

STEP 1

Essential preparation



Displaced women from Thampattai camp, Sri Lanka, planning activities following the tsunami

1.
Essential
preparation

Photo credit: Howard Davies

Step 1 covers the essential activities that are needed in order to prepare for an EMMA investigation. These activities can begin before EMMA teams arrive in the emergency zone and before terms of reference for the analysis have been agreed. They include preparation and briefings in-country, while the practical arrangements for the EMMA process are put in place. Crucially, they include the clear identification of the target population for assistance – disaggregated into different groups where possible to reflect diverse needs.

Before starting Step 1, the EMMA leader should

- o be closely familiar with all the steps in the EMMA toolkit.

1.1 Overview of Step 1

Objectives

- Obtain a good-enough initial understanding of the general emergency situation.
- Organize the EMMA team, their work-space, logistics, and essential support.
- Establish clear terms of reference for the EMMA exercise with management
- Agree who the intended target population are, and where they are located.

Activities

Section 1.2: Background research (before arrival)

- Review any pre-crisis livelihoods assessments.
- Review general economic analyses, information about disaster area.
- Review any recent damage / impact assessments.

Section 1.3: Consultations with colleagues (in-country or in the disaster area)

- Review latest emergency needs assessments.
- Clarify geographical and / or sectoral mandate of agency.
- Clarify the agency's response time-frame.
- Arrange briefings on political and security considerations.

Section 1.4: Setting up an EMMA working base

- Establish work-space (meetings, training, group work).
- Confirm the EMMA team membership, roles, and responsibilities.
- Organize fieldwork logistics, travel, and accommodation plans.

Sections 1.5 and 1.6: Population targeting and disaggregation

- Identify who the target population are.
- Draft a general seasonal calendar for their local economy.
- Define distinct target groups within the target population, including by livelihood strategy, wealth or social status, culture or ethnicity, and gender.

Timing

This step requires consultation with, and co-operation from, colleagues and other agencies. The time needed depends on the scale of the disaster area, on the level of administrative support available in the emergency zone, and the urgency of programming deadlines. EMMA teams who are familiar with the emergency-affected area and local agency operations may complete this step in as little as two days. However, in other circumstances these activities can easily take up most of the first week of the EMMA assignment.

Key outputs

- EMMA terms of reference agreed with country management (preferably in writing).
- Summary information about the target population (see Boxes 1.5 and 1.8).

1.2 Background research

Background research begins before arrival in the emergency-affected area. A day or two on the internet before departure can be very rewarding; and may provide useful material to read on the journey.

The main aims of background research are...

- to become familiar with any impact assessments, or needs assessments, that have already been produced by agencies on the ground;
- to identify any general economic analyses and other background information about the area, including maps and basic statistics (e.g. about population, food security, culture etc.);
- to locate any existing reports that describe the 'normal' livelihood strategies or seasonal calendars of the emergency-affected population, including cultural considerations;
- to establish useful contacts in the country – potential key informants.

Box 1.1 Useful websites for rapid background research

RELIEF-WEB: for general news and updates on emergency situation (organized by countries and sectors), lots of maps, OCHA Situation Reports, Cluster Reports
www.reliefweb.int

FEWS-NET: for food-security information, descriptions of livelihood zones and market profiles, data on markets and trade, food security, maps of trade flows
www.fews.net

MAP-ACTION: source of maps and technical information, for example on trade flow
www.mapaction.org

UN OCHA: 'Who Does What Where' – a contact-management directory
<http://3w.unocha.org>

LOG-CLUSTER: logistics information relevant to conducting fieldwork, road conditions and travel times, maps and supplier databases (for contacts)
www.logcluster.org

UNICEF: for general country-overview information, especially re water and sanitation, health sector, essential household items. Focus on children's needs
www.unicef.org

WFP: for information on food-security issues, search by country, CFSVA and CFSAM reports
www.wfp.org

UNHCR: usually good for information on shelter needs, especially re refugee and IDP movements
www.unhcr.org

IOM: International Office for Migration – reports relating to movement of people and shelter needs
www.iom.org

IFRC: for links to national Red Cross organizations (especially relevant after natural disasters)
www.ifrc.org

Box 1.2 Useful websites for detailed research

FAO and FAOSTAT: for reports and data on food production, food security, and balance sheets

www.fao.org / <http://faostat.fao.org>

WFP VAM: the Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping branch, for detailed reports about food insecurity

