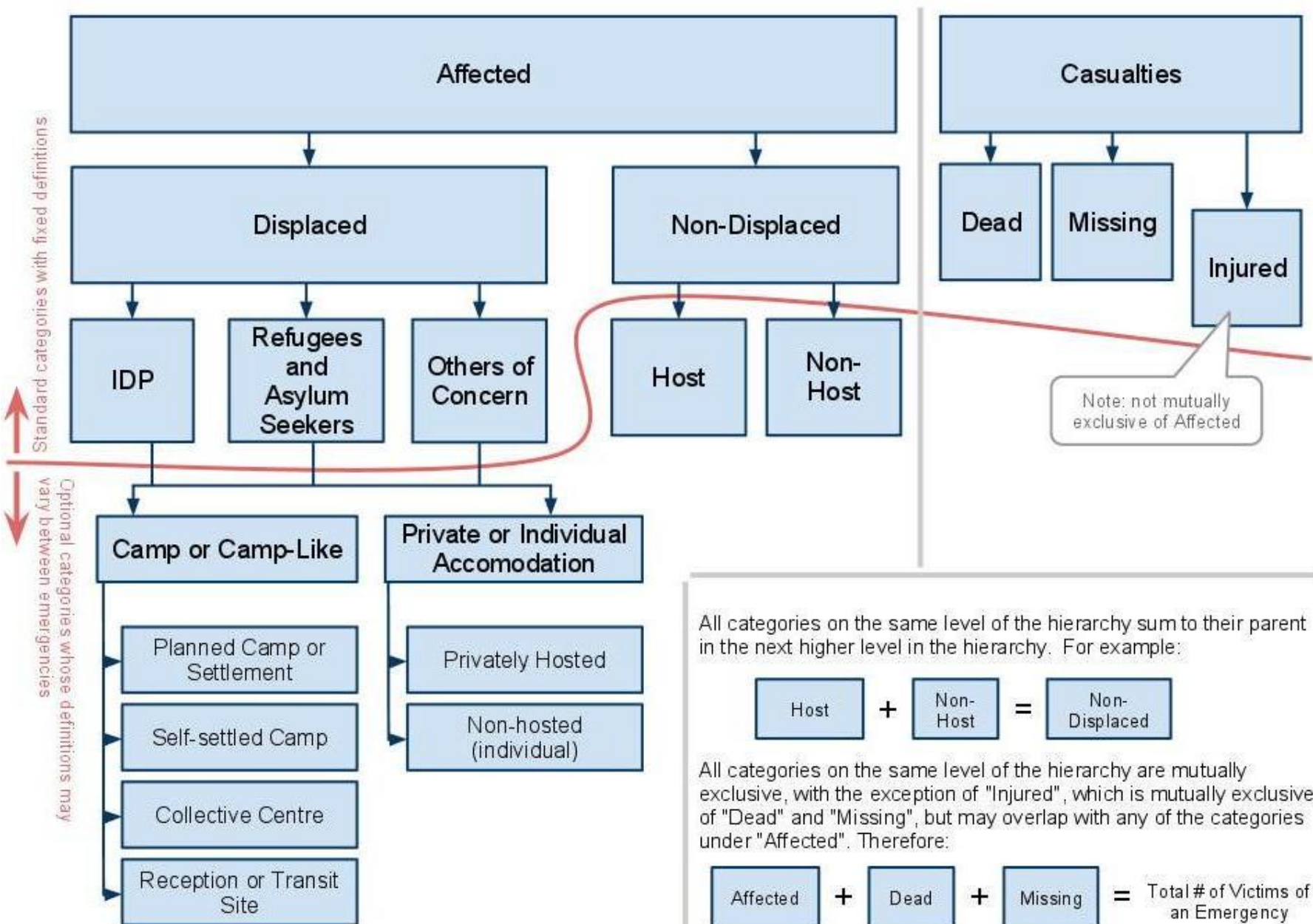
16. The data which fulfills the Humanitarian Profile Common Operational Dataset could be constructed using many possible schemas. The description below lists the simplest possible approach that satisfies the data characteristics that have been identified as critical to the utility of the HP. While it may not be possible to obtain all these data, even as estimates, during the early phases of the emergency, the data characteristics described below represent a standard that is achievable as the emergency response matures.

17. The data characteristics described below can be thought of as a simple table, where each column is one of the data characteristics and each row represents a discrete group of people having the same values for each of the data characteristics; for example a single record in this table might represent the total number of Male IDPs aged 35-39 residing at Camp X on April 26, 2011 who were originally displaced from District Y as counted by a camp census conducted by the National Disaster Management Agency.

**Date** - This is the date for which the other values in the record are considered to be valid. Note that in some cases, if the date value is the same for all records, this item could be reported as metadata for the dataset rather than for each record.

**Humanitarian Profile Classification** - The most important data characteristic is the scheme of categories into which the affected population is disaggregated. These categories must be mutually exclusive within the same level of the hierarchy such that the sum of all people in each category at a given level in the hierarchy equals the number of affected people or casualties as shown in the graphic below.

