

Multi-sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA)

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

Overview

The Multi-sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) is a joint multi-sectoral assessment designed to provide a rapid, standardized overview of an emergency following a disaster or crisis. It identifies immediate humanitarian needs and critical service gaps to support collective decision-making.

MIRA is most appropriate in disaster settings where a specific event triggers a sudden-onset emergency or sharp conflict escalation with severe humanitarian impact, followed by a window of relative stability that allows humanitarian actors to conduct field data collection and detailed follow-up response planning.

1. Primary Objective

The primary objective of the MIRA in Myanmar is to provide direct decision support to the humanitarian community for the immediate provision of life-saving aid to affected populations. Specifically, the SOP supports:

- **Collective Strategic Understanding:** Helping all humanitarian decision-makers collectively understand and communicate the nature, scope, and dynamics of a crisis during the initial days post-impact.
- **Prioritization & Evidence Base:** Establishing an evidence base for humanitarian strategic priorities, funding allocations, and response planning.
- **Area-Based Coordination (ABC) Support:** Providing sub-national area-level snapshots of needs, service availability, and response gaps to guide operational planning, resource targeting, and local prioritization.
- **Guiding In-Depth Assessments:** Informing and supporting the design of subsequent, sector-specific, and operationally detailed needs assessments.

2. Scope

What the MIRA can deliver:

- Initial common understanding of most pressing needs in affected areas and population groups
- A voice for the affected population
- Information to help guide the planning of subsequent assessments which are more detailed and operationally specific
- An evidence base for response planning
- An inter-agency process based on global best practices in rapid needs assessment
- Area-based situation snapshots
- District or township need profiles
- Priority location maps

What the MIRA does not provide:

- Information to directly inform the design of specific and localized humanitarian interventions
- Statistically representative data for quantitative analysis on humanitarian needs
- A substitute for detailed or in-depth sectoral assessments

3. Guiding principles

1. **One assessment approach, one dataset:** The MIRA is a collective product owned by the humanitarian community, not any single agency.
2. **Speed over precision:** The MIRA is designed to provide rapid indicative data within a short timeframe of the onset of a crisis. Findings are not statistically representative and should not be presented as such.
3. **Do no harm:** No assessment activity proceeds where it would expose enumerators or communities to unacceptable risk, or where it would raise expectations that cannot be managed.
4. **Voluntary participation, mandatory standards:** Partner participation is voluntary; adherence to the agreed methodology, tool and timeline is not optional for those who participate.
5. **Local ownership & area coordination:** Coverage, field movement, local access negotiation and enumerator management are decided at the area/zonal level by those with the operational presence and contextual knowledge.
6. **Data minimisation and protection:** Only data that will demonstrably be used for decision-making is collected. Limited personal data is collected.
7. **Transparency of coverage and gaps:** What was not assessed is reported as clearly as what was assessed.

4. Coordination and Roles

The MIRA architecture integrates national strategic oversight and support with operational field execution across ABCs/ZCGs, data collection partners, clusters, ICCG, OCHA, REACH.

MIRA ACTIVATION DECISION AUTHORITY

- **ABCs and/or ZCGs:** For small or medium scale emergencies, ABCs and/or ZCGs may activate a MIRA based on contingency plans and/or operational needs. OCHA is informed and provides support. Small-scale emergencies are defined as disaster events affecting a single township. Medium-scale emergencies are defined as disaster events affecting two or more townships within the same state or region as a result of a single hazard or shock.
- **National Level (OCHA):** Decisions on activation are made at the national level by OCHA in consultation with the ICCG or Humanitarian Coordinator as relevant in regard of large-scale disasters affecting multiple zones or requiring nationwide resource mobilization and responses.

OCHA

OCHA holds overall accountability for the MIRA as an inter-agency product. OCHA's core responsibilities include:

- Convenes the decision on MIRA activation based on agreed trigger criteria and consultation with the ICCG and the Assessment Team for larger-scale emergencies. Where a crisis is localized, the relevant ABC or ZCG will be considered as the appropriate forum for deciding MIRA activation, reflecting their operational presence, contextual knowledge, and proximity to field realities.
- Issues directly or through the relevant ABCs/ZCGs the MIRA activation note to partners, including geographic scope, timeline and call for participation.
- Mobilises directly or through the relevant ABCs/ZCGs voluntary data collection partners and maintains the partner participation register.
- Confirms the geographic scope and coverage targets in consultation with the ICCG for large-scale disasters affecting multiple zones and with ABCs/ZCGs for localized emergencies.
- Arbitrates directly or through the relevant ABCs/ZCGs disputes on coverage, methodology and findings that cannot be resolved technically.
- Approves the final MIRA report/dashboard for release and leads dissemination to the partners, HCT, ICCG, donors and other stakeholders as needed.
- Owns and administers the Kobo Toolbox project: account, form deployment, user permissions, submission monitoring, form versioning and ensures the anonymisation and controlled sharing of the data set.

