



## No. 1.3 Response Analysis

### What is response analysis?

Response analysis is the process by which a set of appropriate actions is identified in an emergency. Here, ‘appropriate’ is **defined by two sets of criteria**, related to: (1) the **needs** and livelihoods of the affected population; and, (2) the implementing agency’s **goals, capacity, and operating environment**.

It is important that response analysis be implemented as a distinct step, separate from situation analysis, to ensure adherence to the principle that humanitarian assistance be provided to populations who require assistance, in direct proportion to need, without political or agency bias. Here, providing assistance ‘in direct proportion to need’ should be seen in its broadest terms, to mean not simply filling a gap, but doing so in a way that builds on and supports people’s livelihood strategies.

This requires an analysis that both sets out an ideal set of responses (in relation to the gap and the livelihood setting) and a narrowed-down, pragmatic set of final options based on the agency’s own internal capacities and the humanitarian operating context (see Figure 2).



Fig. 1: Response analysis should *always* proceed an intervention (Credit: Chiramwiwa Gavi/OXFAM)

### How does response analysis relate to other steps in the project cycle?

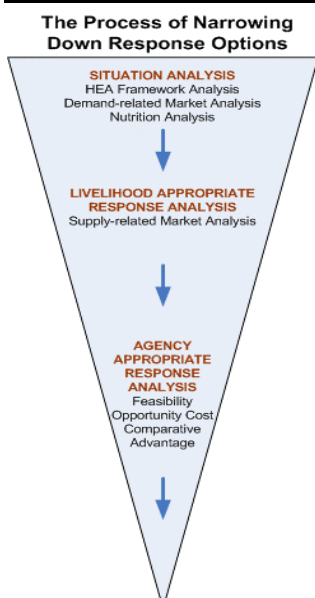


Fig. 2: Identifying appropriate responses (Boudreau 2008)

Response analysis follows directly on from situation analysis in the project cycle (Fig. 3). A **situation analysis** gathers essential information on the causes and consequences of a crisis. This allows determination of whether a response is required, and if so, setting out its magnitude and scope.

If a situation analysis determines the *need* for a response, then a **response analysis** determines its *nature*. Table 1 sets out the Sphere standard and indicator for humanitarian responses.

**Programme planning, implementation and management** follows the response analysis. This stage ensures that selected responses are implemented in a smooth, timely and efficient manner and that processes of monitoring, evaluation and programme re-design are established.

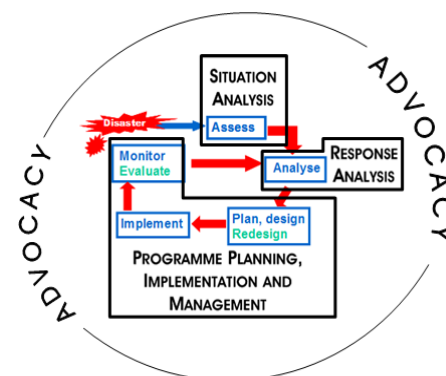


Fig. 3 : Oxfam EFSL project cycle (Boudreau 2008, adapted from Sphere)

Table 1: Sphere common standards for response and indicator

Sphere standard response	Sphere standard indicator
“A humanitarian response is required in situations where the relevant authorities are unable and/or unwilling to respond to the protection and assistance needs of the population on the territory over which they have control, and when assessment and analysis indicate that these needs are unmet.”	“...Humanitarian agencies undertake activities on the basis of need, where their expertise and capacity can have the greatest impact within the overall assistance programme.”

Source: Sphere Common Standard 3, Indicator 3

## What are the basic parameters for selecting an appropriate response?

For a response to be appropriate for Oxfam to implement, answers to the following must be ‘yes’:

1. Is the response *livelihood-appropriate*?
2. Is the response *agency-appropriate*?

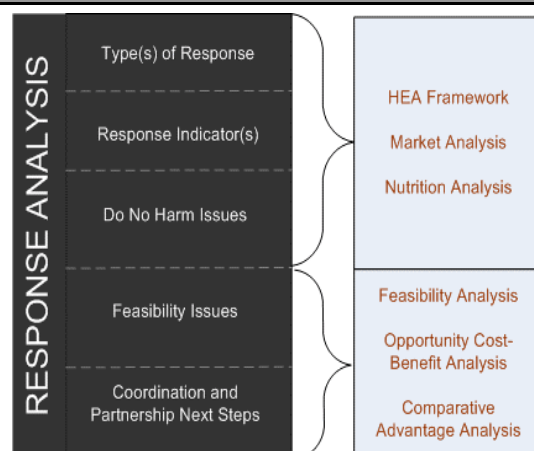
A ‘*livelihood-appropriate*’ response is one that fills an assessed gap (survival or livelihood protection) and/or builds resilience. If possible, it builds on and strengthens existing livelihood strategies; at a minimum, it does not undermine them. In practice, existing markets should be used to solve household deficits, provided that: (1) affected households provide adequate effective demand; and, (2) markets are able to supply the necessary commodities or services.

An ‘*agency-appropriate*’ response is one that makes the best use of the mandate, strengths and capacity of the organisation, and fits within the overall context of the humanitarian operation (i.e., it does not duplicate or interfere with other relevant efforts).

## What information is required for response analysis and planning?

Figure 4 outlines the information required to carry out effective response planning, which should be gathered during an initial 30-day assessment period. In addition to all of the information needed to answer the assessment’s *situation analysis* questions, response analysis and planning requires the following:

- A clear depiction of Oxfam’s regional priorities in the emergency area;
- A list of the other agencies operating in the emergency area, along with their existing and planned activities;
- A general understanding of Oxfam’s technical capabilities (both existing and potential) in the emergency area; and,
- A rough projection of the response’s potential benefits, cost, and the concurrent costs and benefits of alternatives.



**Fig. 4: Essential information for an effective response analysis (SOURCE: Boudreau 2008)**

## What are the minimum requirements for ‘first phase’ humanitarian response?

The following are the minimum requirements for programme management to use in the first phase of a humanitarian response i.e., around two to three months:

- On the first day after a disaster, Oxfam should be able to undertake initial assessments.
- Within two days of a rapid onset emergency being identified, a concept note should be produced to inform Oxfam and potential donors of the intention to respond.
- Within three days, Oxfam will start to deliver assistance.
- Within four weeks, a review/analysis/assessment must be undertaken and documented to guide the future direction of the programme (second phase and beyond).
- Within six weeks of a rapid onset and 10 weeks of slow onset emergency, a programme plan and logframe should be produced, including a coordination plan with external partners.

## Where can I find further reading and more detailed information?

Oxfam EFSL Rough Guides: – 1.1 EFSL Assessments – 1.2 HEA	The Sphere Project 2004. <i>Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response</i> (Chapter 1): <a href="http://www.sphereproject.org">www.sphereproject.org</a>
Leather, C. 2009. <i>Oxfam GB Minimum Requirements for EFSL work during the First Phase of an Emergency Response: A Guide for Programme Managers</i> .	Boudreau, T. 2008. <i>Response Analysis in Oxfam GB</i> . Oxfam, UK.

## Who can I contact for more information and guidance?

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