



## **DISASTER ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW**

- An overview of disaster assessment
- Practical insights on conducting assessments
- The role of the UN in assessments
- Preparedness planning for assessment



## **PART ONE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- The role of assessment in disaster management
- The steps in the assessment process
- How the objectives of assessment evolve over the course of the recovery from a disaster
- Different data collection methodologies suitable for assessment

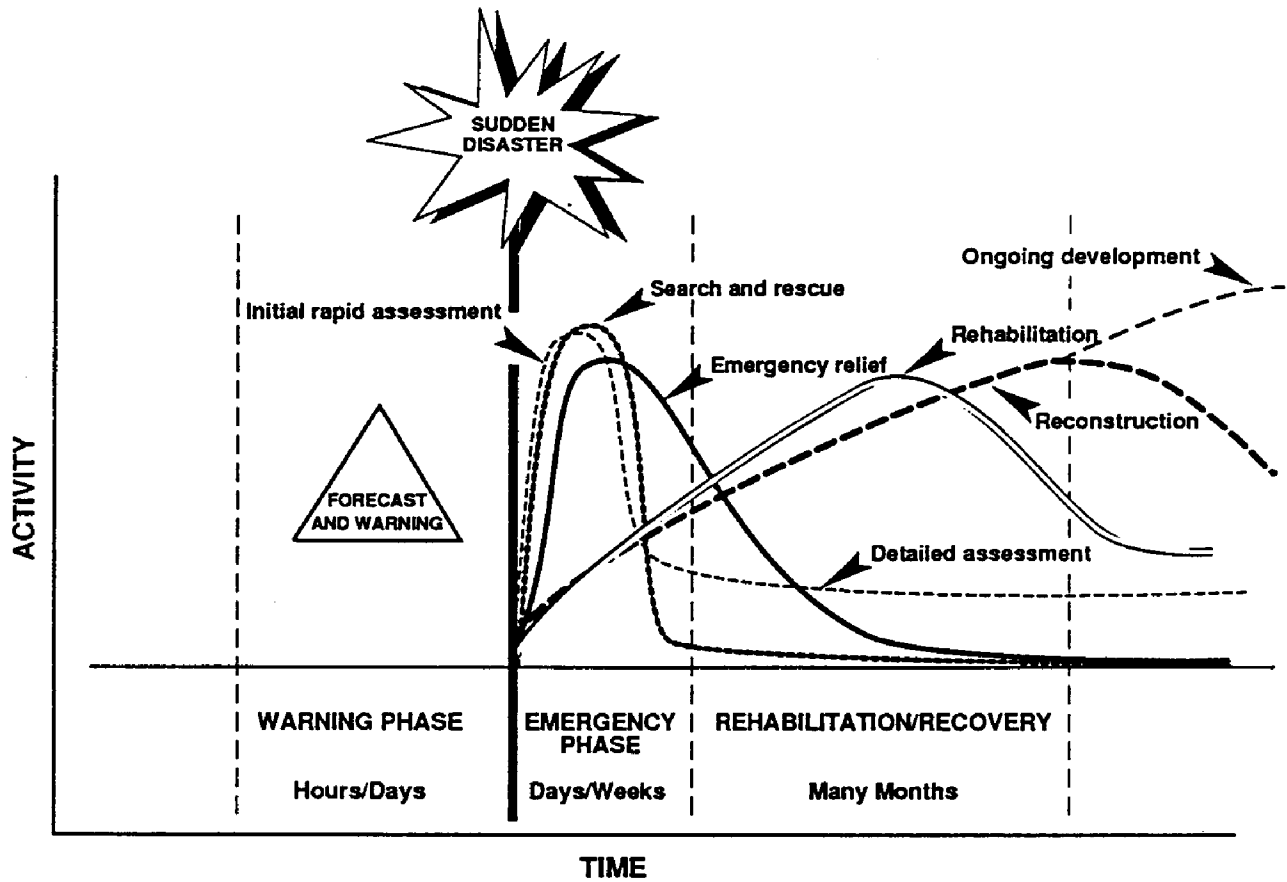


## **ASSESSMENT IS THE PROCESS OF DETERMINING**

- The impact which a hazard has had on a society
- The needs and priorities for immediate emergency measures to save and sustain the lives of survivors
- The resources available
- The possibilities for facilitating and expediting longer-term recovery and development