<http://www.wfp.org/food-security>

Microfinance Gateway: for country profiles on micro-finance institutions and credit services

www.microfinancegateway.com

Food Economy Group: resource for Household Economy Analysis (HEA) reports and guidance

www.feg-consulting.com

Livelihoods Connect: resource for Sustainable Livelihoods approach, reports, and guidance

www.eldis.org/go/topics/dossiers/livelihoods-connect

SEEP-Network: good for web-links to country-specific sites on micro-finance, enterprise development

www.seepnetwork.org

BDS-Knowledge: huge library of reports on enterprise development, market analyses

www.bdsknowledge.org

UNDP: for more detailed reports on long-term development policies and livelihood strategies

www.undp.org

VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT WIKI: good practice in value-chain development

http://apps.develebridge.net/amap/index.php/Value_Chain_Development

MICRO-LINKS: Micro-enterprise development in conflict-affected environments; project site and resources

www.microlinks.org/ev_en.php?ID=19747_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC

1.3. Consultations with colleagues

Upon arrival at the in-country office or making contact with the emergency focal point, EMMA practitioners need to establish relationships with the staff on the ground. It is essential to establish a clear TOR that defines the scope of work. The EMMA team must be briefed on its roles and responsibilities.

EMMA orientation for managers (and donors)

EMMA is still a new approach. It is important to brief managers (and quite possibly donors too) about what the EMMA process aims to achieve. The introductory chapter provides useful materials for these conversations.

Good talking points may include the following:

- Markets may offer a fast, effective, empowering way to respond to priority needs.
- Market recovery is a necessary aspect of livelihood rehabilitation and food security.
- Inappropriate humanitarian responses can do major further damage to livelihoods
- Women and men use markets in different ways, and are affected differently by crisis.
- Market actors' 'behaviour' can indicate whether responses are working as intended.
- Crises in market systems can also be opportunities for improvement and reform.

Find out what management issues the EMMA approach may raise. How open-minded are decision-makers to unconventional or indirect interventions? For example, are there donor restrictions on the types of humanitarian response that they will fund? Is it feasible to think of support to market actors (e.g. assistance to traders) in a critical market system?

Understand the agency's mandate and capabilities

Every humanitarian agency has its own specialisms, capabilities, and planning time-frames, which help to determine the scope of its feasible response options.

- Find out what geographical mandate the agency is taking on – what area it is likely to cover; what languages it works in.
- Understand the agency's sectoral specialisms (shelter, child protection, gender, water and sanitation, etc.), the agency's skill sets, and its resources (staff numbers, vehicles).
- Confirm what time-frame the agency is planning for. Do managers want EMMA to help to inform the operational activities for the next three months, six months, a year, or longer?
- Get briefed on the agency's pre-crisis operations in-country, if any. Does the agency have objectives for long-term development work, i.e. an interest in transitional programming?

Emergency briefing for EMMA team

Arrange for front-line staff, field-based managers, and sector specialists (e.g. shelter, wat/san, food security) to brief you. This may be easier if it is done jointly.

- Find out the latest information on damage. Get hold of any emergency needs assessments. Refer to any emergency web forums or www.reliefweb.int for assessments from colleague agencies.
- Find out what is already being done or planned by various humanitarian agencies. For example: check UN OCHA's 'Who Does What Where' matrix at <http://3w.unocha.org>
- Talk to long-term development staff (internal or external, UNDP) who know the specific region well.
- Join the relevant cluster group or co-ordination meetings. Contact the cluster-group leader as a potential key informant.

Box 1.3 UN cluster groups

Cluster groups or other co-ordination meetings are generally the forums in emergencies for sharing information and avoiding duplication. You may find specialists within the cluster who can offer valuable information and insights (including contacts for key informants), or be willing to participate in EMMA.

Cluster groups may also value EMMA findings directly. After cyclone Yemyin in Pakistan in 2007, the recommended shelter kit for 10,000 displaced households included floor mats which could perhaps have been sourced locally. An EMMA analysis exploring local production capability would have been valuable to the Shelter cluster.

Political or security considerations

EMMA teams need to be sensitive to political and security considerations, both during the EMMA fieldwork and in terms of the response options that EMMA recommends. Make sure you are invited to security briefings.

In conflict situations, especially, remember the following:

- Market systems may be part of the root cause of conflict; for example: due to competition over access to resources.
- Special sensitivities are needed regarding response option; for example: to avoid responses that aggravate conflict, or create perceptions of agency bias
- The most vulnerable and affected groups may not necessarily be the poorest; for example: during the civil unrest in western Kenya in 2008, the worst-affected households were (relatively wealthy) small-holders and businesses targeted for ethnic and political reasons.

Further reading on market analysis and conflict: see material in the EMMA reference manual on CD-ROM, including:

- ODI Humanitarian Practitioners Network: *Food Security and Livelihoods Programming in Conflict* (Jaspars and Maxwell, 2009)
- The SEEP Network: *Market Development in Crisis-affected Environments* (Market Development Working Group, 2007)

- USAID Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation Guide: *Livelihood and Conflict: A Toolkit for Intervention* (CMM, 2005)

Build your contacts

EMMA is all about people and knowledge: find out who is who.

