

PILOT TEST of EMMA in MYANMAR
July 2008

**Testing Emergency Market Mapping & Analysis
in the Ayeyarwady Delta, Myanmar
following Cyclone Nargis**



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This report has been produced for Oxfam, IRC and InterAction, with the invaluable practical assistance of Save the Children in Myanmar. It contributes to the development of a toolkit (EMMA) for humanitarian agencies to better understand market systems in the aftermath of sudden-onset emergencies. For further information please see www.dgroups.org/groups/RMAT



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For making us feel so welcome, for being so patient during translation, and for their frequent promises to always do their best, we sincerely thank the Pilot Two participants of Myanmar, who tirelessly contributed towards making a stronger tool.

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1 Introduction

The EMMA toolkit is a set of tools and guidance notes under development. It is designed to assist front-line humanitarian staff in sudden-onset emergencies to better understand and where appropriate make use of market systems. The ultimate purpose of EMMA is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the early humanitarian actions taken to ensure people's survival, protect their food-security and restore their livelihoods.

1.1 Purpose of EMMA pilot

EMMA is work in progress. During the current phase, the toolkit is being subjected to a series of "pilot tests", intended to explore how potential toolkit users actually apply the tools and guidance in a live humanitarian emergency situation. We want to understand what works well, what doesn't, and what components of EMMA need to be modified to better fit the resources and constraints of typical humanitarian agencies. Specifically we are concerned with:

- The appropriateness of the tool in meeting agency information needs in a timely fashion
- The time taken to apply the tool
- The technical capacity of field teams and their capability to use the tool
- The reaction of traders and other market actors to the tool

The first pilot test was conducted in western Kenya in April 2008, in the aftermath of the conflict and population displacement that had taken place during January and February 2008.

This report covers the second pilot test, conducted in Ayeyarwady delta during July 2008, in the aftermath of the devastating Cyclone Nargis.

1.2 Cyclone Nargis

Cyclone Nargis struck the Ayeyarwady Delta in Myanmar on 2 and 3 May, leaving over 84,000 people dead and more than 50,000 missing. Over 450,000 houses were completely destroyed and 350,000 partially. More than 600,000 hectares of agricultural land were flooded, killing up to 50% of draught animals. Many skilled fishers and processors died in the flooding and the storm - over 27,000 fisheries workers are missing or dead. Detailed information about the impact of Nargis is in the Post-Nargis Joint Assessment (PONJA report) at www.asean.org/21765.pdf

1.3 EMMA host and participants

The second EMMA pilot was hosted by Save the Children in Myanmar (SCiM). SCiM were present in Myanmar doing livelihoods and child-protection work before Nargis struck, but as part of the international response to the disaster, they are now running one of the largest NGO emergency food security and livelihoods programmes in Ayeyarwady Division.

Beside contributing to the development of EMMA, SCiM wanted to better understand critical market systems for the population affected by the cyclone, and so enable SCiM to programme more effectively.

The pilot test was led by Anita Auerbach and Mike Albu from Practical Action Consulting, seconded to SCiM. We worked with the support and advice of SCiM's own livelihoods team staff in Yangon, and a locally-recruited assessment team of 12 individuals – drawn from partner NGO's of Oxfam and SCiM.

2 Pilot Process in Myanmar

2.1 Context for piloting EMMA

The cyclone struck in early May. Along with other international NGO agencies, SCiM were only able to begin implementing a large-scale response after experienced international staff arrived in mid June. By mid July, when pilot took place, SCiM were in the midst of a rapid expansion of staff (international and nationals) and operational activities. Planning was already taking place to implement substantial responses to meet urgent non-food and livelihood recovery needs in Pinkyayaing (a.k.a. Middle Island) and Hlaing Bon (a.k.a. East Laputta).

The EMMA pilot took place in mid July (11 weeks after Nargis). However, the operational phase of the humanitarian response was in many ways similar to perhaps week 3 or 4 of a 'normal' crisis. The atmosphere in the Yangon office was frenetic; managers and staff were extremely busy with operational tasks and planning; people had little time or mental space to analyse information or reflect on methods. This was a good time and place to 'test' EMMA therefore, in the sense of providing a realistic humanitarian crisis environment, dominated by the need for decisions and action!

A number of livelihoods and emergency needs assessments and other surveys were taking place, or were just being completed, at around the same time as the EMMA pilot. Most prominently:

- SCiM had just undertaken a rapid emergency needs assessment
- FAO completed a rapid agriculture (*crops, livestock, fisheries, forestry*) assessment in June 2008
- ASEAN, UN and the Myanmar Government were about to release findings of the comprehensive post-Nargis joint assessment (PONJA) - on 21 July 2008.
- WFP were conducting a large economic survey of food prices and availability in 35 market-places in the affected area during July.