ABC/ZCG Coordinator

In each assessment area, a designated **Field Assessment Coordinator** (ABC Coordinator for ABC level and zonal IMO for ZCG level) is responsible for:

- **Field Coverage Planning:** Convenes field partners to agree on site assignment lists (village, wards, sites), resolving spatial overlaps and coverage gaps in real time.
- **Local Authority & Community Access Clearance:** Negotiates entry with community leaders and local authorities, confirming movement feasibility and safety prior to deployment.
- **Daily Operations & Tracking:** Conducts daily coverage check-ins with deployed partners, submits daily tracking updates to the Assessment Team, and escalates unresolvable gaps within 24 hours.
- **Incident Management:** Manages local security incidents, community complaints, and safeguarding issues, reporting upward on the day of occurrence.
- **Daily Quality Assurance & Data Cleaning:** Additionally, in case of small or medium-scale deployments, the zonal IMO conducts regular data quality assurance (outlier/GPS verification, duplicate detection, logical coherence checks) and leads structured data cleaning in coordination with the Field Assessment Coordinator and the data collection partners.

Assessment Team

OCHA and REACH jointly form the Assessment Team to provide dedicated technical leadership throughout the MIRA lifecycle:

- **Assessment Coordinator Role:** During nationwide emergency deployments, REACH provides an Assessment Specialist to serve as the Assessment Coordinator, leading technical assessment coordination.
- **Research Design & Kobo Tool Coding:** REACH leads research methodology design in coordination with the ICCG, unit of analysis definitions, sampling approaches, and Kobo form (XLSForm) development and version control.
- **Capacity Building & Training:** REACH leads on the development of question-by-question guidance, training materials, and delivers Training of Trainers (ToT) and partner refresher trainings within 24 hours of onset. REACH also to provide training on data cleaning process, as well as data cleaning and analysis scripts.
- **Daily Quality Assurance & Data Cleaning:** During nationwide emergency deployments, REACH conducts regular data quality assurance (outlier/GPS verification, duplicate detection, logical coherence checks) and leads structured data cleaning in coordination with the Field Assessment Coordinator and the data collection partners.
- **Data Analysis & Product Development:** REACH leads methodology, quality assurance, data cleaning and analysis tables for large-scale emergency deployments. OCHA leads dashboard development, dissemination, coordination, and Kobo administration.
- **Live Partner Data Access:** OCHA configures dashboard systems to ensure participating partners maintain live access to the data they collect, alongside raw data views.

Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) & Cluster Leads

The ICCG and cluster leads ensure technical rigor, indicator alignment, and operational utility:

- **Tool & Methodology Validation:** ICCG validates the assessment questionnaire, indicators, and sampling approach prior to deployment.
- **Sectoral Input & Prioritization:** Clusters provide core sectoral indicators, review question feasibility, and respect strict questionnaire length limits (30-minute completion ceiling).
- **Technical Plausibility & Validation:** During the analysis phase of a MIRA activation, clusters review draft analysis tables, preliminary findings, and key messages through validation workshops to assess technical plausibility, ensure sectoral accuracy, and provide contextual interpretation before dissemination of the final products.
- **Response Planning Integration:** Clusters integrate final MIRA findings into cluster-specific response plans, flash appeals, and allocation strategies.

Data Collection Partners

Participation is **voluntary and self-nominated**. There is no contractual relationship, no payment and no obligation to participate. However, an organisation that opts in accepts a defined set of minimum commitments for that activation. By registering, a partner commits to:

- Nominate a **partner focal point** reachable for the full duration of the exercise.
- Deploy only enumerators who have completed the MIRA briefing for this activation.
- Assess the agreed number and list of sites in the agreed area or notify the Field Assessment Coordinator within 12 hours if this becomes impossible.
- The partner focal point should assign a unique number to each enumerator in the organisation as enumerator ID. These will be used for the Assessment Team as a reference when following up for data cleaning.
- The partner focal point will agree on the format of the organisation name (full name and abbreviation) input with the Assessment Coordinator.
- Use only the official Kobo form, unmodified, and submit all data through the official platform.
- Transmit finalized data within 12 hours of connectivity (max 24 hours post-interview). Respond to data quality queries from the Assessment Team within 24 hours.
- Paper Form Management: for offline paper data collection (where Kobo is impossible), transcribe data into Kobo within 24 hours and destroy paper copies securely within 5 days of data collection closure following Assessment Team confirmation.
- Retain full duty-of-care responsibility for its own personnel, including insurance, security management, transport and safeguarding. Participation in the MIRA does not transfer this responsibility to entities outside the organisation.
- Refrain from releasing partial or organisation-specific MIRA findings before the collective product is released.