# FIGURE 1

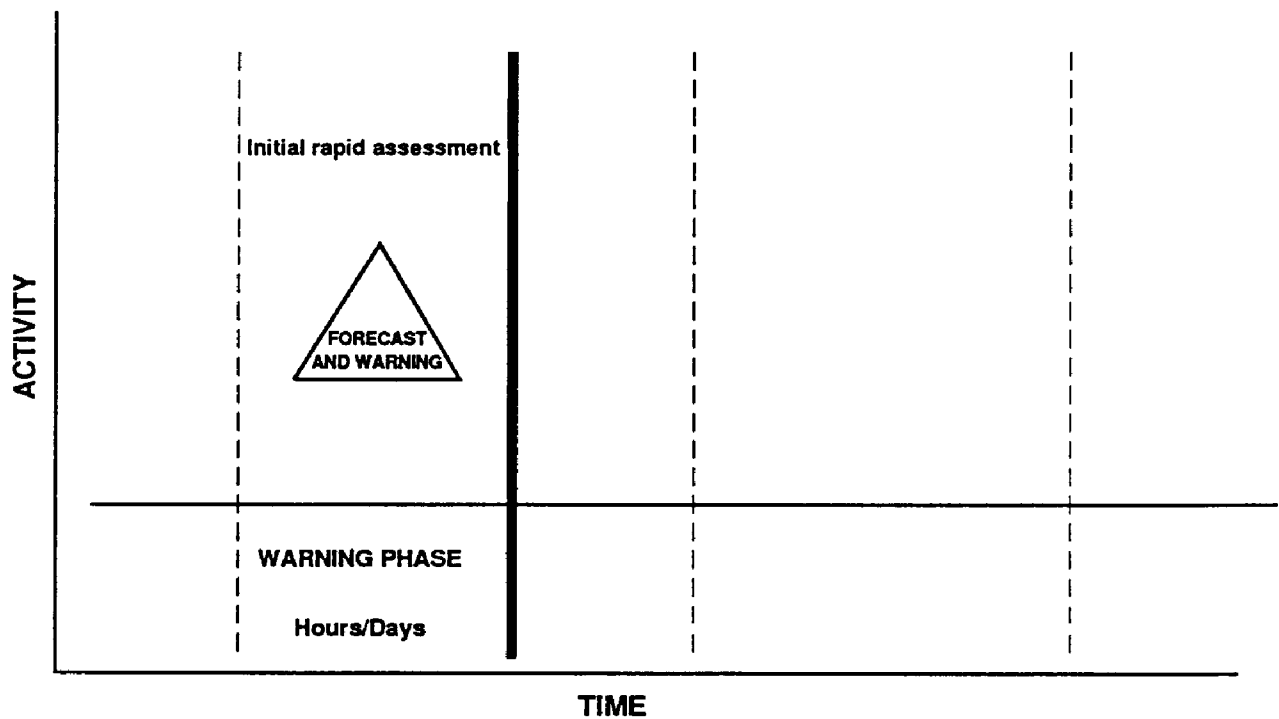


Episodes and activities in relation to the risks and the occurrence of sudden disasters



## WARNING PHASE

- Determine extent to which affected populations are taking measures to protect lives and facilities from expected hazard impact
- Activate arrangements in the preparedness plan regarding the implementation of assessment

