UNDRR
UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

Checklist on Scaling Up Disaster Risk Reduction in Humanitarian Action

Course Syllabus

e-learning course

Course Background

The world is experiencing an unprecedented moment of fragility and uncertainty, ignited by the emergence of several confluent crises, including climate-fuelled disasters, the COVID-19 pandemic, and various situations of conflict around the world. The call to enhance preventative measures, mitigate risk factors, and ultimately alleviate humantarian demands, which has echoed across global discussions for several years, is now more urgent than ever. In an interconnected world, where risks are systemic and cascade across borders, critical opportunities to ensure that disaster risk reduction (DRR) is an integral part of humanitarian planning and programming, must be made a priority.

Conducting risk analyses during strategic planning exercises allows to:

a) expand humanitarian focus from acute and urgent needs to chronic vulnerabilities and exposure to future risks, stresses, and shocks and

b) helps integrate the reduction of extreme vulnerabilities into planning to facilitate recovery, and therefore aim to prevent new/reduce existing risks, all of which contribute to decreasing future risks and strengthening community resilience.

"We spend far more time and resources responding to crises rather than preventing them. People are paying too high a price. We need a whole new approach."

Antonio Guterres, 2017.

Managing the negative effects of a crisis through humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping is costly. In the Pathway for Peace study, the United Nations and World Bank produced a business case to show that conflict prevention, besides saving millions of lives, is also economically beneficial, as preventing outbreaks of violence **would create net savings close to 5 billion USD per year**. Similarly, in a study commissioned by USAID looking at Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia, Economics of Resilience to Drought quantified the savings from earlier response, where investing in more proactive responses to avert humanitarian crises could **reduce the cost to international donors by 30%**, as well as also protecting billions of dollars of income and assets for those most affected.

Ensuring that the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) is risk-sensitive is therefore beneficial and essential for both the population and the overall humanitarian community in a given country context. Although humanitarian crises cannot always be prevented, the suffering associated with the impacts of various shocks, crises, and disasters can be greatly reduced through strong, proactive, and collaborative risk-informed programming. The integration of broader DRR considerations within humanitarian action can and must also be done in non-HPC contexts, including by working across the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus and by seeking to strengthen risk reduction at the local level.

This training is primarily designed to assist relevant actors in adopting a risk-sensitive approach when preparing Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs) and subsequent Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) as part of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC). It outlines key steps for analysing potential hazards and their risk levels, determining how humanitarian situations might evolve over a given period of time, and informing contingency planning, preparedness measures, and early actions ahead of possible developments to reduce risk. It also helps to ensure strategies and programmes are **sufficiently robust to withstand changes in the operational environment**. This training also includes specific modules dedicated to giving participants an overview on key enablers to reduce systemic risk through enhanced HDP collaboration, as well as possibilities for risk-informing humanitarian action outside of the HPC.

Course Goals and Outline

This e-learning course guides humanitarian, development, and peace actors on various opportunities for integrating disaster risk reduction activities in their work. It allows participants to understand the urgency and importance of strengthening cooperation between humanitarian, development, and peace actors to enable long-term reduction of vulnerabilities.

At the end of the course, participants will be able to:

> Define the concepts of humanitarian action and disaster risk reduction and explain their importance in reducing the impact of disasters on communities.

> Analyse the causes and consequences of disasters and assess the factors contributing to vulnerability and resilience.

> Evaluate the different approaches to disaster risk reduction, including prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery and identify the best practices and lessons learned.

> Be familiar with the Checklist on Scaling up DRR in Humanitarian Action: Supporting Risk-Informed Programming and Humanitarian-Development-Peace Collaboration.

> Identify the key actors involved in humanitarian action and disaster risk reduction and describe their roles and responsibilities.

> Understand the urgency and importance of strengthening cooperation between humanitarian, development, and peace actors to enable long-term reduction of vulnerabilities.

> Apply the principles of humanitarian action and disaster risk reduction to real-life situations using case studies.