A partner that cannot meet these commitments should decline participation. Declining carries no consequence; participating and then not delivering creates a coverage gap that is discovered late and is materially damaging to the exercise.

Responsibility matrix

The responsibility matrix delineates organizational roles across the MIRA operational lifecycle:

Legend: **R** = Responsible (does the work) | **A** = Accountable (final decision/approver) | **C** = Consulted (provides input) | **I** = Informed (kept updated)

Activity	OCHA	REACH	ABC/ZCG Assessment FPs	Partners	ICCG
Activation decision (Localized/Zonal)	C / I	C	A / R	I	C
Activation decision (Large-Scale / Multi-Zone)	A/R	C	C	I	C

Activity	OCHA	REACH	ABC/ZCG Assessment FPs	Partners	ICCG
Geographic scope & coverage targets	A	R (large-scale)	R	I	C
Methodology & sampling design	C	A/R	C	I	C
Questionnaire design, indicators & Kobo coding	C	A/R	C/I	I	C Validation
Kobo deployment, permissions	A/R	C	I	I	I
Partner mobilisation & registration	A/R	I	R	R	C
Area coverage plan & deconfliction	I	C	A/R	R	I
Enumerator training & ToT	A/R	R	R	R	I
Data collection	I	I	A/R	R	I
Daily QA & feedback loop	I	A/R (large scale)	A/R (small/medium scale)	R	I
Data cleaning & analysis	C	A/R (large scale)	A/R (small/medium scale)	I	C
Findings validation	A	R (large scale)	R (small/medium scale)	C	R
Report approval & release	A/R	C	I	I	C
Dataset custody & sharing	A/R	R (large scale)	R (small/medium scale)	I	I
Lessons learned	A/R	R	R	C	C

R = Responsible · A = Accountable · C = Consulted · I = Informed

5. Activation

Trigger criteria

A MIRA activation may be proposed by ABCs/ZCGs or OCHA on behalf of the ICCG when one or more of the following triggers are met:

#	Trigger
T1	A sudden-onset event (natural hazard, conflict escalation, mass displacement) with reports of significant severe humanitarian impact that would likely require a coordinated response by humanitarian stakeholders
T2	Displacement of 5,000 people or more into or within an area within 7 days
T3	Loss of humanitarian access to a previously served area, followed by restoration of access
T4	A significant information gap in a newly affected location where no formal assessment occurred in recent weeks and major response funding/operational decisions are pending.

Activation Decision Mechanism

1. OCHA consults the Assessment Team on technical feasibility and the relevant ABC/ZCG on operational relevance and duplication.
2. OCHA takes the decision and issues the activation or endorses ABC/ZCG decision and activation after consultation, specifying:
 - Justification and trigger met
 - Geographic scope (administrative units in scope)
 - Objectives and the decisions the findings will inform
 - Indicative timeline with fixed data collection window
 - Call for voluntary partner participation, with a registration deadline
 - Named coordination focal point and Assessment Team technical focal point, in the cases when the Assessment Team focal point is not the coordination focal point.
3. **Non-activation is a valid outcome.** Where existing data is sufficient, or where the security or access environment makes credible data collection impossible, OCHA records the decision not to activate, with reasons.

Indicative timeline

The MIRA operational timeline is structured into three distinct phases, spanning from the initial crisis onset through to data collection and multi-tier dissemination.

Phase & Step	Operational Benchmark	Lead Role	Key Output / Milestone
Phase 1: Readiness & Activation	0 – 12 hours post-onset	ABC / ZCG / OCHA	MIRA Activation decision issued; Assessment Team established with REACH Assessment specialist.
Partner & Site Mapping	Within 12 hours	ABC / ZCG REACH (large scale)	Partner mapping complete; target location list identified.
Tool Contextualization	12 – 24 hours	REACH	Kobo form contextualized (if relevant for large scale deployments), tested, and locked.
Partner Refresher Training	24 hours post-onset	OCHA	Refresher briefing / ToT delivered to registered partner focal points.
Phase 2: Field Deployment	24 – 36 hours post-onset	ABC / ZCG Partners	Assessment teams deployed; coverage tracker active.
Field Data Collection	3 – 5 days duration	Data Collection Partners	KIs interviewed; data transmitted via KoboCollect (within 72h post-onset rollout).
Phase 3: Live Access & Analysis	Ongoing during collection	OCHA / Partners	Partners granted live access to raw data and live coverage dashboards.
Preliminary Results & Tables	2 days post-collection	OCHA / REACH (large scale) / ZCG IMO (small/medium scale)	Data cleaned; standardized analysis tables & preliminary findings presented on MIRA dashboard.
Large-Scale Emergencies			
Detailed Presentations & Reports	2 weeks post-collection (14 days post-onset)	ICCG / OCHA REACH (large scale)	Detailed sector presentations, and final MIRA report/dashboard released.
Lessons Learned & Closure	Within 3 weeks post-deployment	OCHA / REACH / ZCG	After-action review conducted; SOP and tool updates logged.

