Rapid Assessment for Market (RAM)

Provides a basic understanding of the capacity of selected markets to provide people with key commodities in the immediate aftermath of a sudden shock;

Is an instrument allowing humanitarian practitioners with limited market expertise and time to develop a rapid and basic understanding of key markets within the first few days after a shock;

Does not assess the need for relief

**RAM PROCESS**

**STEP 1: Gathering initial information on the availability and accessibility of financial services**

What key commodities are needed by the shock affected population?  
(i.e. What market systems should the RAM focus on?)

What financial services are available to the shock affected population?  
Does it make sense to continue the RAM?  
If so, what marketplaces should the RAM focus on?

**STEPL1:** Gathering secondary information  
**Tool 1:** Key markets and commodities needed by the affected population
**Tool 2:** What financial services are available and accessible?
**Tool 3:** Drawing market maps
**Tool 4:** Continuing the RAM or not
**Tool 5:** Key markets the assessment should focus on

**STEP 2: Collecting market information**

What was the physical damage to the selected marketplaces?  
What were the consequences of the physical damage for the selected marketplaces?  
What is the traders’ capacity to supply key commodities since the shock?  
How has the people’s demand for the selected key commodities changed since the shock?  
How have the prices for the selected key commodities changed since the shock?

**STEP 2:** Recommendations for conducting interviews  
**Tool 7:** Discussion with market representatives or key informants
**Tool 8:** Discussions with traders (wholesalers/retailers)
**Tool 9:** Summary of findings per market (to complete before leaving the market)

**STEP 3: Analyzing Market Information**

What was the physical damage to the selected marketplaces?  
What were the consequences of the physical damage for the selected marketplaces?  
What is the traders’ capacity to supply key commodities since the shock?  
How has the people’s demand for the selected key commodities changed since the shock?  
How have the prices for the selected key commodities changed since the shock?

**STEP 3:** Conclusion tree to assess market response capacity

**STEP 4: Reporting the findings**

The aim of Step 4 is to assist the RAM team in writing a report.  
A report summarizing the assessment findings is required for response-analysis discussions and decision-making

**STEP 4:** Reporting format
**Tool 12:** Section 1: Shock and needs analysis summary  
**Tool 13:** Section 2: Market mapping  
**Tool 14:** Section 3: Market map and trader analysis

**STEP 5 - Monitoring**

Step 5 of the RAM is dedicated to the monitoring of key markets. Markets are dynamic in nature and their evolution is difficult to predict, particularly following a disaster, as both traders and customers adapt to the altered situation. To maintain an up-to-date understanding of the market context it is necessary to monitor the key commodities and marketplaces over time.

**STEP 5:** Retail Price Collection Form
**Tool 15:** Wholesale Price Collection Form
**Tool 16:** Secondary Price Data Information Form

**RESOURCES:**

Applying the RAM requires a team leader with a basic understanding of how markets work. A greater understanding of markets and market analysis experience will increase the quality of the assessment.

Cooperation with the logistics and finance departments is of particular importance.

Although the RAM does not assume that RAM users have market expertise, the following skills are needed:

1. Experience in field work and assessments;
2. Ability to break down and rephrase complex questions;
3. Ability to adapt the language to the interviewee;(i.e. adapting to the cultural and socio-economic background of the interviewee);
4. Ability to collect information using rapid and participatory rural appraisal tools;
5. Language skills;(i.e. local language and common language to communicate between team members);
6. Basic numeracy and analytical skills;
7. Excel / database skills for the analysis of the price data collected
8. Monitoring in Step 5 is needed by at least one RAM team member
EMMA is a set of tools (this toolkit) and guidance notes. It encourages and assists front-line humanitarian staff in sudden-onset emergencies to better understand, accommodate, and make use of market systems. It does not offer a simplistic blue-print for action. However, EMMA does provide accessible, relevant guidance to staff who are not already specialists in market analysis.

EMMA aims to encourage speedy, rough-and-ready market-system analysis during the first few weeks of an emergency situation. EMMA is not relevant to rapid assessments and initial concept notes in the first few days of a crisis.

The Scope

**Gap (people):** People, priority needs and preferences of most affected  
**Market:** Market system, constraints and capabilities  
**Response:** Emergency response, different options and opportunities

### WHO IS EMMA FOR?

EMMA is for members of staff leading early assessments on the front line during sudden-onset emergencies, and during the transition to early recovery programming.