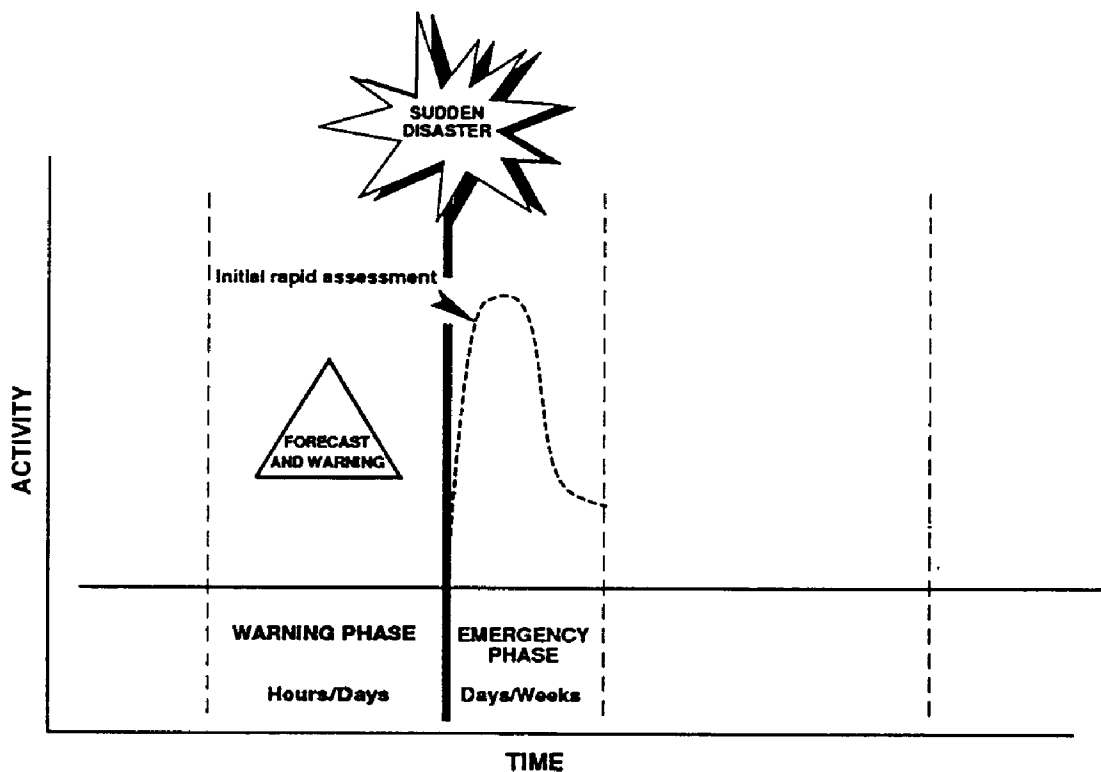


EPISODES AND ACTIVITIES IN RELATION TO THE RISKS AND THE OCCURENCE OF SUDDEN DISASTERS



## EMERGENCY PHASE

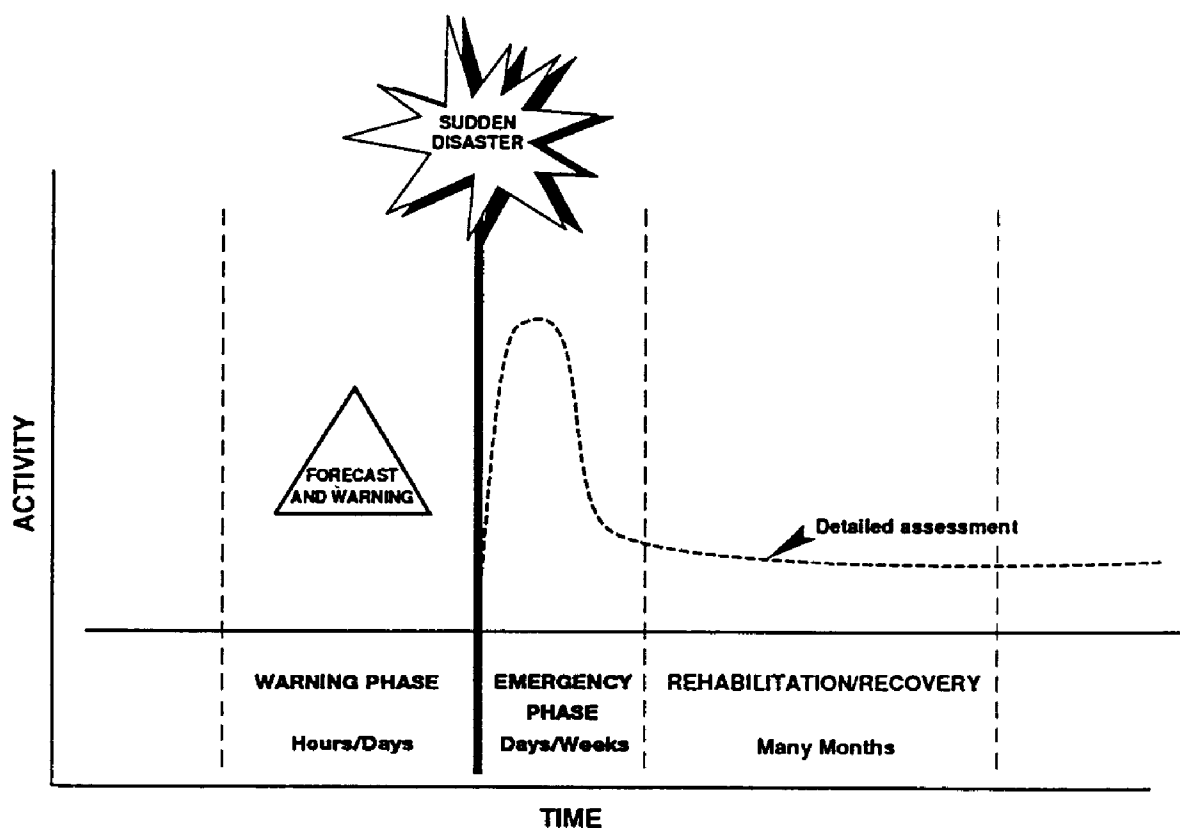
- Confirm the reported emergency and estimate the overall magnitude of the damage
- Identify, characterize and quantify “populations at risk” in the disaster
- Help to define and prioritize the actions and resources needed to reduce immediate risks
- Identify local response capacity, including organizational, medical and logistic resources
- Help anticipate future serious problems
- Help manage and control the immediate response



**EPISODES AND ACTIVITIES IN RELATION TO THE RISKS AND THE OCCURENCE OF SUDDEN DISASTERS**

## REHABILITATION PHASE

- Identify the priorities of the affected people
- Identify the policies of the government with regard to post-disaster assistance
- Estimate the additional support required from national and international sources for relief and recovery
- Monitor the outcome and effectiveness of continuing relief and rehabilitation measures