Start building a contact list of colleagues, staff in other agencies, potential key informants, key officials, main traders, and market-actors.

Do not neglect the knowledge of local ancillary staff. Drivers, guards, cooks, and office cleaners often understand from personal experience the impact of an emergency on ordinary households and local markets very well.



1.4. Establish a working base for the EMMA team

EMMA work-space

Set up an EMMA ‘base camp’: a space where the EMMA team can work, meet, train, and store information. Try to make this a place where calm reflection is possible – quiet enough for the EMMA team to think, discuss, and learn.

Ideally, the EMMA base-camp will have

- a large table and chairs, and wall-space for maps and flip-charts
- a telephone for arranging meetings, computer and internet access.

Confirm the EMMA team membership, roles, and responsibilities

The size of an EMMA team will depend on the scale of the emergency (number of locations), the urgency of the need for results, and the resources available. Experience to date suggests that EMMA works best when two people cover each market system selected (in Step 2) in any district or location. In most contexts, it is essential from a practical perspective, and to meet gender standards, to have both women and men in the team – for interviewing households, for example.

For large team-based EMMA processes in which an experienced EMMA practitioner leads a locally convened team of researchers / assessors (see section 0.7), it will usually be necessary to train and orientate colleagues broadly beforehand in EMMA concepts and methods (see Step 3).

Even in a simple two-handed EMMA process, some aspects of fieldwork (Step 5) – especially information gathering for gap analysis – may benefit from co-opting other field-staff; for example, to conduct interviews with target households. These people may also need orientation in interview methods.

Training guidance for these scenarios is provided in the EMMA reference manual on CD-ROM.

Fieldwork planning: travel, accommodation, logistics

Begin planning for the fieldwork as soon as possible. Talk to logisticians, administrators, and drivers about road conditions and travel times (see www.logcluster.org), or check the updated emergency information at the www.reliefweb.int link.

- Plan for accommodation and vehicles.
- Book meeting rooms or spaces for preparation, training, and analysis work.
- Arrange meetings for consultations with colleagues and other agencies' staff – both before and after the fieldwork phase.
- Find out which are the important market-days of the week in the local area.

1.5. Population targeting***Confirm target population***

As early as possible, EMMA teams must confirm who the target population are.

Box 1.4 'Target population' defined

In EMMA, 'target population' means the mass of people who ultimately benefit from the emergency response. These are not necessarily the individuals who are directly involved in the agency's action.

For example, after a cyclone, youths are employed on cash-for-work basis to clear debris from irrigation ditches. They are directly involved; but the ultimate beneficiaries – and hence the 'target population' – are large numbers of small farmers, agricultural workers, and their families whose food security is to be restored.

How to do this

Talk to colleagues and review emergency needs assessments. This will be largely a management decision, based on emergency needs assessments. It will also reflect the agency's geographical or sectoral mandate. Key information that defines the target population includes the following:

- The estimated population numbers: how many people are at risk and/or in need of assistance?
- Their location – approximate geographical area most at risk, approximate distance (or travel time) from major commercial centres or ports. A map is useful at this point.
- Any characteristics that distinguish particular households as a priority target for the agency: who are those that are most in need of assistance or most at risk?

Box 1.5 Examples of target populations			
<i>Target</i>	<i>Numbers</i>	<i>Locations</i>	<i>Agency focus</i>
Flood-affected rural households	70,000 households	South-west delta area (approx 1,500 km ²), 6–8 hours from national port	Small-holders and landless families
Earthquake victims	120,000 households	50 villages/towns within 30 km of earthquake epicentre at Khanit	Families with elderly members and vulnerable children
Internally displaced families	30,000 households	Four IDP camps in the Shalinha valley, 3 hours from provincial capital	All displaced people within camps

Basic livelihood information

The use of a livelihoods approach in emergency assessments is increasingly common (Young et al., 2001). EMMA requires at the very least some essential information about the livelihood strategies of the target population. As more details are understood, EMMA teams will then divide the target population into separate groups according to differential needs (section 1.6).

However, these preliminary questions should set the scene to begin with.

- What were their main sources of employment, income or other important livelihood activities?
- What types of land or other natural resource did / do they depend on?
- What are the seasonal patterns of their lives and key activities at this time of year?
- Were there any major risks to people's livelihoods that existed before the current crisis?
- What are the typical coping strategies being adopted by affected households following the shock?

How to do this

For detailed guidance on livelihoods concepts and methods, see the EMMA reference manual on CD-ROM.

EMMA assumes that there is not usually time to survey the target population directly at this point. Therefore, you must rely on secondary reports and general knowledge of colleagues. Critical assumptions can be checked later during gap-analysis fieldwork (Step 5).

