DESIGN PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS SOURCES OF ERROR IN HUMANITARIAN ASSESSMENTS

DETect, MINimise, ACCOUNT for AND REPORT ON ASSESSMENT ERRORS – THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ACTUAL SITUATION AND THE DATA COLLECTED

ERROR EXAMPLE MITIGATION MEASURES

**Coverage error**
The nomadic population is not included in the sampling frame

**Introduce multiple sample approaches**

**Sampling error**
Enumerators visit houses of acquaintances, instead of selecting randomly as instructed

**Review sampling strategies for feasibility, spot-check field sites to monitor quality, consider which groups are likely to be excluded from the survey**

**Non-Response error**
During the field visits it turns out that a large part of the intended respondents are not available because they are at work

**Send advance notification, Train on refusal aversion, adapt assessment introduction to different groups, increase sample size to ensure sufficient samples are reached**

ERROR EXAMPLE MITIGATION MEASURES

**Adjustment Error**
Outdated population figures are used for weighting of the findings

**Expert review, encourage checks and double checks**

**Processing Error**
Inconsistent coding of responses to open questions

**Document alterations and additions, comprehensive training and procedures on coding, data entry and analysis**

**Inferential Error**
The conclusions are extrapolated to the whole affected population despite the non-representative sample

**Do not go beyond the data, carefully consider the limitations of the assessment design, maintain independence**

ERROR EXAMPLE MITIGATION MEASURES

**Specification error**
Respondents and analysts interpret the concept ‘drought’ differently

**Include expert review, pre and pilot testing, use previously validated questions**

**Respondent error**
Households exaggerate needs in the hope of receiving more support

**State questions in a simple, straightforward manner, do selective re-interviewing**

**Mode**
Interviewers have difficulties navigating the ODK form

**Consider the most appropriate mode of data collection, train enumerators on the mode**

**Item Non-response**
A significant part of respondents refuse to answer a sensitive question

**Rephrase and carefully introduce sensitive questions, oversample to reach sufficient sample**

**Interviewer**
Interviewer uses leading questions and adopts a different interviewing style across respondents

**Train enumerators on interviewing techniques, brief and debrief, provide incentives for enumerators**

**Questionnaire error**
Sensitive questions are asked before trust has been established

**Include expert review, pre and pilot test, use previously validated questions**

**Recording error**
Respondent incorrectly paraphrases a response to an open question

**Add instructions in the questionnaire on how to ask and answer each question, monitor responses**

EXPLAINING ERRORS: Assessments using probability sampling commonly include a confidence interval and margins of error. However, these statistics solely reflect some of the error related to design and thus omit the effects of other errors related to measurement, processing and analysis. Methods to quantify these type of errors are costly, time-consuming and not feasible within a humanitarian setting. Sources of errors and their potential impact on the trustworthiness of the results should therefore be made transparent and explained within the methodology section of the assessment report, using qualitative statements.