

*The primary objective of the IMRC is to provide critical information management support and capacity building to facilitate the enhancement of coordination mechanisms and further develop information management capabilities of response actors, leading to better identification of needs and gaps in humanitarian assistance inside Syria.*

## Background

Information Management support to all levels of the crisis response is essential in providing humanitarian actors with accurate information. The dynamic and multi-faceted nature of the Syrian crisis has created significant challenges for humanitarian information management. As the crisis continues, it has become increasingly important to fill information gaps in a systematic manner to improve decision making and promote more effective humanitarian response mechanisms.

The Whole of Syria (WoS) framework, established to enhance the effectiveness and accountability of the response inside Syria, brings together hundreds of international and national actors from Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey operational hubs, as well as in Syria. Actors working under the WoS architecture include the humanitarian clusters, United Nations (UN), International Organizations (IOs), International Nongovernmental Organizations (INGOs) and local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), in coordination with United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). The deployment of strategic and operational coordination structures has resulted in better collaboration and coordination. However, requests for greater coordination and information management support remain a need in the Whole of Syria approach. Coordination and IM challenges include:

- varying levels of IM capacity within national and international organizations and inter-agency coordination entities;
- increasing demand for improved data collection, processing, analysis, and reporting;
- data and information exchange due to lack of confidence, capacity to prepare and analyze data, and ability to share data between relevant actors;
- local and national NGO capacity issues in reporting their response data to the cluster framework via the OCHA 4W tool resulting in under-reporting of cross-border assistance;
- weak linkages between needs identification and analysis, preparedness and contingency planning, and response monitoring;
- increasing need for enhanced situational awareness and accountability across multiple hubs and constituencies; and
- IM and coordination support from all levels (partner, operational, strategic) critical for WoS approach success.

Funded by United States Agency for International Development and the Swiss Development Cooperation and in partnership with OCHA, the IMRC was launched to support the Whole of Syria structure with information management, coordination and capacity building services. Specifically, IMRC aims to enhance information management and reporting capacity of Syrian and international NGOs responding to the Syria crisis through the provision of change management and common services, coordination support, capacity building and an internship program.

IMRC encompasses the core of iMAP's strategy to improve outcomes and decision making through a three-tiered approach to information management (IM) support to all levels of the humanitarian community - partner, operational, and strategic levels. Through this tiered approach, the IMRC aims to be a regional center of excellence by providing innovative solutions and by establishing best practices in coordination and IM strategies.

## IMRC Services



### IM Capacity Building

IMRC will tailor and develop core and thematic trainings on humanitarian information management to empower organizations with an improved and standardized technical skillset. Along with the training program, the IMRC has an internship program where recent local university graduates are hired as interns, trained, and prepared for future employment as junior IM officers with partner organizations. Selection of national candidates proves iMAP's commitment to the development of national capacity.



### Change Management

The change management unit develops and aligns IM systems with global standards and best practices to optimize outputs. The overall goal of the change management unit is to maximize data-information lifecycles to enhance NGO response and coordination efforts. The realignment of NGO information management systems ensures that datasets and protocols are interoperable, thus facilitating information sharing and coordination.



## Common Services

The growing needs for IM support and the limited IM capacity of partner organizations has led to an increase in demand for iMMAP staff to support short, specific and limited scope projects. In response, IMRC common services provide the following support:

### Help Desk:

Humanitarian actors can access IM support services, ranging from data collection and processing to analysis, mapping and software development.

### Cluster Support:

iMMAP core staff are seconded to clusters for deployments of one month in support of large-scale WoS assessments and analysis as needed. iMMAP aims to strengthen cluster IM capacity with surge support targeting the production of pre-defined products or trainings.

### Inter-sector Group Support:

Time-bound information management sub-groups will be created to fulfill information management workstreams as they arise. Such workstreams could potentially revolve around protection, access, advocacy, needs assessments, population updates, people in need updates, situational monitoring, gap analysis, impact monitoring, indicators, reporting formats, and information sharing protocols.

### HPC Support:

This support includes, but is not limited to, the provision of humanitarian information management backstopping services when required to ensure the efficacy of the needs identification processes and response planning. Support for the HPC cycle will include: IM capacity, tools and resources required to develop a sound Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), subsequent Periodic Monitoring Reports (PMR), and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). As a function of Common Services, HPC support will deliver specific, time-bound outputs ranging from rolling out of data collection tools to development of the HNO website. HPC support is available to all cluster members, with a particular focus on supporting NGO data collection efforts, data cleaning and aggregation, data analysis, and development of data visualization tools.

## Beneficiaries

### Coordination Entities:

Whole of Syria Framework, OCHA, Inter Sector Group (ISG), Humanitarian Clusters, NGO fora and local and international NGOs

## 2017 Achievements

- Developed the technical capacity of more than 204 individuals from over 42 organizations engaged in the Syria response, including in-house and remote training.
- Delivered more than 200 targeted and time-bound IM products (e.g. websites, employees portal, open-source solutions, feedback and complaint system) to various clusters and over 120 organization
- Provided extensive direct support to the 2018 HNO, including HNO-Syria website and HNO report as well as contributed to the 2018 Humanitarian planning Cycle (HPC) in Gaziantep, Berlin, Beirut and Jordan and the mid and end-year periodic monitoring report (PMR).
- Managed the full IM cycle for 10 organizations under change management services
- Improved the coordination structure for the North-East Syria (NES) NGO Forum and provided extensive IM support to all 23 INGOs in the forum by providing 1) an inter-sectoral data sharing protocol to ease data exchange, 2) communication online platform for partners, 3) emergency response matrix database, and 4) IM common services such as data cleaning, mapping and visualization.
- Trained 6 interns who are now in various IM roles in different organizations such as Medair, WFP, SAMS, SRD and Global Communities
- Managed the clash security incidents database inside Syria and developed new tracking tools to automatically log incidents on the database with the support of OCHA



### Better DATA

Improve data quality, collection and timeliness to stimulate sharing and coordination



### Better DECISIONS

Analyze and visualize data to support better decision making



### Better OUTCOMES

Maximize program outcomes and make a difference

iMMAP's services have facilitated informed and effective disaster risk management, emergency response, and development activities by enabling evidence-based decision-making for cluster/sector leads, critical NGO, and government operations. iMMAP's goal is to alleviate the suffering of victims of natural disasters and armed conflicts by providing the humanitarian community with a decision-making service through the provision of recent, reliable and appropriate geographical and strategic information.