

Research Terms of Reference

Mid-Winter Response Assessment 2024-25

UKR2411

Ukraine

November 2024

V1

1. Executive Summary

Country of intervention	Ukraine					
Type of Emergency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Natural disaster	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Conflict	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)
Type of Crisis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sudden onset	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slow onset	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Protracted
Mandating Body/ Agency	ECHO					
IMPACT Project Code	Code upcoming					
Overall Research Timeframe	01/11/2024 to 15/04/2025					
Research Timeframe: Component 1	1. Pilot/training: 21/11/2024			6. Preliminary presentation: N/A		
	2. Start collect data: 25/11/2024			7. Outputs sent for validation: 15/01/2025		
	3. Data collected: 06/12/2024			8. Outputs published: 29/01/2025		
	4. Data analysed: 22/12/2024			9. Final presentation: 05/02/2025		
	5. Data sent for validation: 23/12/2024					
Component 2	1. Pilot/training: 31/01/2025			6. Preliminary presentation: N/A		
	2. Start collect data: 03/02/2025			7. Outputs sent for validation: 05/03/2024		
	3. Data collected: 17/02/2025			8. Outputs published: 19/03/2024		
	4. Data analysed: 27/02/2025			9. Final presentation: 30/03/2024		
	5. Data sent for validation: 28/02/2025					
Number of assessments	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single assessment (one cycle)				
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multi assessment (more than one cycle)				
Humanitarian milestones	Milestone			Deadline (can be tentative)		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Donor plan/strategy		_ _ / _ _ / _ _ _ _		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Inter-cluster plan/strategy		Ukraine Winter Response Plan 2024-25 (OCHA)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cluster plan/strategy: Shelter/NFI WASH		Support to winterisation response implementation (December 2024 – March 2025)		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	NGO platform plan/strategy		_ _ / _ _ / _ _ _ _		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other		_ _ / _ _ / _ _ _ _		

Audience Type & Dissemination	Audience type		Dissemination	
	X Strategic X Programmatic X Operational <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]		X General Product Mailing (mail to NGO consortium; HCT participants; Donors) X Cluster Mailing (WASH and Shelter) X Presentation of findings (Cluster meeting) X Website Dissemination (Relief Web & REACH Resource Centre) <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]	
Stakeholder mapping	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	X	No
General Objective	Support the implementation and monitoring of the humanitarian winterisation response in Ukraine for 2024-25, in line with OCHA's Winter Response Plan. The assessment will address two components: 1) the coordination and implementation of winterisation activities and 2) Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP). Findings will support the response in being effective, timely, and adaptable to the evolving needs of vulnerable groups, while identifying potential gaps to improve targeting and coverage, ensuring that assistance better reaches those most in need. It will also contribute to lessons learned, guiding future responses and promoting ongoing improvements in effectively addressing winter-related needs in Ukraine.			
Specific Objective(s)	<p>1. Identify challenges and barriers affecting the implementation of the winterisation response, particularly focusing on coordination, communication, and operational efficiency. This objective will explore obstacles faced by implementing partners, local authorities, and humanitarian coordination bodies in delivering winterisation activities. It will assess how these challenges affect timeliness, targeting, and service coverage, with a focus on ensuring critical support reaches the most vulnerable populations, including those in high-risk front-line areas. The objective aligns with the need to adapt the response as outlined in the Ukraine Winter Response Plan 2024/25, considering the evolving operational context and energy infrastructure disruptions.</p> <p>2. Evaluate the winterisation response from an Accountability to Affected Population (AAP) perspective, focusing on the effectiveness, timeliness, and adequacy of the support provided. This will involve assessing the experiences and feedback from beneficiaries, including vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, IDPs, persons with disabilities, families with 3 or more children, and female-headed households, to ensure that assistance is appropriately targeted and meets their needs. This includes how information about the winterisation assistance is communicated to beneficiaries and identify gaps in outreach and access to support services. This evaluation will contribute to the broader lessons learned for improving the humanitarian response in future winters, ensuring that the response adheres to protection principles and "do no harm" guidelines.</p>			
Research Questions	<p>Sub-objective 1 – Implementation & coordination</p> <p>1.1. From the perspective of local authorities and implementing partners, to what extent is the humanitarian winterisation response effectively meeting the needs of vulnerable populations, ensuring that assistance is timely, appropriate and reaching the most vulnerable?</p> <p>1.2. What operational and logistical challenges do implementing partners and local authorities face in coordinating and delivering winterisation activities, and how do these challenges affect the timeliness, targeting, and overall impact of the response?</p>			