By extension, EMMA is also for their managers and for decision makers responsible for planning initial and early responses to crisis.

EMMA is designed for generalists, as well as staff specializing in food-security, shelter, water, and sanitation sectors. This includes both front-line international support personnel drafted into a major emergency situation, and experienced local or national staff who may have good knowledge of livelihoods and economy in the affected area.

EMMA assumes limited previous experience of economic or market analysis

### THE MAIN TOOLS

- Household income and expenditure profiles – charts illustrating the main sources of income and expenditure  
- Seasonal calendars – summarizing important seasonal changes in markets and people’s lives  
- Market maps – graphical representations of market systems (before and after emergency onset)  
- Response frameworks – tables for summarizing emergency-response options and characteristics.
Pre-crisis Market Mapping and Analysis (PCMMA)

**Pre-crisis market mapping and analysis** should be carried out in the frame of the agency's programmatic strategy and emergency response contingency planning, not as a stand-alone exercise. Ideally, the analysis will rely on the shocks/crises and related needs of affected populations, potential response strategy, scope and timeframe, target populations, and intervention areas already identified by the agency in existing programmatic strategies and emergency response contingency plans.

### The objectives
- Informing programs seeking to build resilience or mitigate the impact of a forecasted crisis.
- Improving agency preparedness to respond to the forecasted crisis by understanding the impact it will have on the critical market systems.
- Supporting contingency planning exercises.
- Providing a baseline picture of how critical markets function when they are not under stress.
- Building staff capacity in market analysis and change approaches and attitude towards market based programming.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand the context</th>
<th>Determine what are the most likely shocks and threats that the population may face in the future. Determine what your agency most likely response to these crises will be. Identify the most critical needs of the targeted population your agency is going to address in case the forecasted scenario unfolds.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set the scope and objectives of your pre-crisis mapping</td>
<td>Determine which decisions the pre-crisis market mapping exercise will help you make and how it fits with your agency strategy and set the objectives of the pre-crisis market mapping and analysis. Identify what market information is missing and must be collected from the field and the operational questions the market analysis will respond to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure the buy-in of management</td>
<td>Get the buy-in of the management and key staff of your agency on the exercise and how it fits with your agency strategy; ensure sustainability of the exercise, making sure the results are being used to update contingency planning, to design responses etc. and also to ensure enough resources are being allocated to the exercise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-determine critical markets and key analytical questions</td>
<td>Define what specific markets systems are likely to be the most relevant to the response/program. Draft a list of key analytical questions to be answered for each of the pre-selected critical market systems. Preselect the geographical area to be covered by the analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap and gather the information already available</td>
<td>Gather, map and review the existing information on a) the pre-selected critical markets and their surveillance systems, b) the target groups, c) livelihoods in the selected area. Identify the information missing to answer each of the drafted key analytical questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare and plan for the market analysis</td>
<td>Develop a timeframe, draft agenda and budget for the pre-crisis market mapping and analysis exercise. Formalize the Terms of Reference (ToR) comprising: a) Context, objectives and operational questions, b) Critical market pre-selected, key analytical questions and geographical scope, c) Team composition and lines of responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finalize the frame of the analysis and preparation of field work</td>
<td>Agree with the whole Market Team on the crisis scenario, the target groups and agency response and present the results of the desk review. Finalize the selection of the critical market systems and the definition of the key analytical questions for each market system. Identify the market places to be visited and the key market actors to interview.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preliminary analysis and mapping</td>
<td>Select the periods/time of the analysis. Identify the key market actors to interview and the main market places and other market structures that are being used and accessed by the main market actors you have identified. For each market system, have the team sketch the reference map, the crisis map and the seasonal calendar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect the primary data</td>
<td>Translate the missing information and the hypothesis you have made on the preliminary crisis map into interview questions. Finalize the questionnaires, interview structures and plans and information-recording formats for their key markets actors. Each Market Team or enumerators collect the data in the field and identify more key informants.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final mapping</td>
<td>Translate the missing information and the hypothesis you have made on the preliminary crisis map into interview questions. Finalize the questionnaires, interview structures and plans and information-recording formats for their key markets actors. Each Market Team or enumerators collect the data in the field and identify more key informants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap and market analysis</td>
<td>Calculate the gaps in the reference and the crisis years faced by the target population. Draw conclusions about target groups’ access constraints and preferences. Analyze the market system’s capacity and performance during reference and crisis time, and existing or potential capacity to fill the gap faced by the target population. The key question to answer here is whether the shortfall in household consumption is a supply or a demand problem. Answer your key analytical questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of response options</td>
<td>Based on the gap and market analysis, identify the relevant and feasible response options to be implemented before, during, and after the crisis unfolds. Consolidate the crisis timeline. Speak with some of your key informants at the end of this step about the response options you have selected to check their feasibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market monitoring</td>
<td>Use the map analysis to determine the different market indicators to monitor. As for any other monitoring system, once you have determined what you need to know to monitor your market, define how and with whom you will gather the information and the frequency and responsibility of the data collection. The information you collect through monitoring needs to be superposed with seasonal consideration.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication of results</td>
<td>Use the map analysis to determine the different market indicators to monitor. As for any other monitoring system, once you have determined what you need to know to monitor your market, define how and with whom you will gather the information and the frequency and responsibility of the data collection. The information you collect through monitoring needs to be superposed with seasonal consideration.</td>
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<td>Update the pre-crisis market mapping and analysis</td>
<td>Formalize the results of the exercise in the market report. Identify key decision makers (cluster members, NGOs, local government, and donors) and online platforms for dissemination.</td>
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**Pre-crisis Market Mapping and Analysis (PCMMA)**