This meant that quite a lot of information (data) became available during the pilot test about the impact of Nargis on households and producers. In addition, SCiM already had some useful information from household economic analyses (HEA) about people's livelihoods in the delta prior to Nargis. There was, however, very little information available about the way value-chains or market-systems functioned before the cyclone.

SCiM provided us with excellent accommodation, training spaces, administrative and logistical support. However, due to operational pressures, they were unable to commit any experienced members of staff to co-lead or participate fully in the EMMA pilot process. After the initial assessment team training (4 days) led by Mike, leadership of the EMMA process (i.e. organisation of fieldwork and post-field analysis) was assumed by Anita.

The local assessment team consisted largely of young volunteer nationals drawn from partner NGOs. Very few of this team had prior experience of humanitarian operations, of assessment surveys or of livelihoods development work. In fact few had prior experience of visiting, living or working in the rural Ayeyarwady delta areas most affected by Nargis. In addition, language barriers meant that all the training and post-field analysis work had to be conducted through interpreters for Mike and Anita. This was necessarily time-consuming.

Although access to the crisis-zone – in the Ayeyarwady delta – was possible, travel formalities for non-nationals made it impractical for either Mike Albu or Anita Auerbach to accompany the inexperienced EMMA assessment team to the delta during the assessment work. This meant heavy reliance was placed on de-facto team leaders who emerged from among the group during the training process.

2.2 EMMA pilot process or methodology

Anita and Mike arrived in Yangon on July 14th. Prior to our arrival, SCiM and Oxfam held a workshop (July 5th) to identify the critical market-systems which were of most interest for EMMA. This was facilitated by Save's visiting value-chain expert Tuan Anh Doan.

Selection of Critical Market-Systems

The July 5th workshop essentially served the same purpose as the initial components of EMMA: i.e. of selecting in which market-systems to do detailed field-work assessment, mapping and analysis; based on an understanding of the cyclone's impact, the affected population's emergency needs and pre-crisis livelihood strategies.

The de-facto selection process was possibly not as systematic as proposed in the current version of EMMA – for example as regards seasonality factors, and differentiation of livelihood strategies between different affected groups. However, in practice, we had neither the time nor access to the human resources (key informants) to re-visit this process simply for the benefit of testing EMMA.

There were also good reasons to believe that the selected markets – specifically in the fishery sector (nets and other fishing gear) and in relation to shelter needs (roofing materials) – were realistic non-food priorities. Other market systems considered in the short-list included water pots and household items, boat-building and carpentry tools, crab-hunting and trading, other fishery production. Financial services (access to credit) and rural labour markets were also highlighted, as important components of most of these market systems. We were also advised to steer clear of the critical paddy-rice sector (production, markets, policies, access, prices) as this was considered to be too contentious to investigate or analyse at this time.

Training of Assessment Team

Training of the assessment team began on July 16th and lasted four days. After an initial orientation in the rationale and purpose of EMMA, and some elementary economic principles, the training concentrated on the EMMA component concerned with market-system mapping and analysis. Due to lack of time, and bearing in mind the assessment team's capacity to absorb knowledge and analytic process, the training was not comprehensive. Instead it focussed on specific components of EMMA. For example, given the team's inexperience and need for autonomy in the field, more than one day was devoted to designing and practicing methods for interviewing households and market-actors (traders, retailers etc).