	<p>1.3. How effective is the planning, coordination and communication between implementing partners, local authorities, and humanitarian coordination bodies in ensuring timely and adequate delivery of winterisation assistance?</p> <p>Sub-objective 2 – Accountability affected population</p> <p>2.1 To what extent have beneficiaries received winterisation assistance that meets their needs in terms of timeliness, adequacy, and quality?</p> <p>2.2 How well informed are beneficiaries about the available winterisation assistance, and what channels have been most effective in reaching them?</p> <p>2.3 What feedback does vulnerable groups (e.g. IDPs, persons with disabilities, female-headed households) have regarding the effectiveness and accessibility of the winterisation services they received?</p> <p>2.4 What are the main gaps or issues in the dissemination of information regarding winterisation assistance, and how can these be addressed to improve future responses?</p>			
Geographic Coverage	Oblasts of Chernihivska, Dnipropetrovska, Donetsk, Kharkivska, Khersonska, Kyiv, Kyivska, Mykolaivska, Odeska, Poltavska, Sumska and Zaporizka			
Secondary data sources	Secondary data sources have been reviewed for contextual analysis and determine the methodological approach. They included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ukraine Winter Response Plan (OCHA) - Third Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (World Bank) - Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024 (OCHA) 			
Population(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> IDPs in camp <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IDPs in host communities <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees in camp <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees in host communities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Host communities	<input type="checkbox"/> IDPs in informal sites <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IDPs [hromadas] <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees in informal sites <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees [Other, Specify] <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]		
Stratification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geographical #: ~380 hromadas along the frontline crescent in Ukraine Population size per strata is known? X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Group #: __ Population size per strata is known? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> [Other Specify] #: __ Population size per strata is known? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Data collection tool(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structured (quantitative)	<input type="checkbox"/> Semi-structured (qualitative)		
	Sampling method		Data collection method	

Structured data collection tool # 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Purposive <input type="checkbox"/> Probability / Simple random <input type="checkbox"/> Probability / Stratified simple random <input type="checkbox"/> Probability / Cluster sampling <input type="checkbox"/> Probability / Stratified cluster sampling <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Key informant interview (Target #): ~500 <input type="checkbox"/> Group discussion (Target #): _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Household interview (Target #): _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Individual interview (Target #): _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Direct observations (Target #): _____ <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify] (Target #): _____			
Disaggregation by gender and age	Gender		Age			
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No		
Data management platform(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	IMPACT	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNHCR		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	[Other, Specify]				
Expected output type(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Situation overview #: 1 overview report analysing the response coordination	<input type="checkbox"/>	Situation overview #: 1 evaluating the experience of the population	<input type="checkbox"/>	Profile #: __
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Presentation (Preliminary findings) #: __	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Presentation (Final) #: 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	Factsheet #: __
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interactive dashboard #: __	<input type="checkbox"/>	Webmap #: __	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Map #: TBD to complement the factsheets
	<input type="checkbox"/>	[Other, Specify] #: __				
Access	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public (available on REACH resource centre and other humanitarian platforms)				
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Restricted (bilateral dissemination only upon agreed dissemination list, no publication on REACH or other platforms)				
Visibility	REACH					
	Donor: BHA & ECHO					
	Coordination Framework: USAID					
	Partners: Shelter/NFI Cluster Ukraine					

2. Rationale

2.1 Background

The cold season in Ukraine poses significant humanitarian challenges, exacerbated by extensive damage to housing infrastructure, large-scale displacement, and disruptions to essential services. Frequent power outages resulting from continued attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure are likely to persist into the winter months ([ISW, 2024](#)), depriving many of adequate heating. Vulnerable groups, including internally displaced persons (IDP) and residents of conflict-affected areas, face heightened risks. OCHA's 2024/25 Winter Response Plan (WRP), which targets 1.8 million people across multiple sectors¹ with USD 492 million in required funding, underscores the need for a large-scale and coordinated humanitarian response to address these challenges.

¹ Including 1) Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM); 2) Health; 3) Livelihoods; 4) Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI); and 5) Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH).

2.2 Intended impact

The proposed assessment aims to support the implementation and monitoring of Ukraine's winterisation response for the 2024-2025 season by focusing on two distinct aspects: (1) coordination and implementation and (2) accountability to affected population (AAP). These aspects will be addressed through two assessment components performed at different stages of the response. This is done so as, during consultations with the relevant clusters and partners, it has been determined that not all winterisation assistance would have reached beneficiaries by the time of data collection for component 1 and preference is given to collecting data mid-response to be able to inform any adjustments in the response's coordination and implementation.