*Humanitarian Profile Classification System*



Only the upper levels of the hierarchy have fixed definitions, which recognize that at the more detailed levels (below the red line in the graphic) the classification system may need to be adjusted to fit the operational realities of a given emergency. The definitions for those classes above the red line are given below.

**Casualties** - The sum of Dead, Missing, and Injured

**Dead** - Persons confirmed as dead and persons missing and presumed dead<sup>4</sup>

**Missing** - Persons whose status during or after an emergency is not known

**Injured** - Persons suffering from physical injuries, trauma or an illness requiring medical treatment.<sup>5</sup>

Note that while the other 2nd level classes (Dead and Missing) can be added to Affected to get the total # of victims of an emergency, Injured is not mutually exclusive of the Affected class and should not be included in any such summation.

**Affected** - the sum of Displaced and Non-Displaced persons

**Non-Displaced** - the sum of Host and Non-Host persons

**Host** - Persons who are part of a host community or family receiving affected people. Due to the stress placed on the host families and communities, they are considered part of the humanitarian caseload.

**Non-Host** - People requiring immediate assistance during a period of emergency who have not moved from their homes or places of habitual residence.

**Displaced** - the sum of Internally Displaced Persons, Refugees and Asylum Seekers, and Others of Concern

**Internally Displaced Persons** - "persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border"<sup>6</sup>

**Refugees and Asylum Seekers** - A refugee is someone who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country."<sup>7</sup> An Asylum Seeker is someone who says he or she is a refugee, but whose claim has not yet been definitively evaluated.<sup>8</sup>

**Others of Concern** - persons who have been displaced by the emergency and form part of the humanitarian caseload, but do not fall into either of the above categories

*Each of the above 3 sub-classes of Displaced has the following potential sub-categories. Note that these lower-level classes may not be as universal as the higher level classes described above. The classes and their definitions may need to be adjusted to match operational realities.*

**Camp or Camp-like** - the sum of Planned Camp or Settlement, Self-settled Camp, Collective Centre, and Reception or Transit Site

<sup>4</sup>EmDat criteria, Center for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, <http://www.emdat.be/criteria-and-definition>

<sup>5</sup>Ibid

<sup>6</sup>UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement UN Doc. E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2

<sup>7</sup>Article 1, The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees

<sup>8</sup>UNHCR, <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c137.html>



**Planned Camps** - Planned camps are places where displaced populations find accommodation on purpose-built sites, and a full services infrastructure is provided, including water supply, food distribution, non-food item distribution, education, and health care, usually exclusively for the population of the site.<sup>9</sup>

**Self-settled Camps** - A displaced community or displaced groups may settle in camps, independent of assistance from local government or the aid community. Self-settled camps are often sited on state-owned, private or communal land, usually after limited negotiations with the local population or private owners over use and access.<sup>10</sup>

**Collective Centres** - This type of settlement is where displaced persons find accommodation in pre-existing public buildings and community facilities, for example, in schools, barracks, community centres, town halls, gymnasiums, hotels, warehouses, disused factories, and unfinished buildings. They are often used when displacement occurs inside a city itself, or when there are significant flows of displaced people into a city or town. Often, mass shelter is intended as temporary or transit accommodation.<sup>11</sup>

**Reception and Transit Camps** - Oftentimes, it is necessary to provide temporary accommodation for displaced persons. These camps might be necessary at the beginning of an emergency as a temporary accommodation pending transfer to a suitable, safe, longer term holding camp, or at the end of an operation as a staging point of return. Reception and transit camps are therefore usually either intermediate or short-term installations.<sup>12</sup>

**Private or Individual Accommodation** – the sum of Privately Hosted and Non-hosted

**Hosted** - living in someone's else home with them, sharing resources and a hearth with another household group

**Non-hosted** - living in one's own home

**Current Location** - The current location of the population being reported should be given at the level of geographic detail agreed by the IM Network using the Administrative Boundaries and Populated Places Common Operational Datasets. Organizations reporting Humanitarian Profile numbers should be encouraged to use the p-code system for unambiguous location reporting.

**Sex and Age Category** - These items are somewhat unique in that they will often be available only at a higher level in the classification hierarchy than the other data. As such, they can be reported as separate records or even in a separate table. The latter practice may be preferable as it simplifies the queries needed to produce summarized numbers. In many cases, these numbers will have to be estimated using demographic techniques. The age categories will vary depending on what data is available, but the standard categories are <1, 1-4, 5-9, 10-14, ..., 65-69, 70+.

**Place of Origin** - This attribute only applies to Displaced and its subclasses. It should include p-coded location from which the population being reported moved as a result of the emergency.

**Nationality** - This item generally only applies to populations displaced across international borders and contains the nationality of the population being reported.

**Number of Persons** - The number of people in the population being reported.

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<sup>9</sup> Camp Coordination/Camp Management Cluster Key Documents,  
<http://onerresponse.info/GlobalClusters/Camp%20Coordination%20Management/Pages/default.aspx>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

**Method** - The method by which the Number of Persons was derived. Note that in some cases, if the method is the same for all records, this item could be reported as metadata for the dataset rather than for each record.

**Source** - The organization(s) providing the information. Note that in some cases, if the source is the same for all records, this item could be reported as metadata for the dataset rather than for each record.

**Comments** - Additional comments if necessary.

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