6. Preparation

Methodology

The MIRA uses structured key informant interviews, conducted either in person or remotely. This method allows for high geographic coverage in a very short timeframe (3-5 days of data collection) with limited resources.

- The assessment focuses on the community level (such as village, ward, camp, or site). KIs are asked to report on the situation of the whole or the majority of the population in their location, rather than on specific households.

- Between 1 and 5 KIs are interviewed per location. These are individuals with reliable knowledge of the community, such as local administrators, teachers, healthcare workers, or religious and community leaders.
- If several KI interviews are conducted in one location, the responses will be aggregated at the analysis stage to provide a single consensus response per settlement.
- To ensure the findings are a credible basis for decision-making, the tool is strictly limited to observable phenomena.
 - Included: Indicators that KIs can reliably report (e.g., presence of displaced groups, physical damage to infrastructure, functionality of water points, and main barriers to accessing services).
 - Excluded: Indicators that vary significantly between households or require very specific knowledge (e.g., individual food consumption, exact population counts, sensitive protection issues, or subjective perceptions).

Questionnaire

- The Assessment Team maintains a standing **core questionnaire** covering demographics, displacement, shelter/NFI, WASH, food security, health, protection, priority needs, access to assistance.
- The questionnaire integrates cluster input and may be adapted between or before (not during!) deployments to reflect feedback from previous MIRA rounds, as well as specific information needs.
- **Length ceiling:** the questionnaire must be completable in **maximum 30 minutes**. Where cluster requests exceed the ceiling, the Assessment Team prioritises against the stated decision-making needs and informs OCHA and the clusters of what was cut.
- **Limited personal data.** No names, ID numbers, or photographs of identifiable individuals are to be collected. KI profile is recorded by category only, while contact information may be included but it is optional.

Translation and testing

- The tool is translated into Myanmar language/Burmese and back-checked by a second speaker.
- The Assessment Team has tested the tool for skip logic and constraint issues before deployment.

Partner registration and coverage planning

- Partners register via the MIRA Partner Registration Form <<link>>, including their respective focal point, areas of presence, number of enumerator teams available, languages spoken by field teams, and confirmation of the minimum commitments.
- OCHA compiles the register and shares it with the Assessment Coordinator.
- Each Field Assessment Coordinator convenes registered partners in their area and produces an **area coverage plan**: site list, partner assigned per site, planned date, access constraints.
- Coverage plans are consolidated by the Assessment Team into a coverage tracker, which becomes the reference for monitoring completion during the data collection period.

- Sites with no partner assigned are recorded as gaps at the planning stage and reported to OCHA before data collection begins. Any areas for which access may be lost during data collection should be communicated as soon as possible to the Assessment Coordinator, and no later than 12 hours since the development. Based on partners' capacity, another data collection partner may be assigned to cover the gap, if possible. Any reassignment of data collection locations should be decided at least a day prior to finishing data collection, to not cause any delays to the overall implementation timeframe.

Training and briefing

- A basic training on the methodology and questionnaire is mandatory for every deploying enumerator. In case the enumerators cannot attend the trainings organised by OCHA, they will receive the needed training from their respective organisation's focal point who has attended a ToT.
- The training should cover objectives and limitations; question-by-question guidance; KI selection; KoboCollect operation and offline workflow; informed consent and confidentiality; safeguarding and PSEA; managing expectations and referral of urgent protection cases; incident reporting.
- The training should be delivered by OCHA or the Assessment Team directly, or by partner trainers certified through a previous ToT.
- **Attendance is recorded;**

7. Data collection

KoboCollect: User accounts and permissions

- Access to a shared account is granted to all enumerators participating in data collection.
- Partners are granted the **“Can submit data” (add submissions) permission only**. Partners cannot view, edit or delete submissions, including their own, in the central project.
- View, edit and delete permissions are restricted to the OCHA and Assessment Kobo focal points.
- Every submission must carry, as mandatory fields: partner organisation, enumerator ID, area / admin unit, site code, date of interview, and GPS point.
- Enumerator accounts are **deactivated within 5 working days** of the end of the data collection period.