Component 1: Coordination and implementation

The first component will focus on identifying and addressing the key challenges and barriers in the implementation of winterisation services. This will include examining coordination and communication between implementing partners, local authorities, and humanitarian coordination bodies. The assessment will try to highlight operational gaps, logistical issues, and coordination challenges, providing findings in January 2025 to adjust the response mid-way.

The data will serve two primary aims: enabling stakeholders to make timely mid-season adjustments for a more flexible and adaptive response, and improving service delivery by addressing implementation barriers, ensuring that winterisation assistance reaches the most affected and vulnerable populations, particularly in frontline or high-risk areas.

Component 2: Accountability to affected population (AAP)

The second component will focus on evaluating the impact of winterisation activities on affected populations, with an emphasis on vulnerable groups such as internally displaced persons (IDPs), people with disabilities, women, families with 3 or more children, and the elderly. This component will prioritise accountability and protection in line with the principles outlined in OCHA's Winter Response Plan (WRP), ensuring that humanitarian efforts adhere to "do no harm" principles.

The key objectives are to assess the effectiveness, adequacy, and timeliness of winterisation assistance for vulnerable groups; ensure equitable access to information by evaluating beneficiaries' awareness of available support and identifying communication gaps; and gather feedback from affected populations to understand their experiences and needs. The findings will allow to contextualise and triangulate post-distribution monitoring (PDM) data produced by implementing partners.

Through both components, the assessment will contribute to **lessons learned** on winterisation, helping to inform future humanitarian responses in Ukraine and other contexts where severe winter conditions exacerbate vulnerabilities.

3. Methodology

3.1 Methodology overview

The methodology is designed to gather data on both the coordination and implementation of the winterisation response, as well as the perspectives of the affected population. The methodology is structured into two main stages, each with distinct data collection tools and respondent groups.

Component	Respondent group	Data collection tool	Timing
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1. Coordination & implementation	1. Local hromada authorities (district/municipal) 2. Implementing organisations	Structured quantitative surveys (multiple-choice questions with a section of selected open-ended questions for comments and clarifications).	November 2024 – January 2025
2. AAP	1. Household in areas of winterisation assistance	Survey with different sections for beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.	February – April 2025

Component 1: Coordination and implementation

This stage will focus on gathering insights from key stakeholders involved in the winterisation response, specifically targeting implementing organisations and local authorities. Data will be collected through a structured, quantitative survey. A structured questionnaire will gather quantifiable data on the timeliness, efficiency, and reach of winterisation activities. This will primarily include multiple-choice questions for uniformity and comparability across respondents, but a section with an open-ended question to capture nuanced perspectives on coordination challenges, logistical issues, and operational barriers will be provided. The open-ended questions will be designed in a manner which provides respondents with the flexibility to elaborate on their experiences.

The findings from this stage will primarily inform the mid-winter adjustments necessary for the continued coordination of the winterisation response, ensuring that support is delivered to the most vulnerable populations, especially those in conflict-affected or hard-to-reach areas.

Component 2: Accountability to affected population (AAP)

The second stage of the assessment will evaluate the effectiveness of the winterisation response from the perspective of the affected population, including both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries at household level. A quantitative survey will be administered through telephone interviews conducted by the IMPACT Field Unit.

The survey will be divided into sections to distinguish between those who have received winterisation assistance and those who have not. This approach aims to capture comparative data on the perceived adequacy and timeliness of the support, as well as identify any gaps in service provision.

***** A separate methodology note for this component will be produced in November 2024. *****

3.2 Population of interest

1. People (households) in areas where winterisation activities are implemented: This includes both beneficiaries who have received winterisation support and non-beneficiaries who may have unmet needs. The assessment will explore the experiences, challenges, and perceptions of different vulnerable groups, such as IDPs, elderly individuals, persons with disabilities, families with 3 or more children, and female-headed households, to understand the effectiveness, adequacy, and accessibility of winter-related assistance in high-risk, frontline, and de-occupied areas.

2. Local authorities (hromada or municipal authorities) involved in, or with knowledge of, winterisation activities: Local government representatives at the municipal level play a crucial role in coordinating the delivery of winterisation activities. Their involvement includes identifying priority needs, collaborating with humanitarian actors, and facilitating access to services. The assessment will gather insights into the challenges and successes they

encounter in coordinating efforts, communication, and engagement with both partners and communities. REACH will leverage an existing network of respondents across 380 frontline hromadas, ensuring comprehensive coverage and access to key information from local authorities actively engaged in the winterisation response.