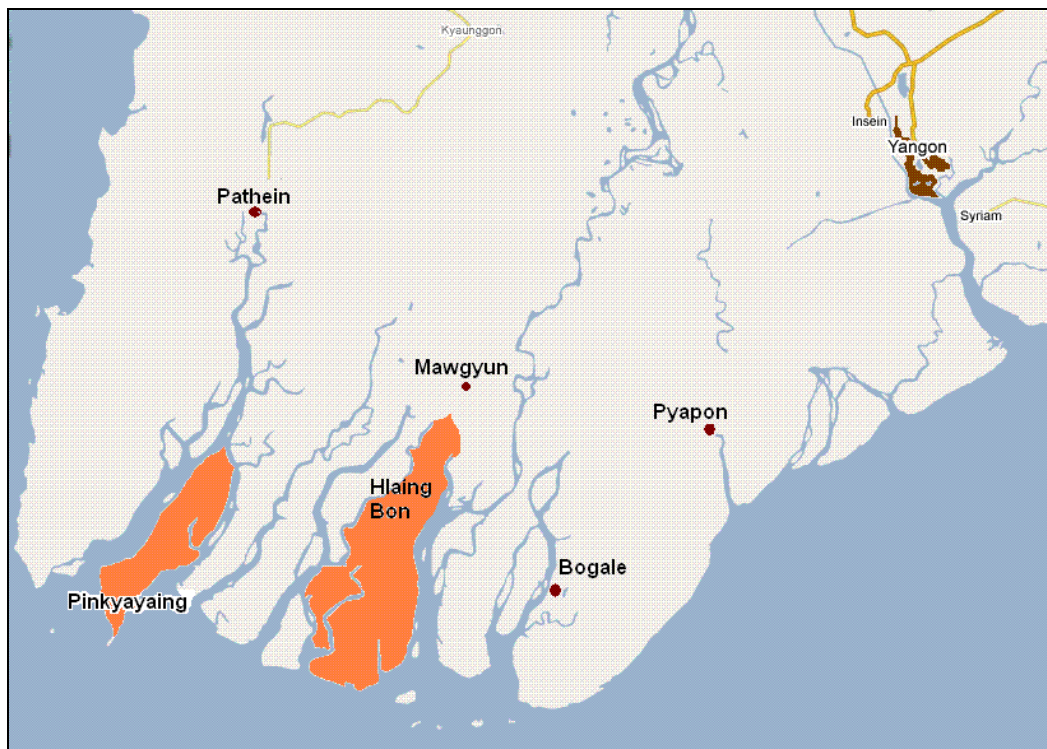
A field-assessment day was inserted before the final training day, for the team to conduct interviews with wholesale traders and retailers in the Yangon city area. This timing was highly useful for gaining experience and building team cohesion before going to the Ayeyarwady delta.

Field Work in Ayeyarwady Delta

On July 22nd, the assessment team divided (into four mini-groups) and travelled to the two assessment areas (Pinkyayaing and Hlaing Bon). In each area, one group focussed on the fishery sector and the need for fishing nets specifically; while the other group focussed on shelter and the need for durable thatch-panels (dhani) in particular. The teams spent five days in the field, each team visiting villages, trading centres and regional market towns (including Pathein, Pyapone, Bogale, Mawgyun). Anita remained in Yangon conducting background research.

During the field-work, the mini-teams interviewed households, village retailers, market traders and wholesalers in at least six villages and four market towns, as well as Yangon. See the EMMA toolkit for details. Interviews were essentially qualitative, examining needs and constraints, although the teams also gathered information on prices and volumes traded both before and in the aftermath of Nargis.

All the travel (boats, vehicles), accommodation and field-work logistics for the mini-teams was arranged by SCiM staff in Yangon and in their Ayeyarwady field-offices. This support was both time-consuming and essential: implications for future EMMA pilots in difficult travelling environments.



Analysis and Reporting

From July 28th – 30th, the teams reconvened at SCiM offices in Yangon, to collate their findings, develop market-system maps and analyse the results. This process was led by Anita, with practical assistance from Tony Stitt (OFDA) and contributions from Sophia Dunn and Rick Bauer (Oxfam). Their key findings and recommendations were written up in separate market analysis report on the two market-systems (see below).

On July 31st, a summary of the key findings and recommendations were presented to an external meeting of humanitarian agencies in the shelter and early-recovery cluster groups in Yangon. Organisations represented included Oxfam, World Vision, Mercy Corps, WFP, Triangle, SCiM, MFF, ...

There was a huge amount of interest in EMMA. Judging by the basic level of questions that members of the shelter cluster asked about thatch, and the early recovery people asked about small fish nets, EMMA managed to generate a lot of useful information in a relatively short space of time.

The seasonal calendar proved an excellent tool for communicating quickly the key seasonal factors, and it was especially helpful for participants who had thus far been unable to think ahead about seasonal shelter issues. The market maps were also very popular. Many people asked for copies after the presentation. Few seemed concerned that the finding lack precision or quantification. It was definitely the qualitative information people were interested in. No one asked about numbers, prices, and quantities at all.

Finally, an evaluation was conducted among the EMMA assessment team to understand their perceptions of the toolkit and training provided, and to learn from their experiences of putting it to use.

