**Desktop Simulation**

**Learning Objectives**

* Understand how an emergency response will impact a country program
* Understand how prepared a country program is for an emergency response (strengths and limits)
* Test the delegation of responsibilities and roles during an emergency response, how they complement each other, and the lines of authority
* Understand a country program’s capacity with partners for a response (what type and scale of a response are they capable of delivering in a quality manner that meets standards)
* Understand the importance of coordination with other actors (Caritas, non-Church partners and community groups)
* Understand how to make the best use of structural resources and pre-positioned items
* Test security plans and procedures

**Part I (9:00)**

Example: The Government of Ethiopia Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency reports that Dire Dawa has been struck by flash floods. Radio Communication received this morning from the head of your sub-office in Dire Dawa noted severe flooding as the Dachatu river overflowed its banks.

**Questions to answer**

* What do you do?
* What documents and tools do you need to refer to?
* What other information do you require at this point and how do you obtain it?

Moderator should look for country program staff to share:

* List/Org. Chart of surge capacity – indicating staff responsibilities –particularly leadership, sit reps, needs assessment teams.
* An authority/decision-making matrix in regards to approving emergency response actions and use of resources.
* Contingency plan if one exists.
* Map of where you work in relation to the area affected; information on your partners’ activities in this regard, as well, if available.
* Map of structural resources that can serve the affected area.
* List of any pre-positioned items and where located.
* Matrix or similar related to what other actors (Gov’t, local NGOS, other INGOS, etc.) have the capacity to do or may do in the affected area and their contact information.
* Security procedures – have all staff in the sub-office been located and are they and their families safe?

**Follow Up (9:30)**

The Government of Ethiopia Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency reports that more than 5,000 have been displaced and the number is likely to climb.

HQ wants to hear more about the qualifications of the person who will be in charge of leading the response for CRS.

The Government is requesting someone to attend an emergency coordination meeting first thing tomorrow.

The Regional Director asks for assurance that needs assessment teams will follow safety and security procedures.

**Tasks/Questions to answer**

* Describe the responsibilities of the person in charge of the response – the emergency team leader – and how this person is qualified to handle these responsibilities.
* What is the objective of your first needs assessment?
* How will assessment data be compiled and analyzed?
* Who are you sending to the coordination meeting?
* How do you reply to the Regional Director about safety and security procedures?

Moderator should look for:

* CV of the staff member in charge or at least particular references to their emergency and leadership experiences.
* Needs Assessment Objective: – Are we responding or not?
* Sources/Methods for this first assessment –sources more secondary at this point: media reports; demographic reports; gov’t reports; UN/NGO reports; interview with gov’t official, community leader, and/or affected population; observation.
* Someone responsible for compiling and analyzing assessment data identified and with a clear picture of how it will be used at this stage – concept note, CI Assessment and Analysis form.
* Whoever is going to coordination meeting needs to be prepared to spend the whole day there. Was this fully taken into consideration?
* Security focal point in place. Communications plan and monitoring procedures in place.

**Part II (10:00)**

36 hours after the initial report of the flooding your first assessment confirms that more than 5,000 have been displaced and the numbers are climbing. The elderly appear to be particularly vulnerable according to interviews conducted with a community leader and a local government official.

The government is doing food distributions wherever needed and plans to continue this for the next two weeks. They seem to have the capacity to do this as they have done it before in similar emergencies. Many of the displaced are staying with host families or have found shelter in schools and religious centers that are being coordinated by the local Red Cross.

Your local Caritas partner in the area is ready to do a food distribution. This is what they have done in the past and they have the capacity to do it. Oxfam is well established near Dire Darwa as well and is ready to cover any WASH needs. It appears there is a need for NFIs, particularly cooking fuel, cooking utensils, and blankets.

OCHA is holding a coordination meeting.

HQ wants to send in a couple Sr. WASH staff.

CNN wants to interview one of your staff.

**Question to answer**

* What are your next steps? (give them 5 minutes)

**Tasks/Questions to answer**

* Outline a SitRep with bullets/notes.
* What conversation do you have with your local partner?
* Who is attending OCHA meeting?
* What do you tell HQ about their wish to send Sr. WASH staff?
* Who is handling media requests? Who is doing the CNN interview?

Moderator should look for:

* Adherence to proper SitRep format
* Conversation with partner should include the importance of coordinating with other local actors and where we can fill gaps. Food distributions don’t need to be done if the government is handling it and if they don’t need anyone to complement their work. There may be another unaddressed need.
* How they tell HQ – thanks, but not thanks for now – as WASH needs have not been identified as a priority need for our response, yet.
* Using the Regional Information Officer properly for media communication and guidance. How did they select who would do the interview? CR? Sr. National staff? Will RIO prep them for interview?

**Follow Up (10:30)**

**Question to answer**

* What is the objective of your next assessment?
* Who is on the needs assessment team?
* What are your funding requirements at this time? What are your funding strategies going forward?

Moderator should look for

* Needs Assessment Objective: To determine what are the priority needs for our response.
* Gender balanced assessment team. Team members who know the local community well. Interpersonal skills weighed more than technical skills.
* Concept note for HQ. Craemer/O’Neil funds. CI Flash appeal for local Caritas partner.

**Part III (10:50)**

72 hours after the initial report of the flooding your second assessment data informs you that your priority for the response will be NFI distributions (blankets, cooking fuel, cooking utensils).

**Question to answer**

* What decisions do you need to make now?

**Questions to answer**

* What vendor contracts/arrangements – transportation, procurement – do you have in place? Are they helpful for your NFI distributions plan?
* What kind of warehouse space is available to you?
* What capacity (structural and human) do your partners have to support NFI distributions?
* What are your updated staffing needs? What TDY support do you need?
* If TDYers coming in, where are they staying (housing) and where are they working (office space)?
* Do you have orientation information ready and available for TDYers and new hires?
* Demonstrate to us that your country program has the capacity to manage major financial cash flows and prevent fraud.
* Put together the outline for a concept note.

Moderator should look for:

* Vendor contracts/arrangements in place.
* Understanding of warehouse possibilities.
* Understanding of potential capacity of partners.
* Clear understanding of staffing needs and how additions can best complement existing staff capacity.
* Understanding of how to manage orientation/onboarding for TDYers and new hires.
* Systems and staff or staffing plan in place to manage major financial cash flows and prevent fraud.
* Focused concept note ideas.

**Debrief (11:30-12:30)**

* Initial thoughts & feelings on the simulation.
* What do you feel are your strengths in terms of preparedness?
* What do you feel are your limits in terms of preparedness?
* In terms of staffing are your roles and responsibilities distinct and clear?
* Do you have a strong understanding of your partners’ capacities? Are expectations clear as to what they can expect from you and you from them?
* Do we need to do more to coordinate our preparation plans with other key stakeholders?
* Do you have a clear understanding of your structural resources and their potential use – warehouses, schools, church compounds, etc.?
* Are your security plans and procedures set and known by all who need to know?
* Any other comments on the simulation?
* What are the next 3 immediate steps you need to take to be better prepared? Who is responsible for ensuring that these steps occur?