3. Humanitarian organisations implementing winterisation activities: This includes a diverse range of actors – local, national, and international organisations – that implement winterisation activities under the framework of OCHA’s Winter Response Plan 2024-25. The assessment will focus on understanding their operational challenges, coordination mechanisms, and effectiveness in delivering timely and adequate support. Insights from these actors will help identify gaps and opportunities for improving the response, ensuring better alignment with community needs and coordination efforts.

3.3 Secondary data review

Secondary data sources will be reviewed for contextual analysis and determine the methodological approach. They included:

- [Ukraine Winter Response Plan \(OCHA\)](#)
- [Third Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment \(World Bank\)](#)
- [Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024 \(OCHA\)](#)
- Population statistics (source: UNFPA. Link not publicly available).
- Number of recorded IDP arrivals (source: IOM. Link not publicly available).
- Various REACH thematic assessments, methodology guidelines and relevant data sets.

3.4 Primary Data Collection

For **Component 1 (Implementation & Coordination)**, two complementary data collection tools with overlapping questions will be developed — one tailored for local authorities and the other for implementing organisations. These tools will include both quantitative questions with predefined response options and a section of open-ended questions, allowing respondents to provide detailed insights.

Local authorities: The survey will be disseminated online to existing contacts within local authorities across targeted hromadas. To ensure robust participation, the REACH field team will follow up with phone calls to encourage survey completion or offer the option to conduct the interview by phone.

Implementing organisations: A registration of interest form will be circulated to implementing organisations, with support from the Shelter/NFI Cluster, to identify interested respondents. Registered participants will then be contacted by the field team to complete the questionnaire over the phone, ensuring active engagement from relevant organisations involved in winterisation activities.

These tailored approaches will enhance response rates and ensure comprehensive data collection from both local authorities and implementing organisations, contributing to a nuanced understanding of the coordination and implementation of winterisation efforts.

Sampling: In total, an approximation of **500 key informants**, across both categories, will be interviewed.

- (1) *For local authorities*, respondents are sampled from areas which are identified by the Shelter Cluster as receiving most response and displaying highest needs for winter assistance in the 2024-25 period. In the case

of this assessment, many of the respondents are the same as the organisations and local authorities already surveyed under the Shelter Support Assessment earlier in 2024. One local authority representative is surveyed at hromada (community) level, with the total number of anticipated responses hovering around 385 KIs across 385 hromadas in crescent areas. In case of frontline movement, some local authorities included in the list may be excluded if they cannot be reached due to a lack of humanitarian access to provide winterisation aid in areas beyond government control.

- (2) *For organisations*, around 100 to 115 responses are anticipated from winter response participating organisations. The survey is distributed through the help of the Shelter Cluster by being added to their mailing list and through a presentation during the national cluster coordination meeting in November. The responses are not restricted to one per organisation, meaning that multiple respondents can participate in each organisation. This is done to ensure that views and perceptions of the winter response are captured along various roles and responsibilities in an organisation.

A separate methodology note will be produced in January 2025 for Component 2 (AAP).

3.5 Data Processing & Analysis

Quantitative data will be collected through KOBO Toolbox. Individual surveys will be conducted to collect structured information. Data cleaning will be performed daily and include checking for duplicates, review of outliers, and all unstructured responses including enumerator comments and content of “Other, Specify” variables. The analysis will be presented in a factsheet.

3.6 Limitations

The assessment may face several limitations. Firstly, access constraints in conflict-affected areas could limit the ability to collect data in certain locations, which may result in incomplete or non-representative findings. Furthermore, the sensitivity of the context increases with the proximity to the frontline, exposing the data collection team to potential psychological risks, such as traumatic stress, re-traumatisation, and more.

Reliance on key informants (KIs) and secondary data could introduce biases or inconsistencies, particularly if KIs lack comprehensive knowledge of all assessed sectors or if available data is outdated. Furthermore, data collected through key informant interviews (KIIs) is not statistically representative, meaning that it cannot be generalised to the entire population and will only be indicative of the experiences in the area.

Another potential limitation lies in the dynamic nature of the conflict, which could lead to sudden changes in needs or conditions after data collection is completed, making it difficult to capture the most up-to-date situation on the ground. The above-mentioned limitations can be mitigated by identifying knowledgeable respondents, triangulate findings from multiple sources to improve accuracy, and remain flexible by updating key data points where feasible throughout the assessment period.