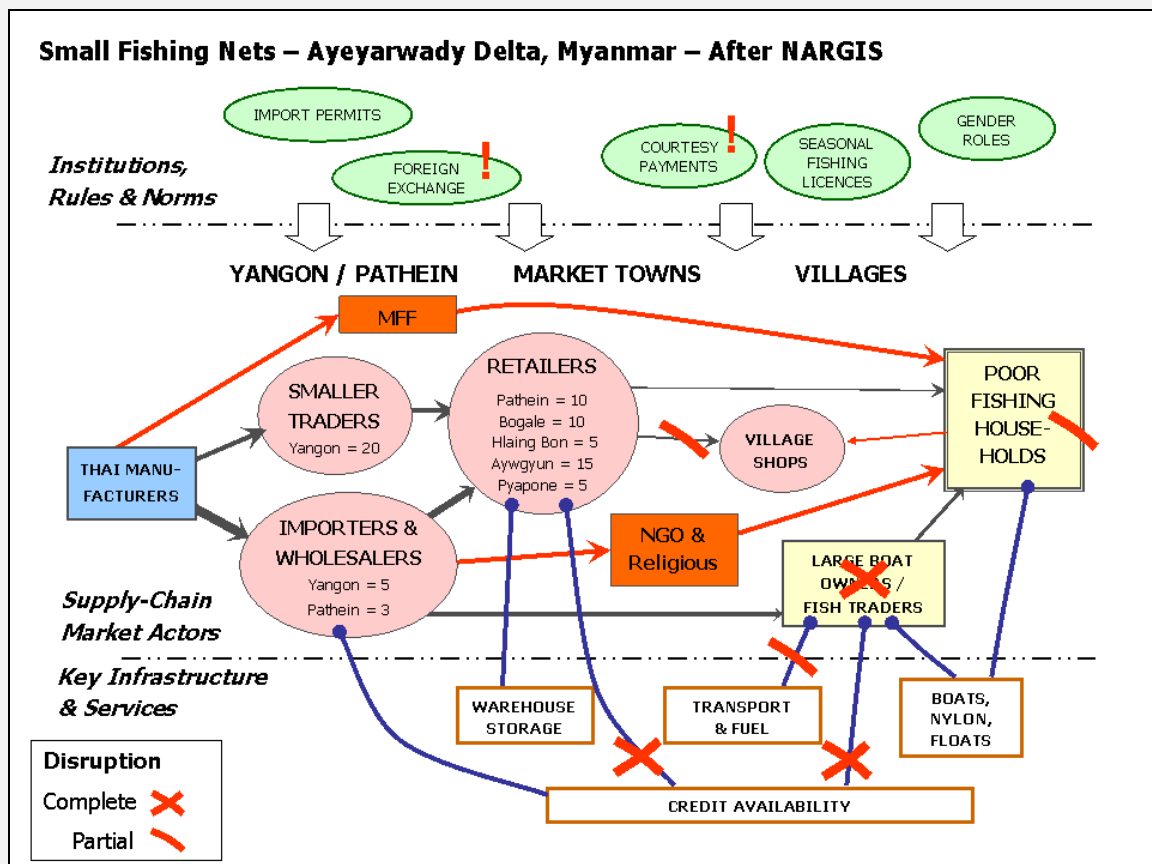
2.3 Market system findings & recommendations

The key findings and recommendations of the assessment teams in the two market-systems (fish nets, dhani thatch-panels) are written up in the separate market analysis report.

This is available on the EMMA website www.dgroups.org/groups/RMAT

Highlights from that report are inserted below:

Fish Net Market System - Highlights



In order to facilitate the early recovery of village-level fishing net traders, where possible, agencies should procure small nets from affected villages and not attempt to bypass market chain actors by purchasing in bulk from wholesalers in Yangon.

