



## What are P-codes?

Pcode is an abbreviated term for 'Place Code'. P-codes are similar to zip codes and postal codes and are part of a data management system that provides unique reference codes to over a thousand locations in the Darfur region. These codes provide a systematic means of linking and exchanging data and analysing relationships between them. Any information that is linked to one location with a pcode can be linked and analysed with any other.

## Why are P-codes useful?

P-codes resolve the basic issue of what we all call a place. Using place-names as identifiers can easily lead to confusion over spelling, different languages or scripts as well as duplication. If agencies develop individual systems for naming or coding places this makes data sharing extremely difficult and huge amounts of potentially useful information go unshared, are manually re-typed or filed and forgotten. Spatial data standards agreed by all agencies provide a single, unified system for referring to locations, allowing the free exchange of data between participating agencies.

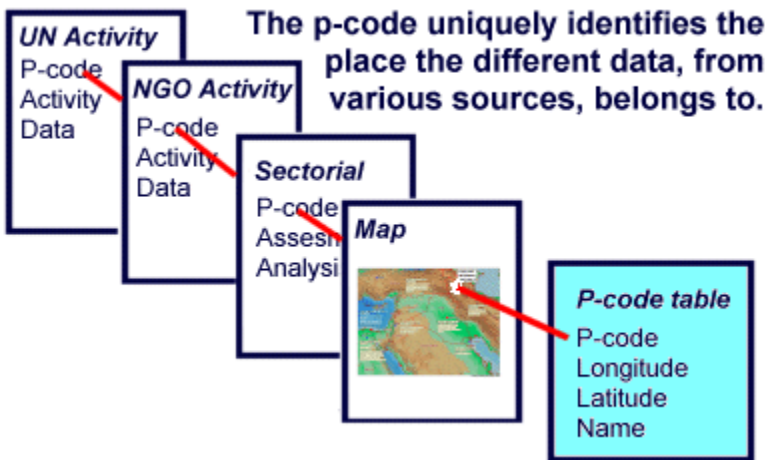
## Why should my agency use P-codes?

To promote cooperation and information sharing and gain full access to the huge range of information already available in Pcode format, on such issues as population, housing damage, landmines, agriculture and assistance distribution. This information can help you to plan your own programmes and avoid repeating surveys already done by others. Agencies using the P-codes for their own data management will be able to combine this information with datasets from other participating organisations.

Spatial data standards include full GIS capability, allowing data linked to towns, villages and administrative units to be mapped and geographically analysed. Data collected with Global Positioning System (GPS) equipment can also be used.

## How can P-codes be used in my existing databases?

In most cases, adoption of P-codes requires only the addition of an extra column to your existing databases and spreadsheets. Over time it is recommended that any other naming or coding systems be phased out and that all new data collection use the P-codes.



By including the pcode into separate spreadsheets, data on different issues from different agencies can be linked and cross-analysed.

## Who uses P-codes?

P-codes for the Darfur region are developed in collaboration with partners and based on the best available information from the Sudanese Government's system of coding. The P-Codes ARE NOT the official coding used by the Sudan government, as this process is ongoing, and should not be cited as such. Our codes are maintained by the HIC-Darfur, and accepted as the data standard for Darfur by OCHA and other UN and NGO Agencies.