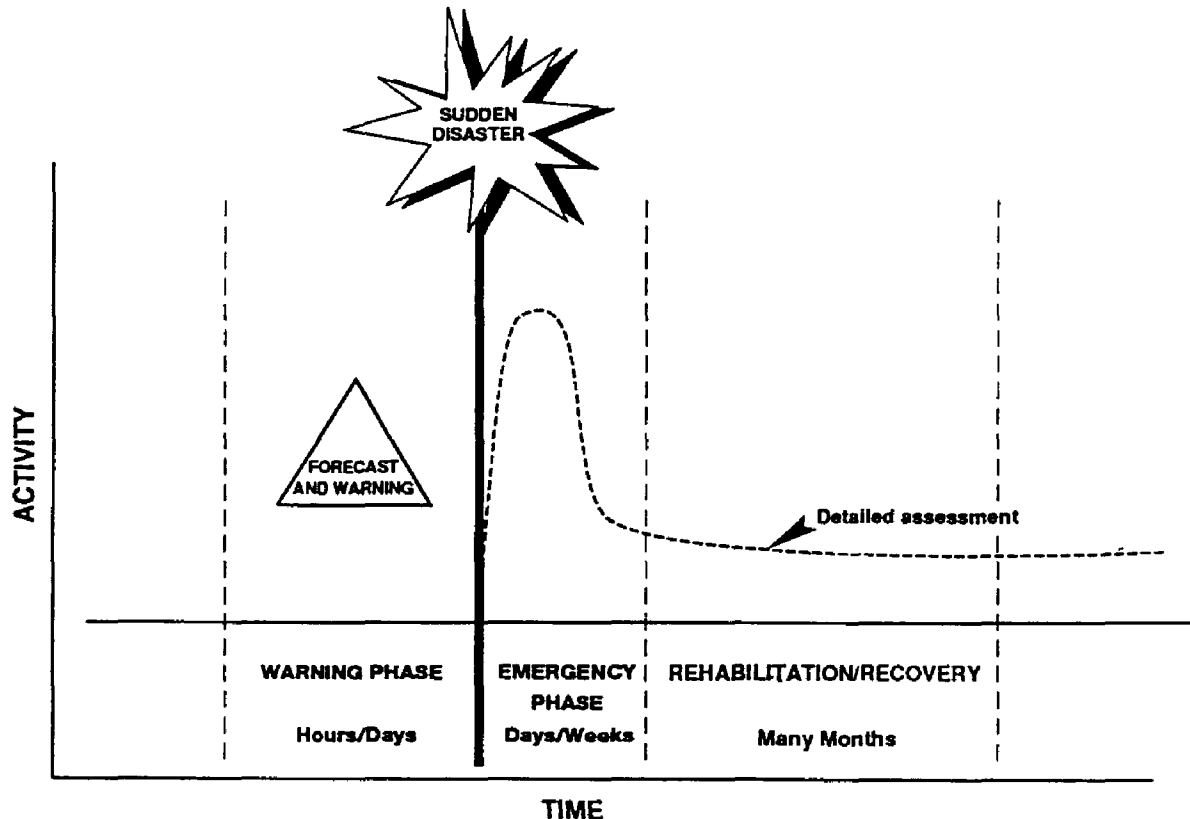


EPISODES AND ACTIVITIES IN RELATION TO THE RISKS AND THE OCCURENCE OF SUDDEN DISASTERS



## RECOVERY PHASE

- Determine the damage to economically significant resources and its implications for development policy
- Assess the impact of the disaster on current development programs
- Identify new development opportunities created by the disaster



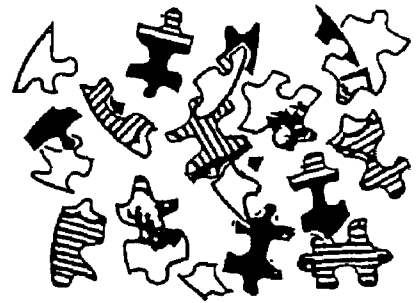
EPISODES AND ACTIVITIES IN RELATION TO THE RISKS AND THE OCCURENCE OF SUDDEN DISASTERS



