Lesson 5: Geo-Usability
Making Usable Maps
• Decide what questions you want your maps to answer before you start.

• Review frequently as you collect data and build your map.
Example Questions

• Where were these damage assessments made?

• What is the status of our emergency shelters?

• Where will our team be working tomorrow, and how do they get there?
Answer one question per map

If you are generating KML files, you can always combine them later to create more complex maps.
Titles and Descriptions Are Essential

Coordinates are **not** sufficient.
Operational Example

• Be sure to address titles and descriptions questions like:
  • What happened?
  • Is this different from the norm?
  • Why is it important?
  • What should we do about it?
Other Key Metadata

- sensitivity and security
- source
- accuracy
- reported and "valid until" timestamps
Key Metadata (cont.)

- contact information
- links to original/additional data
Connect Data to the Real World

Not Actionable

Actionable
Placemarks names should be distinct

(Which do I click?)
Visual Vocabulary

- Use different placemark icons for distinct types of information
- Use different shapes to convey key distinctions
- Use color for secondary distinctions (B/W printing, color-blindness)
Add a Legend
Limit HTML Balloons to Read-only Maps
Avoid "Data Dump" Maps
Check Your Results!
More about Maps 2.0

http://maps2.humaninet.org