

Overview of a Profiling Exercise “A step-by-step”

1. WHAT is IDP Profiling?

IDP Profiling is the collaborative process of identifying internally displaced groups or individuals through data collection, including counting, and analysis in order to take action and advocate on behalf of the IDPs, to protect and assist them and eventually, to help bring about a solution to their displacement.¹

The Process of IDP Profiling is divided to three phases: 1- Preparation, 2- Implementation and 3- Data Analysis and Reporting.

IDP Profiles consist of the following **core data**:

- i. *Number of IDPs disaggregated by age and sex*: in many case these may be only best estimates depending on the timing of the exercise and accessibility to the field.
- ii. *Location/s*: The location requirements include both current location and location of habitual residence whenever methodology allows.

Wherever possible **additional data** could be collected through the process and could include:

- iii. *Cause of displacement*
 - iv. *Patterns of displacement*
 - v. *Protection concerns*
 - vi. *Humanitarian needs*
 - vii. *Potential solution for the group / individual, if available*
- Programme specific information²

2. Is there a need for Profiling?

□ **Who?**

The question of whether there is a need for Profiling could be raised by any member of the humanitarian community: NGO, agency, cluster forum, inter-cluster forum, humanitarian coordinator, resident coordinator, government, donors etc.

□ **Indicators?**

Several observations, facts, gaps or requirements could trigger the question about the need for profiling. For example:

- Lack of figures, disaggregated by sex and age
- Many actors, different data and lack of agreed upon figures
- Inflation or deflation of figures, and lack of an agreed upon update mechanism
- Need for cross-sectoral overview of the situation
- Need for figures for planning, assistance and advocacy purposes
- Lack of baseline information

↳ **Output:**

1. Raise the question

▲ **Tip 1:**

An answer to this question can be provided through an initial desk review of available secondary data. If there is a feeling or possibility that profiling could be part of the solution for the existent problem, an accurate answer could be provided at a later stage by staff familiar with profiling, or profiling experts

¹ The interagency agreed upon definition can be found in “Guidance on Profiling Internally Displaced Persons” 2008, Ch. 1 pp 8.

² It is common to include in profiling exercises data related to specific programmes or projects requirements

3. Advocacy and Lobbying?

Once the possibility of a profiling exercise is on the table, the body that is raising the question should:

- ❑ **Make initial discussions of the needs and expectations for an IDP profiling.** These discussions should involve all the different actors in a collaborative process and be based on a (desk) review of available data. Availability of maps would be very instructive at this stage.
- ❑ **Contact a profiling agency, center or expert** for an initial assessment of the situation. [The Joint IDP Profiling Service can be contacted at this stage for example]

For better advocacy and lobbying the profiling agency, center or expert could:

- ❑ Discuss with the different actors the different methods of profiling.
- ❑ Discuss what a profiling exercise can and what it cannot provide
- ❑ Discuss possible alternative data collection methods based on agreed-upon objectives of the exercise and time frame
- ❑ Draft a simple concept paper (1 pager) with a preliminary proposed method, timeline and budget

↳ **Output:**

1. Know what profiling is and what it is not.
2. Reach an agreement whether to conduct a profiling exercise or not.

Δ Tip 2:

Make sure to involve all relevant actors: Government, HC, RC, members of the cluster(s) including local NGOs, possible implementing partners, members or representatives of other clusters, and any other relevant body.

4. Implementation forum and mechanism

Once an agreement is reached to go ahead with a profiling exercise the involved actors should assess whether the capacity for all the steps of a profiling exercise is there, and if not, whether it can be obtained/put in place.

A number of specific questions should be considered and answered prior to launching a profiling:

- ❑ Which forum/actor will be leading the profiling exercise? (in "clustered" countries it would most frequently be the Protection Cluster or the CCCM Cluster, in non-cluster countries, the HC/RC's office should lead the profiling or designate another lead)
- ❑ What will be the modality of implementation and who will implement the exercise?
- ❑ Who owns the data once available?
- ❑ What is the data dissemination plan?
- ❑ What are the data confidentiality requirements?
- ❑ How will the profiling be funded?

↳ **Output:**

1. Forum, ownership and SOPs agreed upon
2. Funding available for minimum the preparation and training phase
3. TOR of IDP Profiling specialist
4. A IDP Profiling specialist contracted

Once the answers to these questions are identified, the funding of the first stage of the profiling exercise should be provided and a specialist should be tasked to develop the methodology.

Δ Tip 3

The terms of reference of the specialist should initially include:

- 1- Liaise with different stakeholders and ensure inter-agency support for the profiling
- 2- Developing the methodology including budget and timeline, questionnaire, report and tabulation plan, data collection tools
- 3- Selecting, in collaboration with the cluster members, the implementing partner/s
- 4- Training the implementing partner/s

5. Data Collection Methodology

The data collection methodology should be designed by the profiling expert. His or her task is, especially when sampling methodologies are used, to design a statistically sound method that provides reliable estimations. For a comprehensive set of data, if possible, it is advised to use a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods.