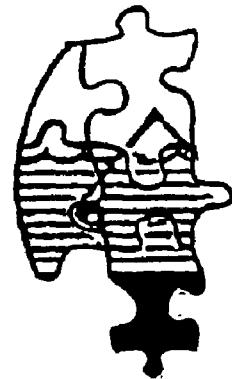


## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DATA AND INFORMATION

**Data**—units of information (perceptions, numbers, observations, facts and figures)



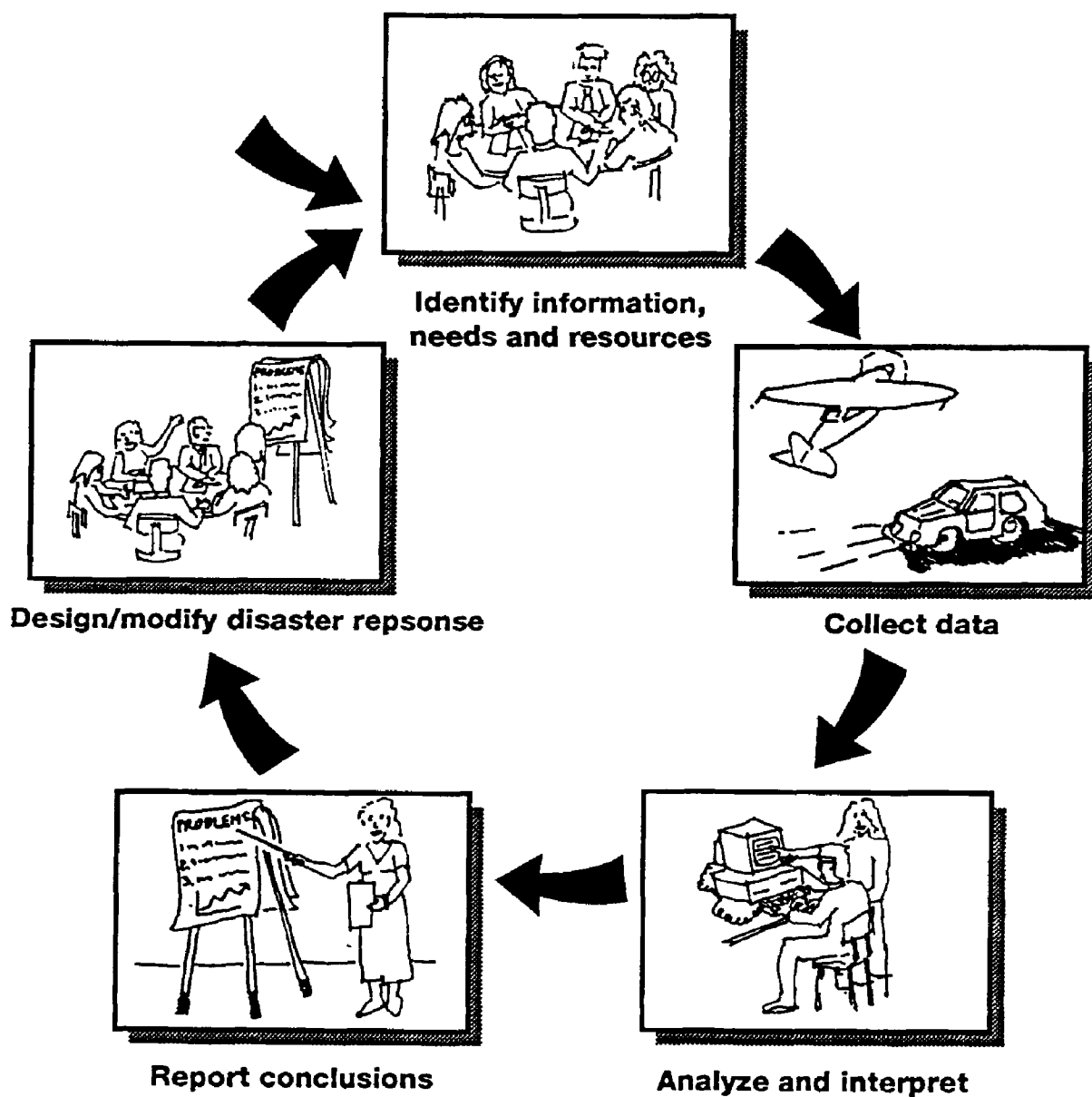
**Indicators**—a small set of data easy to gather and highly correlated with other data



**Information**—useful data



# THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS





## QUESTION

*Q. What are the main purposes of disaster assessment?*



## **RELIEF ACTORS THAT USE ASSESSMENT DATA**

- The survivors
- The government of the affected country
- The United Nations agencies
- Inter-governmental organizations
- Donor governments and their local representatives
- International and national NGO representatives
- The national and international news media