Live Partner Access & Dashboards

In accordance with MIRA alignment principles, participating partners are granted live access to the data they collect during field operations through dynamic coverage dashboards and filtered raw data access, enabling real-time internal reporting without compromising central dataset integrity.

KoboCollect: Offline data collection and sharing

- Enumerators download the blank form **while connected**, before deploying to the field.
- Data is collected offline; each completed interview is **finalised** immediately after the interview, before travelling to the next site.
- Finalised submissions are transmitted **within 12 hours** of return to connectivity, and in all cases **within 48 hours of the interview**.
- Enumerators verify in KoboCollect that submissions show as **sent**, not merely finalised. Unsent forms are the single most common cause of data loss.
- Devices are not wiped, and the KoboCollect app is not uninstalled or cleared, until the Assessment Team confirms receipt.
- Partner focal points confirm **daily** to the Field Assessment Coordinator: interviews completed, interviews transmitted, sites remaining.

Paper-tool data collection and sharing

- Data collection can be done using the paper version of the questionnaire only in cases when using KoboCollect is not possible.
- Each organisation is responsible for providing an appropriate number of complete copies of the questionnaire to their enumerators.
- **Each copy of the questionnaire should correspond to one interview.** Different interviews should not be recorded on the same copy.
- Enumerators should ensure that the questionnaire is filled in following the instructions and logic of the tool. All mandatory questions should be filled in, and all entries should be legible.
- Completed surveys should be shared with their respective organisation focal point who is responsible for filling in the data into the online Kobo form. The surveys should be filled in and submitted on KoboCollect no later than within 24 hours of the interview.
- The paper copies should be maintained securely until the Assessment team confirms that no follow ups are necessary regarding the respective data. Following this confirmation, and no later than within 5 days of the end of data collection period, all paper questionnaires should be destroyed.

Form version control

- The deployed form carries a **version number**, recorded automatically in every submission.
- **After going-live, no changes are made to the form except to correct errors that make a question unusable** (broken skip logic, incorrect constraint, mistranslation affecting meaning).
- Any such change is decided by the Assessment Team, and:
 - a. Announced to all partner focal points and Area Coordinators **before** redeployment;
 - b. Accompanied by an instruction to enumerators to update the blank form in KoboCollect before the next interview;
 - c. Accompanied also by the updated paper questionnaire, if necessary.
- **Adding or changing questions after going-live is not permitted.**

Data Collection window and late data

- The submission window closes on the date agreed in advance at 23:59 Myanmar time.
- Submissions received after closure are accepted into the dataset **only if** the interview date falls within the window **and** the delay is explained by connectivity or access. The Assessment Team decides and logs each case.
- Data received after data cleaning has been finalised is **not** incorporated into released products; It may be retained in the raw data set, but it will not be included in the analysis.

Location data

- GPS capture should be taken at a neutral public point (e.g. site entrance, community centre), **not** at any individual's dwelling.
- Where GPS capture is not safe or feasible, the enumerator records the site name.
- GPS points are used for coverage verification, deduplication and mapping. Precise coordinates are removed in any publicly released dataset.

Consent and conduct

- Every interview begins with a scripted **informed consent statement** embedded in the form, covering purpose, voluntariness, no direct benefit, confidentiality and the right to stop at any time. Consent is recorded as a form response; if consent is not given, the interview is closed immediately.
- Enumerators **must not** promise, imply or estimate future assistance.
- Enumerators should identify themselves by organisation.
- Urgent protection or medical cases identified during interviews are referred through the agreed **referral pathway**.
- Any incident, security event, community complaint or allegation of misconduct is reported to the partner focal point and Field Assessment Coordinator **the same day**, and through the partner's own PSEA/safeguarding channel.

Data protection

- The MIRA 2.0 collects limited personal data. Any PII's that might be relevant will be retained in a password protected version of the clean data set, with access restricted only to the respective data cleaning focal point, the Assessment Coordinator and data collection partners focal points. The clean data set for dissemination beyond the data collection partners and dashboard upload will have all personal data removed at cleaning stage.
- Access to the raw dataset is limited to named Assessment Team members and the OCHA IM focal point.
- Data is stored on the OCHA server and on the Assessment Teams' Microsoft SharePoint. Local copies on personal devices are not permitted.
- Data handling complies with the operation's information sharing protocol and applicable data responsibility guidance.
- Retention: raw data retained for 24 months, then reviewed for deletion or archiving by OCHA as custodian.