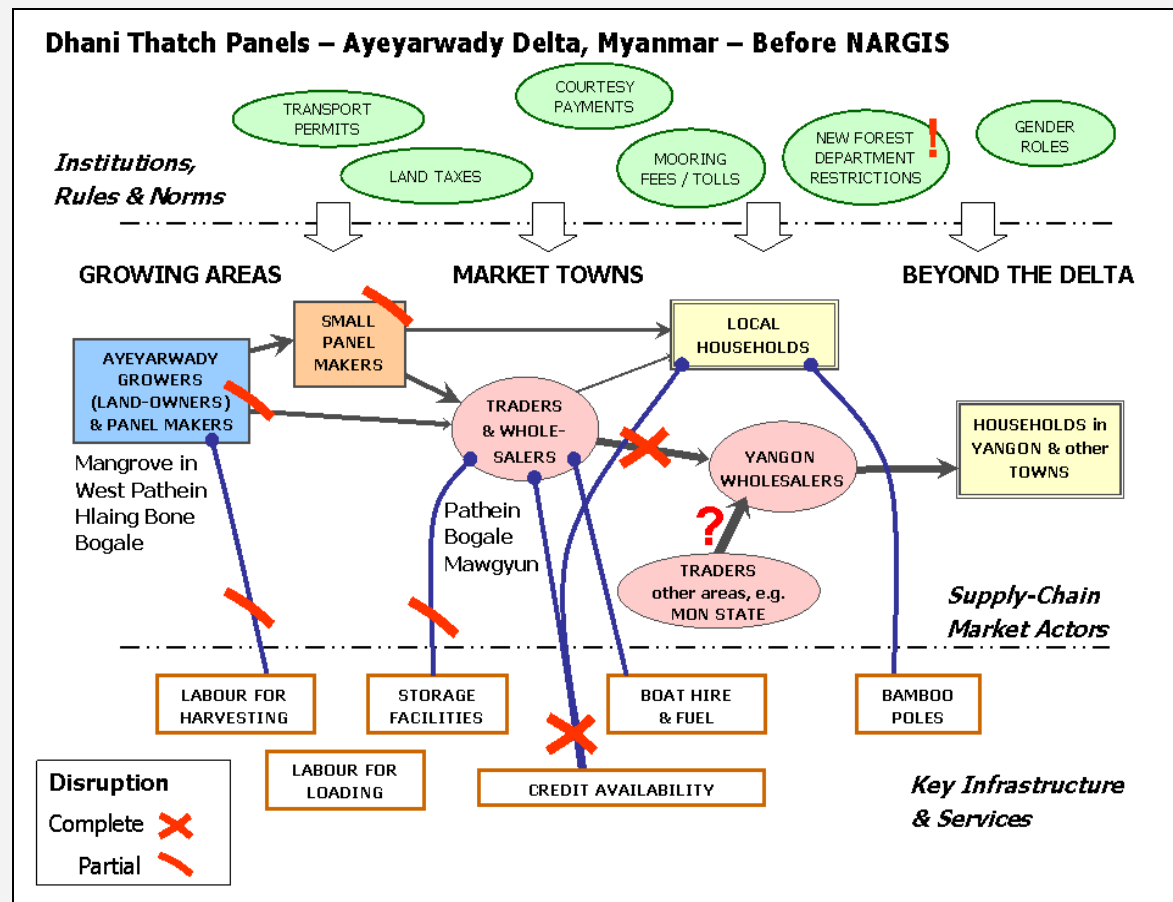
The main bottleneck to accessing significant quantities of nets is obtaining credit from larger actors. Agencies may need to provide either credit to the village retailer, or act as guarantors to wholesalers on behalf of village retailers.

- Households expressed a preference for cash or control over the process of selecting and buying the most appropriate net.
- Fishing households reported that most nets are useless without boats, therefore donors should consider how to synergise their programmes with other donors to ensure that fishermen are able to actually use the nets.

Further follow-up includes:

- Further analysis of how **fishing licenses** may affect poorer households.
- Further analysis of the **shift in livelihoods gender roles** as many fishermen were sadly lost in the cyclone leaving behind female headed households
- **Analysis of fish market systems** is absolutely critical to understanding how poor households usually interact with this system and where potential bottlenecks may lie.
- **Analysis of the large fishing boat and net market** systems as these were major providers of employment .
- Understanding of how the cyclone has affected fish stocks.

Dhani Thatch-panels Market System – Highlights



Most individual households prefer livelihoods-oriented interventions over help with shelter materials. The high distribution of tarpaulin sheets has provided a temporary substitute for more lasting shelter. Housing repair is likely to peak in April/May 2009 when devastated areas of thatch are anticipated to have returned and harvesting occurs. Permanent thatch shelter interventions may be more appropriate around that time. In the meantime, supply remains the key constraint for thatch and prices across the delta are being pressured by excess demand from Yangon.

Further research is recommended for:

- The supply of thatch from areas not discussed here, i.e. Mon State and Myungmya.
- Study of the market systems for other shelter items such as tarpaulin and CGI sheeting.
- Gender concerns on availability of women for panel making
- Further analysis of the impact on the livelihoods of actors involved in the thatch market system, i.e. in the growing areas
- Monitoring on how rising prices of thatch affect poorer households in unaffected areas. Specifically, if they have adequate means to access to shelter materials in the dry season when they would normally repair roofing. As these families are not in the 'the spotlight' they could be particularly vulnerable to any price increases, which push households just above the poverty line down into groups of concern.

2.4 Participants' own evaluation of EMMA

A written evaluation of the toolkit, teaching points and pilot organisation was conducted among the assessment team. When asked what the best thing about working on EMMA was, a third indicated the training 'lectures'. Everyone agreed that they had received adequate training for EMMA and that the pace of training was at a good speed with enough opportunities for feedback and discussion.

Several participants complained about the reception, transport and accommodation in one particular SCiM field office. Feedback has been given to the host organisation to improve standards for future assessment teams.

Some participants had difficulty working with other group members who "lacked motivation". This seems to reflect inexperience of some team members. Care should be taken for future pilots to select fewer, but more experienced people, if possible.