- Review the emergency needs assessments / damage reports for clues.
- Look for livelihood-assessment reports coming from long-term development programmes.
- Talk to colleagues and staff who know the area or the population well.
- Find or draft a rough seasonal calendar for the area.

1.6 Disaggregation of target groups

Do not assume that all affected households have similar needs, opportunities, and vulnerabilities. As far as possible, the different experiences, capabilities, and needs of women and men, and the differences between other social, ethnic, or age-based groups, should be taken into account. The choice of critical market systems, the results of gap analysis, and hence the final response recommendations may well vary from group to group.

There are often huge differences between what women and men need from markets, and the ways in which they access and use market systems. The IASC Gender Handbook includes a useful section on gender and livelihoods in emergencies (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2006, pp. 83–88). The same is true of different age groups and sometimes of different cultural or ethnic groups. EMMA teams need to decide which criteria (Box 1.6) to use for disaggregating target groups pragmatically, taking into account their agency mandate.

Box 1.6 Criteria for defining different target groups

Livelihood strategies

What are the most useful socio-economic categories of the population? Different groups may have substantially different sources of income, ways of making a living and engaging with markets, even in the same location: e.g. farmers, fishermen, casual labourers.

Relative wealth

Differences in relative wealth, social status, and assets are often important factors in determining how emergencies affect households, and they make a big difference in how particular households access and use market systems.

Gender roles

Gender roles and culture influence how women and men access and use markets, along with other factors such as land, natural resources, and other assets. Food crops are often the responsibility of women, whereas men control use of cash crops. These factors affect vulnerability to crisis and the strategies that people use to cope with disasters.

Age, social, cultural, and ethnic exclusion

Age, culture, social divisions, and ethnic divisions all influence how people access and use markets. These factors are especially important to consider if they played a role in triggering the emergency (e.g. in conflict situations).

Number of target groups

Remember that the needs of each group will need to be investigated separately, which will add time to the fieldwork and complexity to the EMMA analysis. Strictly, every target group requires its own separate household survey – in Step 5. In practice, EMMA teams can usually afford only to distinguish between at most two or three different target groups.

The summary results of disaggregating the target population will look something like Box 1.7.

Box 1.7 Target groups – examples		
<i>Target group</i>	<i>Households</i>	<i>Locations etc.</i>
Displaced farming households in camps	7,000	Jezila (3,000); Matran (4,000)
Casual labourers (fishery sector)	3,000	In 14 villages around Ghela
Households with extra-vulnerable individuals, and female-headed	500	Distributed throughout area
<i>Total target population</i>	<i>10,500</i>	

How to do this

Agencies tend to have different emphases and priorities which influence how they define target groups. Some agencies focus on productive groups, some on household types, age differences or gender differences, some on geographical locations or ethnic distinctions.

It is a good idea to adopt categories that are familiar to colleagues. For example:

- differences in their livelihoods strategies (sources of income) before the crisis;
- differences in their relative wealth within the wider community;
- differences in their current location / situation; or
- differences in other vulnerability factors, especially ethnicity or gender.

Information about the target population's characteristics and needs will often still be sketchy at this stage. However, EMMA assumes that you will not usually have time or resources to conduct a detailed survey of the target population. Therefore, EMMA teams must decide – pragmatically – what level of grouping is feasible and has operational value in their circumstances.

Box 1.8 A seasonal calendar for target population

At this early stage of EMMA before selecting critical markets, it is useful to begin sketching out a seasonal calendar for the target groups and their local economic area. This will be used in Step 2. Remember that women and men often have very different seasonal roles and responsibilities.

Seasonal calendars may be found during background research (section 1.2). FAO is a good source, especially for crop calendars. Look out for household economic analysis (HEA) studies also. FEWS NET publish calendars too.

If not, a ‘good-enough’ seasonal calendar may be constructed from brief discussions with colleagues and local staff who understand people’s livelihoods and the local economy.

The level of detail needed at this stage is low: a brief explanation of how and why groups are defined separately. As Box 1.8 describes, you must rely on secondary reports and general knowledge of colleagues or key informants in other agencies. Critical assumptions can be checked later during gap-analysis fieldwork (Step 5).

Checklist for Step 1

- o Do background research, using websites and secondary reports.
- o On arrival, attend security briefings. Organize logistics and administrative support. Establish contacts.
- o Attend orientation meeting with country-programme management. Agree terms of reference.
- o Review emergency needs assessments and damage reports.
- o Confirm details of the target population and identify any important target groups or characteristics that divide the target population.
- o Establish an EMMA base-camp; organize EMMA team.
- o Begin logistics arrangements (vehicle, accommodation) for fieldwork.
- o Get briefings from field-based managers and sector specialists.
- o Set up future meetings with key informants, donors, and other agencies – e.g. cluster group.