Rapid Needs Assessment

Data Collection and Transmission
Objectives

At the end of this unit participants will be able to:

• Describe the importance of planning for data collection

• Describe the importance of redundant data transmission systems and means
What is important?

As part of the planning process

• A standardized means of data collection should be implemented

• Regional or statewide systems are best to assure uniformity

• Focus on what data you need to interpret what *is really going on!*
Data

Data is simple information

• It provides a base, but not a means

• It is just facts and figures until the data is analyzed
Data Analysis

Analysis provides useful intelligence

• It turns facts and figures into useful information

• To be effective, analysis requires the collection of the proper data
Data Details

The more detailed or specific the data

• The more useful it becomes
• The more focused the analysis

Better intelligence is produced

But all data is useful depending on how it is used
Example

1. Debris is widespread
2. Debris is blocking roads
3. Debris is blocking main roads on the SW side of the city and making travel difficult
4. Debris is blocking access to the hospital and preventing ingress of emergency traffic
Identifying Data Needs

Look at cause and effect relationships

- Power is out therefore MRI scans cannot be made
- If MRI scans cannot be made, medical diagnosis is compromised
- If medical diagnosis is compromised, patient care becomes more difficult

Therefore, power failures complicate patient care and efforts should be made to restore power
Formatting Data

• Data should be formatted to ease and speed collection
• Communications must be taken into account
• Data collection should support multiple communication platforms
• Data collection should require minimal expertise on the part of field staff
Transmission

Think about use of multiple systems

• Plan for system congestion
• Remember stress factor
• Think about minimal training prior to use
• Make everything as simple as possible!
Methods

Voice
• Most common method
• Radio, cell phone, landline

Issues
• Data loss in translation
• Time consuming
• May tie up communications channels
Methods

Fax

• Available at larger fixed sites
• Usually dependent on landlines

Issues

• Requires fixed equipment
• Subject to connection issues
• Not readily available from mobile operations
Methods

E-mail

- Message will usually get through, eventually
- Information translation excellent

Issues

- Requires internet connectivity
- Requires electronic equipment
- Requires monitoring on receiving end
Methods

Data Compression
- Very effective if available
- Much more reliable than e-mail

Issues
- Requires equipment
- Certain level of receiver training required
- Software dependent
Training and Use
System must be

- Self evident
- Provide reference instructions
- Be easy to handle
- Require minimal training
Example Form

- Easy to use layout
- Identified lines and boxes for easy transmission.
- Formats available:
  - Paper
  - Electronic
  - Fax
  - Text Only
- Data entry self explanatory
Review

At the end of this unit participants will be able to:

• Describe the importance of planning for data collection

• Describe the importance of redundant data transmission systems and means
And now…

Take a break!