More than half the assessment team felt that EMMA users should be people with 'specific market analysis skills'. One of the most committed group members added that the user should be someone with a knowledge of supply/demand, humanitarian assessments and development work.

On the whole teams reported that the households and traders responded well to their questions and understood the importance of EMMA. Some traders complained about over assessment by NGOs with no follow-up or purchases (assessment fatigue).

Most participants felt there was insufficient time to complete EMMA fieldwork. The balance between time spent training and the relatively short time in the field felt wrong. Four participants felt that a month was needed! Others said they needed between 2 days and 3 weeks. Some participants – lacking experience of emergency operations, were probably seeking more 'perfect' data that is really required of EMMA.

3 Lessons Learned

3.1 Initial EMMA steps

The Myanmar pilot of EMMA did not cover the initial EMMA steps. In other circumstances, we would have used 'gap analysis', a 'seasonal calendar' and an appraisal of 'cash feasibility' as a way to move from the existing emergency needs assessment (ENA) to the identification of preliminary response options. And thus to the selection of critical market-systems. However, in this Myanmar pilot, the choice of market-systems was essentially already made (see section 2.2 above) by the SCiM livelihoods team in the July 5th workshop. None-the-less, we learned some things of value:

- The process of selecting critical market systems for EMMA must not be over-elaborate. Experienced humanitarian staff will probably feel they know intuitively which market systems need to be understood better, based on an interpretation of emergency 'needs'. The initial EMMA steps must not appear time-consuming or superfluous.
- The seasonal calendar tool is very important, and must be heavily emphasised. SCiM already had a good seasonal calendar for Ayeyarwady from previous HEA work in Kaungyidaunt Township in 2007. However, this did not cover the seasonal factors relevant to housing reconstruction, which would have been useful to know before the main EMMA work began.
- Because of the previous HEA work and other background material, we had a fairly good picture of the affected population's likely livelihood strategies – which augmented field visits in June. We were probably lucky in this regard. In general, EMMA needs to specify clearly what minimum level of 'livelihoods' information is desirable in ENA's – even if we know that it may take some years for these standards to become the norm.
- The selection of critical market systems may depend on factors other than affected people's needs, and the impact of the crisis on markets. Other considerations may include political, security and operational sensitivities about the EMMA process itself.

3.2 Main EMMA components

The focus of effort in the Myanmar pilot was on the main EMMA components around market mapping, analysis of market-systems and interpretation of findings. Many of the same lessons about EMMA were learned (reinforced) here as in the first pilot in Kenya. Essentially, these relate to the challenge and imperative of ‘simplifying’ and speeding up the EMMA process, so that it better fits the resources and capabilities available to emergency teams. The added value also came from Mike’s first-hand experience of these pressures.

Language

- Great use of ‘logistics’ terminology would be useful – e.g. lead times, pipe line, supply chain. This makes it easier to communicate and engage with logisticians and also introduces professional language
- Try to avoid idiomatic language if possible (*e.g. shaping the environment*) as this makes translation difficult

Basic Economic / Market Concepts

- It is difficult for an assessment team to do effective qualitative interviews with traders, if they do not understand fundamental economic concepts such as the relationship between supply, demand and prices, or what a ‘value-chain’ or a profit margin is. A degree of elementary teaching for assessment team members is therefore required before field-work begins. Perhaps this should be a training module for assessment team members within EMMA.
- Persons leading the EMMA process need to be relatively comfortable with these basic economic / market concepts themselves if they are to orientate the rest of the team and lead the fieldwork and subsequent analysis of data. This must be the objective of the envisaged EMMA ToT course to be developed in phase 4. It also implies that people wishing to be EMMA practitioners should have some prior aptitude for basic economic thinking, since this can not be conveyed in a 2 or 3 day training.

Seasonality

Most participants quickly understand the seasonal calendar and how and why prices fluctuate with the season; although some of the participants still hadn’t understood why they needed to collect data for the ‘same time last year’, even though they did understand the reasons for seasonal price changes.

- The calendar should be used more to get across the point of seasonal data collection, and the range of reasons for supply/demand shifts, i.e. use a seasonal graph of changing quantities, and prices, to highlight the importance of collecting and comparing information consistent with the season.
- We could also use the calendar more to help participants explore causal relationships in the field, i.e. if affected groups do not want thatch now, then what are the issues we need to explore at that later date?

Market Mapping

- Include some guidance in EMMA toolkit showing how the sizes of arrows and boxes can be used to indicate the volume of trade flows, market share of different actors and relative importance of the services/infrastructure, rules, etc.