4. Key ethical considerations and related risks

The proposed research design meets / does not meet the following criteria:

<i>The proposed research design...</i>	<i>Yes/ No</i>	<i>Details if no (including mitigation)</i>
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... Has been coordinated with relevant stakeholders to avoid unnecessary duplication of data collection efforts?	Yes	
... Respects respondents, their rights and dignity (<i>specifically by: seeking informed consent, designing length of survey/ discussion while being considerate of participants' time, ensuring accurate reporting of information provided</i>)?	Yes	
... Does not expose data collectors to any risks as a direct result of participation in data collection?	Yes	
... Does not expose respondents / their communities to any risks as a direct result of participation in data collection?	Yes	
... Does not involve collecting information on specific topics which may be stressful and/ or re-traumatising for research participants (both respondents and data collectors)?	Yes	
... Does not involve data collection with minors i.e. anyone less than 18 years old?	Yes	
... Does not involve data collection with other vulnerable groups e.g. persons with disabilities, victims/ survivors of protection incidents, etc.?	Yes	
... Follows IMPACT SOPs for management of personally identifiable information ?	Yes	

5. Roles and responsibilities

Task Description	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
Research design	AO/GIS Specialist	SRM	Research HQ, Shelter/WASH clusters	Shelter/NFI Cluster DCC
Supervising data collection	AO	SRM	Research HQ	RM
Data processing (checking, cleaning)	DO, AO	SRM	Research HQ	RM
Data analysis	AO, DO	SRM	Research HQ	RM
Output production	AO	SRM	Research HQ	DCC
Dissemination	AO, SRM	SRM,	CC, DCC	HQ, Shelter/WASH clusters
Monitoring & Evaluation	AO, SRM	SRM	CC, DCC	IMPACT HQ
Lessons learned	SRM	SRM	CC, DCC	Research HQ

AO – Assessment Officer
CC – Country Coordinator
DCC – Deputy Country Coordinator
DO – Data Officer

6. Data Analysis Plan

The Data Analysis Plan is available upon request from the relevant research staff.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

IMPACT Objective	External M&E Indicator	Internal M&E Indicator	Focal point	Tool	Will indicator be tracked?
Humanitarian stakeholders are accessing IMPACT products	Number of humanitarian organisations accessing IMPACT services/products Number of individuals accessing IMPACT services/products	# of downloads of x product from Resource Center	Country request to HQ	User_log	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
		# of downloads of x product from Relief Web	Country request to HQ		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
		# of downloads of x product from Country level platforms	Country team		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
		# of page clicks on x product from REACH global newsletter	Country request to HQ		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
		# of page clicks on x product from country newsletter, sendingBlue, bit.ly	Country team		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
		# of visits to x webmap/x dashboard	Country request to HQ		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
IMPACT activities contribute to better program implementation and coordination of the humanitarian response	Number of humanitarian organisations utilizing IMPACT services/products	# references in HPC documents (HNO, SRP, Flash appeals, Cluster/sector strategies)	Country team	Reference_log	[List here relevant HPC-documents to be monitored: E.g. Iraq HNO 2018, Iraq Flash Appeal Mosul, Shelter Cluster strategy]
		# references in single agency documents			[List here relevant agency-documents to be monitored: E.g. UNHCR Country Strategy, UNICEF WASH Response Strategy]
Humanitarian stakeholders are using IMPACT products	Humanitarian actors use IMPACT evidence/products as a basis for decision making, aid planning and delivery	Perceived relevance of IMPACT country-programs	Country team	Usage_Feedback and Usage_Survey template	[Outline here the usage survey to be implemented for this research cycle E.g. Usage survey to be conducted in November 2017, following the release of x outputs, targeting at least 10 partners]
		Perceived usefulness and influence of IMPACT outputs			
		Recommendations to strengthen IMPACT programs			
	Number of humanitarian	Perceived capacity of IMPACT staff			

	documents (HNO, HRP, cluster/agency strategic plans, etc.) directly informed by IMPACT products	<div>Perceived quality of outputs/programs</div> <div>Recommendations to strengthen IMPACT programs</div>			<i>E.g. Usage survey to be conducted at the end of the research cycle related to all outputs, targeting at least 20 partners]</i>
Humanitarian stakeholders are engaged in IMPACT programs throughout the research cycle	Number and/or percentage of humanitarian organizations directly contributing to IMPACT programs (<i>providing resources, participating to presentations, etc.</i>)	<div># of organisations providing resources (i.e.staff, vehicles, meeting space, budget, etc.) for activity implementation</div> <div># of organisations/clusters inputting in research design and joint analysis</div> <div># of organisations/clusters attending briefings on findings;</div>	Country team	Engage ment_log	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</div>