

Through its Key Initiatives, UNHCR's Division of Programme Support and Management (DPSM) shares regular updates on interesting projects that produce key tools, practical guidance and new approaches aimed at moving UNHCR's operations forward.



"When we manage information poorly, we miss gaps, waste time, money and resources, which = lives."/> UNHCR / H.J. Davies / June 2005

Emergency Information Management Toolkit

Using advanced technology and simple systems to gather data and information on the populations we serve

In January 2015, DPSM's Field Information and Coordination Support Section (FICSS) released the updated Emergency Information Management Toolkit ('Toolkit'), developed as part of the recently completed *UNHCR Information & Data Management Strategy 2012-2014*. The Toolkit equips UNHCR staff with the tools and guidance needed to ensure consistent, effective information management in emergencies in support of timely and informed operational decision-making. It reinforces predictable information management activities, and is designed to be used by and serve our staff and partners working in emergencies.

The Toolkit is changing the way UNHCR works in emergencies by allowing actors to better plan, target and coordinate assistance in all types of environments, even in complex urban situations. The Toolkit supports field operations in fully assuming the organization's responsibilities for leading and coordinating information management in both refugee and IDP situations. It further strengthens information management as a core responsibility of UNHCR.

The updated Toolkit includes guidance on:

- **Developing and maintaining an emergency information and data management strategy;**
- **Tracking and maintaining Population Statistics, undertaking registration, and using rapid population estimation techniques;**
- **Creating and maintaining a camp profile;**
- **Creating maps and info-graphics;**
- **Maintaining operational web-portals for emergency operations; and**
- **Advice and tools for undertaking emergency needs assessments.**

WHAT IS INFORMATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT?

Information and data management involves using advanced technology and simple systems to enhance collaboration, analysis and information sharing both within UNHCR and with our partners. It enables evidence-based decision making and delivery and impact in all areas, including protection, health, nutrition and food security, water and sanitation, shelter, delivery of core relief items, community-based response, registration and tracking and responding to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

WHY AN EMERGENCY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT TOOL KIT?

The updated Toolkit covers UNHCR's core responsibilities within the crucial first two to four months of an emergency situation. The Toolkit offers a collection of standard templates for information management which have been used during emergency responses throughout the world, supplemented by references to additional information on specific sectors.

WHO IS THE TOOL KIT FOR?

The Toolkit is particularly helpful for UNHCR managers and colleagues responsible for protection, registration, community services, external relations and information management. It describes their roles and responsibilities in relation to information management.

UNHCR Operational Web Portals global landing page





Syrian refugees receive plastic sheets at a distribution center in Jordan's Za'atari refugee camp. / UNHCR/ J. Kohler/ November 2013

ENHANCING COLLECTIVE HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCY RESPONSE

In emergencies, UNHCR must ensure effective coordination with partners and counterparts within the framework of the Refugee Coordination Model, so that they may design effective programmes and plan and target their support to persons of concern within their areas of expertise. The Toolkit supports UNHCR teams in the field in delivering information management services for our partners and enables the entire humanitarian community to respond better together.

Updates from the field

THE ROLE OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT IN THE SYRIA RESPONSE

The Toolkit is helping UNHCR and partners to target emergency resources and to enhance coordination better by using information and data management. The tools and procedures it contains may be adapted to the specific operational contexts, such as the Syria situation. In Jordan and Lebanon, the use of the operational web-portals, for example, now serve as an important forum for the systematic sharing of information and tools across sectors and organizations, and for enhanced coordination among agencies. The Toolkit has also supported UNHCR and our partners in moving away from blanket assistance by working together to identify the most vulnerable persons within a population, in order to ensure that their needs be targeted and met effectively.

WHAT COMES NEXT?

The Toolkit was first piloted in May 2013. Technological advancements continuously change the way UNHCR collects and communicates information. As a consequence, approaches to data collection, processing, analysis and dissemination are changing as well. The Toolkit was developed and continues to be updated with the support and participation of various units/sections and colleagues in the field and at UNHCR Headquarters. Based on continuous advancements in the field, new guidance, links and tools will continue to be added to the Toolkit on an on-going basis.

KEY FACTS ABOUT THE UPDATED EMERGENCY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT:

- The Toolkit is the result of broad collaboration between the field and HQ to identify good practices and to develop guidance and tools for capturing and sharing information and data in emergencies.
- The Toolkit complements other UNHCR emergency guidance already in place.
- The Toolkit is meant to inform a coordinated humanitarian response, and may be used by anyone responding to a refugee emergency.
- Information management is a service UNHCR provides to our partners, through timely, actionable information so aid is tailored to the needs of the populations we serve.

MORE INFORMATION

The updated Emergency Information Management Toolkit can be accessed here:

<http://data.unhcr.org/imtoolkit/>. A video which will walk you through the website features and functionalities can be accessed here: <http://youtu.be/5CzQOGlxgWQ>.

For more information, please contact the Field Information and Coordination Support Section at:

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