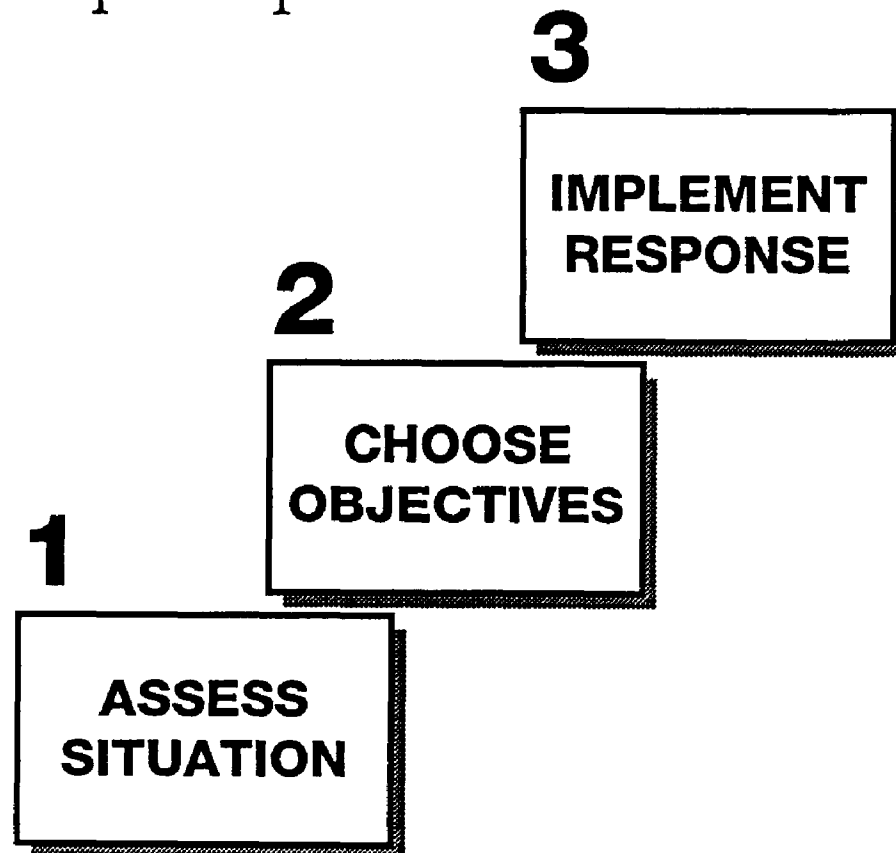


## THE DECISION-MAKING SCENARIO

Situation assessment

Choosing objectives and  
alternative Interventions

Developing and implementing  
response plans





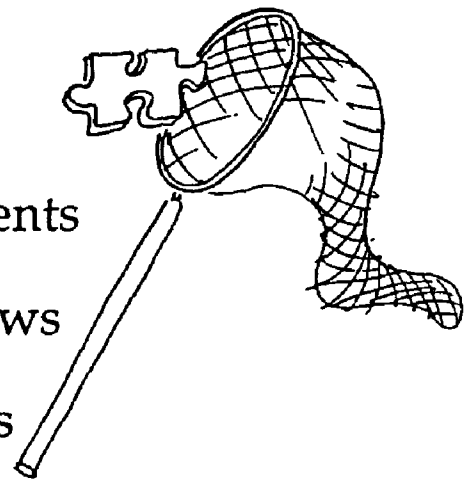
## **USEFUL DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

### **Impact and emergency phase**

- local self-assessment
- Visual inspection
- Interviews by specialists

### **Emergency phase onwards**

- “Sentinel” surveillance
- Formal surveys
- Critical sector assessments
- Key informant interviews
- Regular “polling” visits



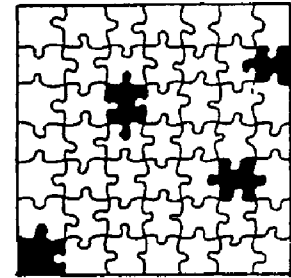
### **Rehabilitation phase onwards**

- Continuing surveillance
- Routine reporting

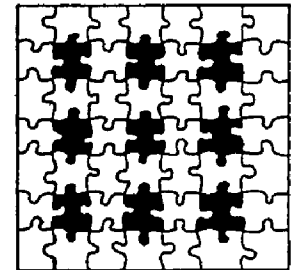


## SURVEY SAMPLING METHODS

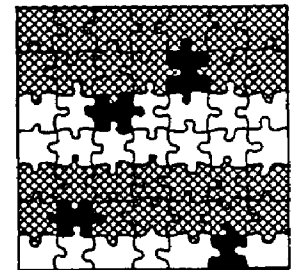
- Simple random samples



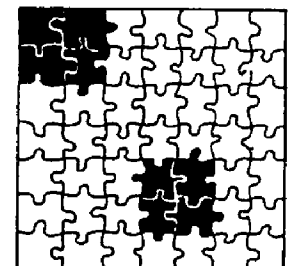
- Systematic random samples



- Stratified random samples



- Cluster samples





*Estimating accuracy depends on an understanding of data gathering methodologies and their limitations.*



**QUESTION**

*Q. Identify two types of data collection methods. For each method indicate (1) what information this particular method is especially suited to uncover and (2) what the strengths, limitations and biases of each method are.*



## **PART 2**

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- Increase your knowledge of general factors contributing to successful assessments
- Improve your ability to conduct detailed assessments in sudden onset disasters
- Increase your awareness of important aspects of slow onset disasters that affect the assessment process



## **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESSFUL ASSESSMENTS**

- Well designed assessment systems
- Effective operational data collection
- Efficient routing, analyzing and reporting
- Collecting data for future operations



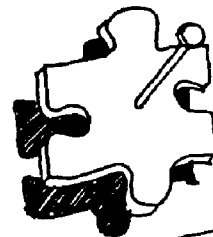
## **ATTRIBUTES OF WELL DESIGNED ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS**

- A pre-established assessment plan is critical
- Needs for information change over time
- Data should be targeted to user needs
- A “data coordinator” should be designated
- Choose “assessors” carefully
- Specify what data should be collected
- Verify the quality of assessment data
- Involve survivors
- Collect data that will be useful for future planning



## OPERATIONAL DATA COLLECTION

- Focus on important areas of risk
- Standardize assessment guidelines
- Identify barriers to access
- Use existing information systems
- Compose multi-disciplinary assessment teams
- Use formal sampling and survey methods
- Specify how data were collected
- Present rates and percentages
- Standardize recording and presentation techniques

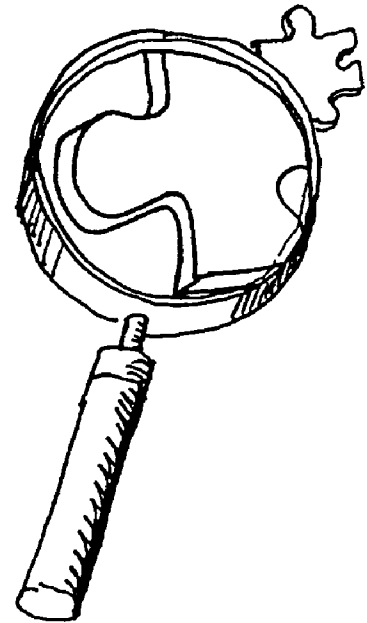


Source:	_____
Method of collection:	_____
Team:	_____
Location:	_____
Time:	_____
Date of collection:	_____



## ROUTING, ANALYZING AND REPORTING DATA

- Anticipate who needs the data and how they will get it
- Structure incoming data to support decision-making
- Evaluate incoming data
- Establish expected levels of service to identify shortfalls
- Process data quickly while they are still useful