A suggestion for the electronic version of the toolkit – include a powerpoint template of a market map that can be easily manipulated so that users don’t need to draw the whole thing from scratch. (*e.g. all maps will need the 3 titles ‘Services, Infrastructure’, etc.*)

Interviews and Data Collection

The assessment team in Myanmar was particularly inexperienced when it came to conducting interviews (with households or traders) or gathering data in the field. The training therefore included substantial time spent designing, translating and testing a questionnaire / interview structure in the vernacular. This process seems essential to EMMA fieldwork preparation.

We did not have time however to develop this 'list of questions' into a user-friendly 'template', as Mercy Corps did, for recording the responses from interviewees. This caused problems later with the collation of data, since the teams had not been able to organise information spontaneously in the field. Having a more experienced EMMA team leader in the field would have probably helped.

However lessons for EMMA to support data collection include:

- Demand information:
We need different example tables for the different types of demand, i.e. anticipated, donor-induced demand...
- Supply information:
We need 2 examples, 1 by area, 1 by type of trader. Indicate month for 'before' and 'after' columns (maybe more than 1 month), and unit/time, i.e. kg/week, to guide consistency.
- Questionnaires:
Subject headings are needed to establish an interview structure, which would force participants to adapt the questions to their particular culture, language level, market system.
- Getting interviews with traders:
some participants found this particularly difficult and sometimes resorted to alluding to potential purchases in order to get information from traders. This is risky and needs to be guarded against.
- Transport costs:
We didn't really make sufficient effort to collect this data, so the 'value chain' analysis was not complete. Should this be better highlighted in the revised EMMA.

Data Analysis

EMMA is not a linear process. It deals with complexity and really requires an 'iterative' mind-set. This means the analysis (i.e. thinking about what the data means) needs to be a continuous process – beginning from the initial EMMA steps and preliminary response options, continuing with preliminary market maps and then elaborating these during the field-work and afterwards. EMMA practitioners need to be comfortable with this constant reflection on information and revision of knowledge.

- One way to encourage this kind of iterative analysis is to include some 'decision-points' at the end of each interview questionnaire. The idea is that the interviewer is prompted to make interpretations, draw tentative conclusions, about key issues (e.g. a trader's capacity to supply) on the spot, while the interview is still fresh. It helps to focus on collecting information selectively.
- The draft guidance note on market system analysis written by Mike in July "was really good", and will be incorporated in the revised EMMA

3.3 Pilot testing process

The general consensus – among participants in the assessment team, among SCiM livelihoods team, logistics staff and other agency representatives who attended the external meeting on July 31st – was that EMMA performed well in Myanmar. It seemed to be widely appreciated as a useful tool by most everyone that the pilot team met.

The host agency (SCiM) certainly found the information gathered by participants very useful and will use the recommendations in their planning for any programming planning in these market systems.

It should be noted that EMMA's success was assisted by two factors:

- i. The context was highly relevant. Despite being 11 weeks post-Nargis, the test was effectively under emergency conditions with significant unmet needs remaining.
- ii. SCiM had administrative capacity to host the EMMA pilot process. They unexpectedly had a highly capable volunteer staffer, who took responsibility for all the logistics and arrangements for EMMA.

We were highly fortunate in the second case, and it is quite unusual to have a resource person able to organise things for such a large pilot team (2 ex-patriots, 13 nationals).

- In future pilots, we should aim to have at most 6 or 7 participants in the EMMA pilot team, so as to reduce the administrative and logistical burden on the hosting agency
- These participants in EMMA pilots need to have **some** previous experience – either
 - as humanitarian practitioners (i.e. who understand agencies' operational needs), or
 - in livelihoods programming in the affected area (i.e. familiarity / contacts with key informants), or
 - of rapid assessment processes (i.e. qualitative interviewing and rapid data collection), or
 - of markets / value-chain analysis in the informal business sector (i.e. grasp of basic economic and market concepts). This could include logisticians.

Host agency ownership of EMMA process

In Myanmar, Anita essentially took on the role of the person who leads the EMMA process – rather than merely being a facilitator. This means, in particular, that she had to do the background research (using literature that was in English and therefore inaccessible to most of the assessment team), lead the data collation and data analysis process, write the market systems report on key findings

In future pilots we need to try to establish greater ownership of the EMMA process by the host agency – as this will better simulate a real application of EMMA. This implies leadership from an experienced member of staff within the host agency. Following brief training on EMMA by Anita, he or she will ideally take responsibility for garnering background literature, analysing the data and writing up the key findings and recommendations.

- The EMMA lead practitioner needs ideally to have two or three of the 'person specifications' listed above to do this.
- We need to limit the number of other 'external' participants if possible, without losing the opportunity to get buy-in to EMMA from other agencies through active participation.
- External participants from other agencies should be 'local staff' if possible.