- **Objective:** Informing programs seeking to build resilience or mitigate the impact of a forecasted crisis.
- **Purpose:** Improving agency preparedness to respond to the forecasted crisis by understanding the impact it will have on the critical market systems.
- **Methods:**
  - Pre-determine critical markets and key analytical questions
  - Gap and gather the information already available
  - Prepare and plan for the market analysis
  - Finalize the frame of the analysis and preparation of field work
  - Preliminary analysis and mapping
  - Collect the primary data
  - Final mapping
  - Gap and market analysis
  - Selection of response options
  - Market monitoring
  - Communication of results
  - Update the pre-crisis market mapping and analysis

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**Key Considerations:**
- Understand the context
- Set the scope and objectives of your pre-crisis mapping
- Ensure the buy-in of management
- Pre-determine critical markets and key analytical questions
- Gap and gather the information already available
- Prepare and plan for the market analysis
- Finalize the frame of the analysis and preparation of field work
- Preliminary analysis and mapping
- Collect the primary data
- Final mapping
- Gap and market analysis
- Selection of response options
- Market monitoring
- Communication of results
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**Programmatic Strategy:**

- Provide a baseline picture of how critical markets function when they are not under stress.
- Build staff capacity in market analysis and change approaches and attitude towards market based programming.

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**Key Outcomes:**

- Improved agency preparedness to respond to the forecasted crisis.
- Better understanding of the impact of a forecasted crisis.
- Enhanced contingency planning exercises.
- Increased resilience among affected populations.
- Improved monitoring and evaluation systems.

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**Key Activities:**

1. Pre-determine critical markets and key analytical questions
2. Gap and gather the information already available
3. Prepare and plan for the market analysis
4. Finalize the frame of the analysis and preparation of field work
5. Preliminary analysis and mapping
6. Collect the primary data
7. Final mapping
8. Gap and market analysis
9. Selection of response options
10. Market monitoring
11. Communication of results
12. Update the pre-crisis market mapping and analysis

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**Pre-crisis Market Monitoring:**

- Use the analysis to determine the different market indicators to monitor. As for any other monitoring system, once you have determined what you need to know to monitor your market, define how and with whom you will gather the information and the frequency and responsibility of the data collection. The information you collect through monitoring needs to be superposed with seasonal consideration.

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**Key Benefits:**

- Improved response to forecasted crises
- Enhanced ability to build resilience among affected populations
- Strengthened contingency planning exercises
- Increased staff capacity in market analysis and change approaches
- Improved monitoring and evaluation systems

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**Additional Considerations:**

- Consider the shocks/crises and related needs of affected populations
- Potential response strategy, scope and timeframe, target populations, and intervention areas already identified by the agency
- Existing programmatic strategies and emergency response contingency plans

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**Tools and Resources:**

- Terms of Reference (ToR)
- Market Team
- Market enumerators
- Questionnaires
- Interview structures and plans
- Information-recording formats
- Desk review
- Map analysis
- Seasonal calendar

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**Follow-up:**

- Formalize the results of the exercise in the market report
- Identify key decision makers (cluster members, NGOs, local government, and donors)
- Online platforms for dissemination