## QUESTION

*Q. What are some common problems with data collection systems for assessments?*



## **GUIDELINES IN SUDDEN ONSET DISASTERS**

- Determine location of problems
- Determine magnitude of problems
- Determine immediate priorities
- Assess all critical sectors
- Identify relationships between sectors
- Compare findings to “base-line” information





## **CRITICAL SECTORS**

- Emergency medical and health
- Search and rescue
- Damages to lifelines and critical facilities
- Shelter and housing needs
- Personal and household needs
- Agriculture needs
- Economic needs



## KEY ACTIVITIES IN THE EMERGENCY PHASE

- Establish boundaries of affected areas
- Identify air, water and land transportation blockages
- Identify secondary threats
- Assess damage to communications systems
- Target areas that are not reporting information
- Establish status of hospitals, clinics and overall treatment capacity in high impact areas
- Locate isolated and severely affected communities
- Prioritize areas requiring search and rescue
- Ensure operation of data assessment centers
- Determine availability of essential items
- Identify public health requirements
- Identify needs for temporary shelter
- Support local administrative responses
- Assess the status of “life-line” systems



## **EVALUATING RESPONSE ACTIONS FOR LOCAL OFFICIALS**

Are local officials:

- Focussing on highest priority problems
- Concentrating on things the public can't do themselves
- Restoring services that enable survivors to be more effective and efficient
- Providing needed materials



## **LIFE-LINE PRIORITIES**

- Communications
- Water supply
- Electricity
- Road networks
- Sewerage systems



## QUESTION

*Q. Choose three key activities in the emergency phase that have not been sufficiently addressed in assessments that you have experienced. Describe the consequences.*



## **ASSESSMENT FOCUS DURING THE REHABILITATION PHASE**

- Restoration of “life-line” systems
- Safety of basic infrastructure  
including hospitals and schools
- Critical and strategic industries



## **ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES DURING THE RECOVERY PHASE**

- Assessing damage to the social structure
- Assessing damage to strategic economic sectors
- Identifying development opportunities



## **DAMAGE INFORMATION SYSTEM COMPONENTS**

- Farm land and crop damage
- Livestock losses
- Irrigation damage
- Fishing assets damage
- Roads and bridges
- Embankment and flood control
- Reservoir and dams
- Harbors and ports
- Railways
- Electricity supply
- Gas supply
- Water supply
- Housing
- Schools
- Medical facilities
- Telecommunications
- Industries by sector
- Cultural assets
- Dead and missing, by demographic category
- Injured, by type of injury and demographic category
- Homeless





## **FOCUS OF ASSESSMENT IN SLOW ONSET DISASTERS**

- Immunization
- Water supply
- Nutrition
- Bulk food logistics
- Registration and  
distribution administration
- Population movements



## QUESTION

*Q. What are major challenges in conducting assessments in slow onset disasters?*



## **PART 3**

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

To enhance your understanding of:

- The responsibilities of the UN system for assessment
- The role of the Disaster Management Team
- The responsibilities of the resident coordinator and how that role changes during recovery
- How and with whom information should be shared , especially when requesting international assistance



## UN-DMT ASSESSMENT RESPONSIBILITIES



UNDP

General infrastructure and government administrative services, possibly in conjunction with the World Bank.



UNDRO

Working through and supporting the resident coordinator/ representative, helps to consolidate and reconcile information from all UN-DMT members and other bodies and to gather information on sectors not covered by the specialized agencies.



UNHCR

The needs of refugees. Some consideration of the needs of host populations and returnees in conjunction with other organizations.



FAO

Effects on food and cash crops, fisheries and livestock operations. Harvest prospects. Requirements for rehabilitation, including possibilities for alternative crops.



UNICEF

Special needs of children and women especially in the health, education and social sectors. Aspects relating to health, nutrition, water supply (particularly rural or other small systems) and sanitation are addressed in conjunction with WHO; selective feeding programs and logistics with WFP.



WFP

Food supplies. Requirements for, use and delivery of food aid and arrangements for its delivery and distribution. Overall logistics.



WHO

Health sector considerations: medical and preventative health needs; epidemiology; long term effects on health structures; water and sanitation. Water and sanitation (large-scale possibly in conjunction with World Bank, small-scale with UNICEF)



## **INITIAL ROLE OF THE RESIDENT COORDINATOR & DMT**

- Facilitate the government's assessment through technical assistance
- Clarify the role of the components of the UN system
- Mobilize UN expertise in and out of the country
- Help mobilize expertise in NGOs, bilateral organizations and national bodies
- Inform UNDRO and local aid organizations of need for technical and logistical assistance
- If necessary, dispatch UN assessment teams



## **PROFILE FOR AN ASSESSMENT SPECIALIST**

- “Seasoned” disaster expert
- Familiarity with the affected country
- Knowledge of the local language
- Leadership skills
- Team worker
- Decision-maker



## **UN ROLES AS RELIEF ACTIVITY DEVELOPS**

- Ensure a multi-sectoral approach
- Develop consensus of overall priorities
- Determine needs for expertise for in-depth assessments
- Ensure a development perspective is present in relief decisions
- Promote regular communication of assessment information
- Formulate and screen requests for international assistance