The data collection methodology will depend, among other issues on the following:

- Type and patterns of displacement
- Available resources (financial and human)
- Level of detail required
- Accessibility of the identified location
- Time availability
- Geographical spread and type of settlements
- IDP Perceptions and sensitivities
- Resources and updating requirements

↳ **Output:**

Methodology developed, with its tools, including - in cases of sampling methods:

- Counting the universe
- Sampling method
- Selection of sample
- Extrapolation of sample / generalization

The source of data could be satellite images, maps, physical counting, locations / roads monitoring, individual and household interviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, semi-structured discussions, etc.

A combination of different methodologies would allow a better analysis at the end of the exercise. The profiling expert is the person to draft a methodology for the exercise thereby determining the appropriate design, i.e. feasible mix of various methods.

The different methods that can be combined in an IDP profiling:

- Rapid estimation methods*: mapping sites, lists collection, aerial satellite imaging, population movement tracking, population density, dwelling count, head count, count using sampling methods, extrapolation from sub groups.
- Assistance related profiling*: Includes updating of available data extrapolated from service centres such as, food distribution centres, health centres, etc.
- Household surveys*: Based on sampling methods.
- Registration*
- Population census*
- Qualitative interviews*
- Focus Group Discussion

Δ Tip 5

In addition to the statistical expertise, local knowledge is very important to advise on the feasibility of the methodology (mix of methods) chosen. Special consideration should be given to cultural issues. For example, the type of questions that could be asked. the forums in which the questions will be asked. choice of enumerators. etc.

6. Data Collection Instruments and Tabulation plan

The forms that are developed must be clear and simple and accompanied by a user, supervisor and interviewers guides:

- The forms must be usable for non-specialists
- The unit of measurement should be clear: individual, community, household, etc
- Questions must be phrased in a way that information can be obtained easily

- Survey questionnaires must be compilable into statistics and analyzable by a database
- It must be relevant in decision-making for the phase of the operation in which it is collected

The questionnaire should be designed in collaboration with all the partners according to their needs. This will ensure ownership of the process. The questionnaire should at a minimum ensure that the following information can be extracted:

↳ **Output:**
1. Questionnaire
2. User guidance
3. Report and analysis plan

- Numbers disaggregated by sex and age
- Locations, including current locations and area of origin locations
- Additional data as required by the relevant actors

The tabulation plan will indicate what kind of information the exercise will provide and in which format. The purpose of the plan is to allow the different actors to:

- Anticipate what information they will get
- Make sure that the questions asked will give them the information that they need

Due to the collaborative nature of the exercise, it is very important that the requirements of the different actors are limited to cross-cutting information or core data for a specific field. Profiling could be used to inform the design of more detailed specific needs assessments.

7. Recruitment of enumerators and agreements signing

During this phase, the following should be achieved:

- If the lead agency of an IDP profiling does not carry out the profiling, an (implementing) partner must be selected and a Memorandum of Understanding be signed. The contractual agreements must reiterate data ownership, dissemination plan and contain agreement on data protection requirements
- Development of the TORs of the required staff in accordance with the implementation requirements.
- Recruitment of staff
- Agreement on the SOPs

↳ **Output:**
MOU signed, TORs developed, Staff contracted, SOPs adopted

Δ Tip 6

This phase tends to fall in the cracks between methodology design and the actual implementation. It is advised that the Methodology designer is involved in this part to ensure an appropriate handover and a good understanding of what is needed to be done and how to do it.

8. Training and standard operating procedures

The newly recruited or appointed staff should be trained on the chosen methodology, definitions and concrete methods, preferably by involving them in a field testing:

↳ **Output:**
1. Training designed and delivered
2. Enumerators' guidance distributed

- The process/steps of the exercise and the precise role and responsibilities of every staff member
- Clarification of definitions
- The use of forms including the questionnaire with precise instructions of the filling process, including how to adjust the questionnaire if and as needed

- Data collection techniques such as interviewing, focus group discussion, semi structured discussion techniques as required
- The information flow

▲ Tip 7

The training could include a one day field implementation to make sure that the process is clear. The training could be modularised, so team members with specific tasks could be trained on their roles only.

9. Data collection

During the data collection phase, it is important that the Team Leader conducts regular debriefings with enumerators and team leaders to ensure progress, address challenges and questions and adjust implementation time plan.

10. Data Management and Data entry

The process of data management starts in parallel with the design of the questionnaire and the tabulation plan. It is very important that the two are compatible.

Every profiling exercise requires a data manager and trained data entry staff.

The transfer of collected data to databases should be controllable, clear, easy and consistent. It should take into consideration the geographic spread of the operation, logistical requirements, and internet and power availability.

All data collected will be entered into the database for analysis and reporting. The database will be standard in one country for one operation.

➤ **Output:**

1. Data base system developed.
2. SOP put in place

11. Data Analysis, Reporting and Dissemination

- The data analysis should be consistent with the tabulation plan.
- Use of statistical software for some methodologies is highly recommended.
- At the end of the exercise a final report should be produced and disseminated.
- The core information should be public.
- Specific information can be made public upon approval of the agency or body that leads the profiling exercise, e.g. the Protection Cluster.
- Modalities for sharing data should be determined from the beginning of the exercise.

➤ **Output:**

1. Final narrative analytical report.
2. Statistical tables / data

12. Data update

At the beginning of the exercise, the narrative analytical report should advise where feasible on:

- Updating requirements
- Updating mechanism
- Updating frequency