> Design and implement effective disaster risk reduction strategies and programmes, considering the needs and perspectives of different stakeholders and the local context.

The course is comprised of 6 modules:

> **Module 1**: Fundamentals of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

> **Module 2:** Disaster Risk Reduction Frameworks – Understanding Inter-connected and Systemic Risk

> **Module 3:** Supporting Risk-Informed Programming and Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Collaboration

> **Module 4:** Entry Points: Integrating DRR into the Humanitarian Programme Cycle

> **Module 5:** Foundations for HDP Collaboration on DRR

> **Module 6:** DRR and Humanitarian Enablers

Content and Learning Objectives

Module	Learning Objectives
Module 1 Fundamentals of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)	• Use key DRR terms/concepts in discussing risk-informed humanitarian response. • Explain the importance and value of strengthening cooperation between humanitarian, development, and peace (HDP) actors to enable long-term reduction of vulnerabilities.
Module 2 Disaster Risk Reduction Frameworks – Understanding Inter-connected and Systemic Risk	• Understand the Sendai Framework's aims of reducing risks and strengthening resilience and the linkages with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the Agenda for Humanity. • Be familiar with the concept of systemic risk and the aims of comprehensive risk assessment and the use of the Global Risk Assessment Framework (GRAF).
Module 3 Supporting Risk-Informed Programming and Humanitarian-Development- Peace (HDP) Collaboration	• Explain the origins and purposes of the Checklist and understand how it can help operationalise HDP collaboration to reduce emerging and existing risks. • Recognise the importance and value of making risk reduction integral to humanitarian planning and programming at all levels. • Understand the key roles of humanitarian, development, peace, DRR, and government actors in facilitating the integration of risk reduction efforts. • Identify the contexts in which the Checklist can be appropriately used, both in countries that follow the Humanitarian Programming Cycle process and those that engage in equivalent humanitarian planning efforts.
Module 4 Entry Points: Integrating DRR into the Humanitarian Programme Cycle	• Identify the key stages of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) and several options for integrating a risk lens and/or DRR actions in each. • Identify several components of the Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework (JIAF) that can serve as entry points for DRR discussions. • Design activities in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) to mitigate risks identified in the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO).
Module 5 Foundations for HDP Collaboration on DRR	• Identify and draw upon good HDP collaboration practices to reduce disaster risk. • Appreciate the importance of DRR initiatives in mitigating underlying risk factors/ pre-existing vulnerabilities. • Identify the underlying risk factors/pre-existing vulnerabilities on which HDP actors may focus and collaborate. • Identify the cross-sectoral impacts that the underlying risk factors have generated.
Module 6 DRR and Humanitarian Enablers	• Explain the purpose and importance of HDP coordination and collaboration to address/reduce systemic risk and cross-sector impacts. • Identify constraints to coordination and collaboration and how these might best be reduced or eliminated. • Identify in-country opportunities to discuss DRR integration and risk-informed programming. • Know where to turn for further support.

Course Design

The modules contain the following components:

1. **Interactive Lessons:** They are the core mandatory learning components, as they provide the integral content of the modules.

2. **Interactive Activities:** For each module, an activity will assess your comprehension of the lessons learned in the module.

Learning Materials

Learning materials are the core learning components in the course. They will guide you to achieve the course's learning objectives. Supporting materials are integrated into each module and are available to assist your learning process.

Interactive Lessons

They introduce you to the conceptual foundations of the different modules in an interactive manner. The lessons will help you to prepare and successfully complete the activities at the end of the module.

Each lesson has an average of between 40 – 60 slides, including the interactive activities.

You may interrupt a lesson at any point, as the system keeps track of your progress. Upon your return, it will automatically take you to the point where you have previously stopped.

A printable version of the lessons is also available.

Study Plan

The course has been designed in a way to give you flexibility to plan your learning progress. The lessons, activities, and additional resources of all modules can be accessed throughout the course. Thus, you will only need to complete all of the required activities to obtain your certificate.

Grading Policy

Participants are required to successfully complete each of the 6 modules, entitling participants to a certificate of completion.