

Briefing note 4: Organizational Requirements and Capacity Building for Market-Based Programming

Market analysis and programming requires organizations to take on board new approaches and ways of working. This calls for new staff expertise and partnerships with organizations experienced in working with market systems. This briefing focuses on organizational considerations with respect to market-based programming, with particular emphasis on human resources. It highlights the need for institutional commitment and collaboration with other agencies to ensure greater coordination for effective humanitarian responses.

KEY POINTS

1. **More ambitious market engagement programmes require increasing organizational capacities, time and resources to implement effectively.**
2. **Market-based programming requires strong leadership to manage diverse teams and to secure support from other agencies.**
3. **Market development actions to strengthen the resilience of market systems require greater involvement from the development community.**

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITIES, TIME AND RESOURCES FOR MARKET PROGRAMMING

Provided the right expertise and sufficient resources are in place, market analysis during emergencies can generally be implemented relatively quickly and efficiently by humanitarian agencies. While the time required to develop and initiate market use or strengthening activities may take only a month or two, a pre-crisis market analysis will involve more in-depth market assessments, which in turn will lead to recommendations that might involve contingency planning and resilience building. A longer term commitment is required to strengthen the capacities of local organizations and programming that bridges the gap between humanitarian and development agencies.

These activities invariably require greater expertise, time and resources than those related to market use, and take significantly longer to implement as they need to be integrated within longer term programming. Figure 1 illustrates how the amount of time, resources and level of organizational capacity required for market analysis and programming depends on the depth of analysis and the level of market engagement (see [briefing note 2](#)).

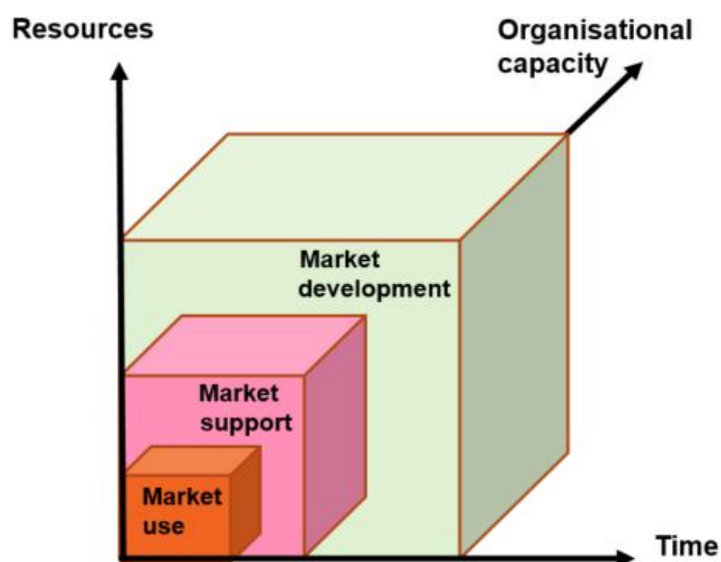


Figure 1: Organizational and resource requirements in relation to different levels of market engagement

STAFF EXPERTISE AND TEAM COMPOSITION

A key consideration before embarking on a market analysis is the availability of staff with the right skills/expertise. Ideally, a market assessment team requires a composition of staff who understand humanitarian WASH, market systems, cash transfer programming and consumer demand and behaviours. However, it may prove difficult to identify the personnel with the necessary expertise for the market assessment, especially at short notice.

The bulk of the data collection and analysis can be undertaken by a small, dedicated core team. Rather than training everyone to the same level, training should focus on staff who will lead the process and the enumerators responsible for data collection to ensure quality of the analysis. This requires good expertise in information/data management, and the ability to utilize ICT tools for data acquisition, analysis and presentation. There will also be a need for inputs from logistics, procurement, finance and monitoring and evaluation teams.

Requirements will depend on the depth of market engagement, but a common challenge is the need for expertise from outside the humanitarian sector. Ensuring inputs from development staff is essential to understand the nature and cause of the problems that are being faced, particularly where these relate to chronic development issues and how these compound the impact on populations during a crisis. This helps to understand how market systems operate in non-crisis situations and the approaches adopted during longer term development programming.

To promote organizational buy-in, there is a need for a better understanding across the organization of the value of market analysis to support humanitarian programming – both for emergency preparedness and response. As shown in Figure 2, this can be achieved through a combination of tailored workshops on market analysis and strategic discussions around the existing evidence base for working with market systems.



Figure 2: Training workshops were an important precursor to the pre-crisis market analysis in Harare

Training is an important part of the market analysis. This does not mean that everyone needs to be an expert in market analysis, but staff from country programmes do need to understand the basics.

Victor Makovere of Oxfam Zimbabwe training PCMA enumerators on the concepts of market systems prior to PCMA fieldwork (Oxfam, 2016). Photo: Oxfam.

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT

A significant factor in the success of a market analysis is the level of institutional commitment, which is largely influenced by the level of buy-in from programme leaders and organizational directors. This commitment is also necessary to support the uptake and implementation of recommendations from a market analysis to inform humanitarian programming activities. The level of engagement may be influenced by preconceived ideas about the outcomes from the market analysis or a lack of understanding of the potential benefits of market-based programming (or the potential negative consequences on a conventional in-kind response). Senior staff may buy into the approach but may not appreciate the complexities or the extent of organizational commitment that is required, nor perhaps the potential difficulties of implementation at scale. In other situations, there may be an underlying reluctance to adopt the approach due to either the lack of sufficient evidence with respect to the benefits or due to concerns about working with the private sector.

CO-ORDINATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Humanitarian responses to emergencies often involve different agencies responding to the needs of different groups of the affected population. These may be targeted towards specific groups in designated areas or targeted towards specific social groups. The understanding of market systems in one area can provide guidance to inform programming in other areas. Market mapping and analysis provides a stronger basis for a more holistic approach, working with existing service providers and suppliers of WASH commodities and engagement with government agencies.

The role of the WASH cluster as a lead actor in the process is therefore important to ensure collective understanding and ownership of the market analysis and to promote coordination and consistency between humanitarian agencies. The buy-in from different agencies and the role of the cluster is therefore key to the achievement of co-financing of market analysis by providing greater justification for the market assessment in the first place.

Coordination between humanitarian agencies and development partners is also important. Whereas humanitarian agencies have a clear understanding of the basic and immediate needs of populations in distress, development partners will have a stronger understanding and experience of market systems in non-crisis or less stressed environments.

Joint Cholera Initiative for Southern Africa (JCISA): Using market-based programming to strengthen cholera preparedness and response in Southern Africa

With support from Oxfam, UNICEF convened a JCISA platform in May 2017 bringing together agencies from across the southern Africa region with the aim of strengthening regional collaboration for more timely, integrated and effective technical support for countries in the areas of cholera preparedness, response and resilience. One of the objectives of the workshop was to increase understanding of market-based responses to cholera as part of preparedness and response interventions. Oxfam in Zimbabwe presented experiences from Harare which highlighted the need to reconsider the current status quo of response activities to successfully tackle the issues around cholera outbreaks. This stimulated interest in market-based approaches and highlighted a need for a concerted capacity building effort across the region.



REFERENCES AND SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

CaLP (2016). CTP organisational capacity assessment tool. Available from www.cashlearning.org

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