## **FORMULATING AND SCREENING REQUESTS FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE**

- Based on assessment, assist government in defining needs
- Ensure accuracy and specificity
- Clarify and coordinate requests to ensure a united appeal
- Determine if a phased approach is necessary
- Revise appeal over time
- Coordinate an integrated UN approach





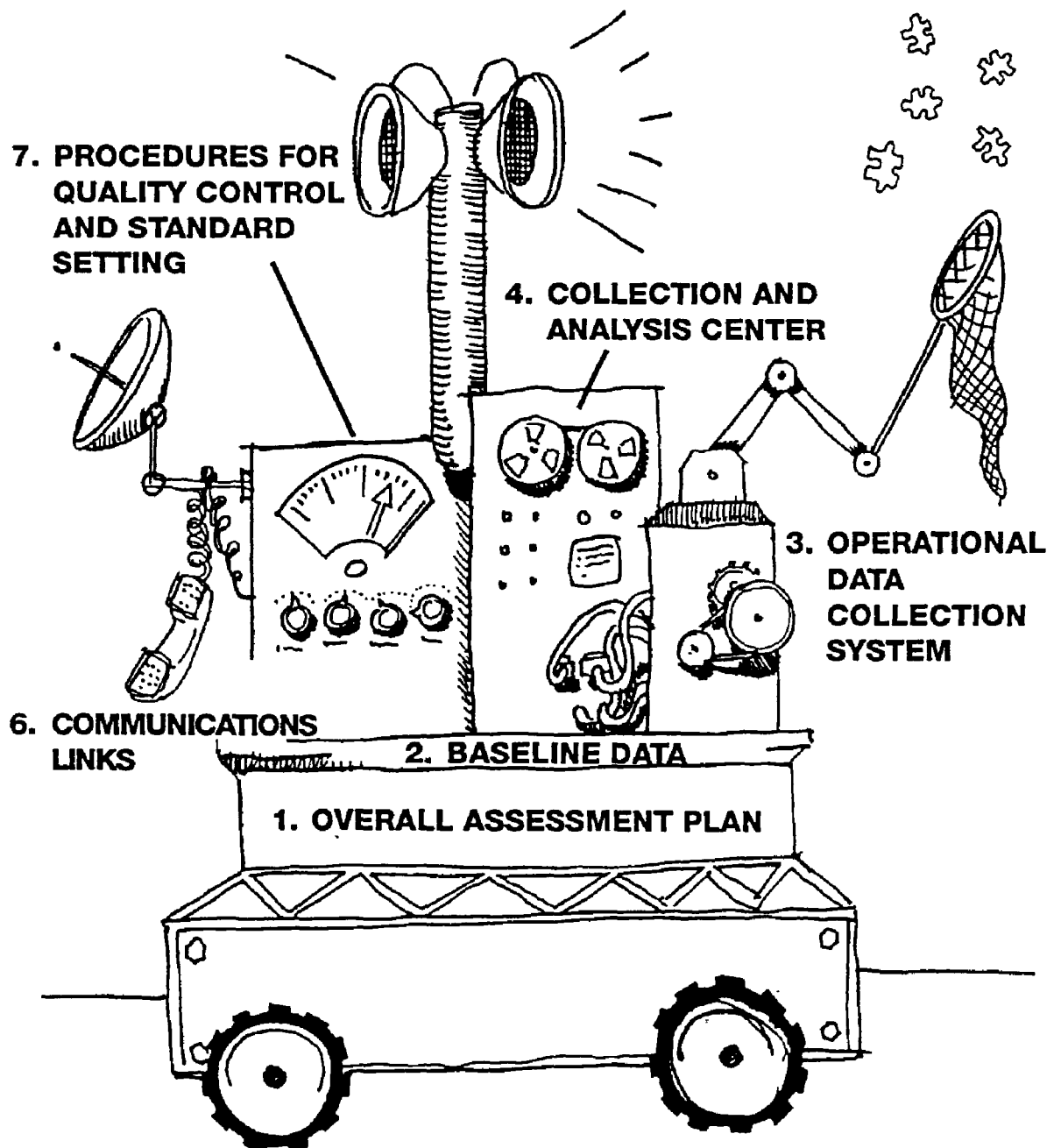
## **PART 4**

# **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- How to design a comprehensive assessment system
- What elements of an assessment system can be in place as a part of preparedness activity
- What activities will contribute to better preparedness for assessment

# COMPONENTS OF THE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

## 5. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND DISSEMINATION





## **UN ROLES IN PREPAREDNESS FOR ASSESSMENT**

- Clarify and document responsibilities
- Identify gaps in coverage and reconcile different approaches
- Help collect base-line data
- Pre-establish assessment teams
- Develop contingencies for UN assessment site visits
- Build and test systems for data collection and analysis
- Lay groundwork for damage information compilation systems



## SUMMARY

- Assessment is a critical component of disaster management
- Assessments must be planned for and systematically conducted throughout the disaster
- The assessment focus should shift as the recovery evolves
- UN and NGOs should assist the local government in conducting assessments
- The UN resident coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the international community understands the recovery needs