The process of 'host agency ownership' will also promote thinking on where EMMA should 'sit' within an organisation. As EMMA is designed for the analysis of food, non-food and services market systems, the potential users are quite broad. For instance, for the analysis of a particular shelter market system, the lead person for EMMA could be within the emergency Shelter department, with participation from Livelihoods, Logistics, generalist field staff and managers. Alternatively, Logistics may lead the process with joint participation from Shelter and Livelihood staff.

However the process is organised, pilot tests clearly indicate that market mapping, is a powerful communication tool which facilitates quick and effective information sharing between departments, managers and donors.

3.4 Training implications (re Phase 4)

The Myanmar pilot revealed clearly that we need to envisage a distinction between the central role of EMMA leaders, and the role played by EMMA assessment team participants.

EMMA leader	EMMA team participant
<p>Experienced international humanitarian practitioner (e.g. Oxfam HSP), or</p> <p>Experienced national / regional manager</p>	<p>Less experienced, national member of staff, government official, or partner NGO staffer.</p>
<p><u>Responsibilities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background research pre-EMMA • Recruitment, training & orientation of assessment team • Design of questionnaires / response templates in the vernacular • Supervision and guidance in the field • Leading the analysis and interpretation • Writing up / presenting findings 	<p><u>Responsibilities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help devise and test questionnaires and response templates for local actors • Field assessments: interviews and surveys • Data collation and interpretation
<p><u>Skills / competency</u> in at least two or three areas relevant to EMMA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humanitarian agency operations • Livelihoods development • Markets / value-chain development • Rapid assessments 	<p><u>Skills / competency</u> in at least one of these areas relevant to EMMA</p>
<p><u>Training Required:</u></p> <p>Three days intensive training and orientation workshop in EMMA at ‘manager’ level.</p> <p>This is to be the output from Phase 4 of the EMMA development project starting Feb ‘09</p>	<p><u>Training Required:</u></p> <p>Two days orientation in basic market concepts and EMMA, in situ, in preparation for field work.</p> <p>This training will be based on a ‘module’ within the EMMA toolkit itself.</p>

4 Summary of Recommendations

4.1 Revisions to EMMA

- Keep it even simpler! EMMA is still seen as 'too demanding', and too slow – even though in Myanmar we probably only covered half of the material at most.
- The initial EMMA steps leading to selection of critical market systems somehow need to be reduced in complexity or made more intuitive – while at the same time, not neglecting EMMA's 'unique' quality of drawing attention to livelihoods issues and seasonality factor that are often ignored. EMMA needs to give good examples of how supporting traders to recover can help stabilise prices and flow of essential goods more quickly as humanitarians tend to neglect what happens after the initial flow of emergency assistance, and underestimate the high level of dependency poor people have on markets
- EMMA is emerging as essentially a qualitative analysis tool – the quantitative aspects seem both very challenging to achieve, and not particularly sought after by decision-makers. One implication is that EMMA users need to properly understand what they are doing: this is not a mechanical process. However, it is critical to ensure a future pilot test with Logisticians, who may well improve the qualitative aspects of EMMA as they have the training and experience necessary for accurate price and quantity data collection.
- EMMA processes need to be led by an individual (or individuals) who have some previous and sufficient experience from a mix of humanitarian operations, assessment techniques, livelihoods development or markets work. Otherwise the learning curve looks unrealistic, even with prior training.
- A grasp of basic economic and market concepts is proving essential for other participants too, and not to be taken for granted. EMMA needs to include guidance (a training module even) on how to bring EMMA users up to speed on the fundamentals.
- More help needs to be provided in terms of pro-forma documents and templates for collecting and collating data. This also includes powerpoint templates for drawing market system maps.

4.2 The next pilot

- In pilot tests 3 and 4, we need to try to shift ownership of the process to the host agency, with Anita playing more of a facilitatory role. This is to get a more realistic sense of EMMA usability by agencies and staff with competing operational pressures.
- This probably requires us to make the next pilots less onerous on host agencies – e.g. in terms of number of external participants etc.
- Aside from Anita (pilot consultant) and Tony Dines (training consultant for phase 4), we should try to ensure any external participants from other agencies are nationals or otherwise very familiar with the affected area.
- We should also try to bring in logisticians and sector specialists from beyond livelihoods and food security (e.g. shelter specialists)
- If the pilot host agency is in agreement, EMMA could potentially be conducted through the cluster system. Several sector specialists from two to three agencies may choose to work together to complete EMMA for the benefit of all emergency organisations or donors interested in that particular market system.