Capacity Building for Emergencies

05 January 2024

Key points

- Emergency learning usually takes place before an emergency occurs, as part of emergency capacity building and emergency preparedness

- Ad hoc learning is available to staff working in emergencies

- Emergency Learning is available in different forms: online self-learning , face-to-face workshops, and online webinars

- This Emergency Handbook is the primary tool for guidance in emergencies

- Establish an induction facilitators team and seek GLC support where necessary.

1. Overview

This entry provides an overview of UNHCR Emergency Capacity Building initiatives and emergency learning opportunities. It gives guidance on target participants, availability, and timing, for individuals, country operations and regions. The links to UNHCR corporate emergency preparedness are also explained.

2. Relevance for emergency operations

Ideally, emergency capacity building and learning takes place before the onset of a humanitarian emergency. UNHCR corporate emergency trainings are not linked to emergency activation and take place as preparedness measures on a regular basis.

However, unpredictability is part of the nature of emergencies. Knowledge, skills and expertise gaps may become apparent at the onset of an emergency. Often new workforce is recruited, who may not have had the opportunity to participate in emergency trainings. For these situations ad hoc solutions are outlined below.

3. Main guidance

a) Learning as part of corporate emergency preparedness and DESS emergency deployment rosters

The Emergency Capacity Development Unit (ECDU) in the Division for Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS) organizes the following corporate emergency trainings:

- **Workshop on Emergency Management (WEM):** Prepares active Emergency Response Team roster members (G6 to P4) for emergency missions. Calls for applications are shared through UNHCR corporate Broadcast emails.
- **Senior Emergency Leadership Program (SELP):** Prepares Senior Corporate Emergency Roster (SCER) members (from P4 eligible to apply to P5 positions onwards) for emergency missions. A call for applications is shared through UNHCR corporate Broadcast emails.
- **Situational Emergency Training (SET):** Country operations/ regions that face high risk(s) of a new or escalated emergency should contact DESS as early as possible to explore organizing a SET as part of their emergency preparedness actions.
- **Emergency Team Leadership Program (ETLP):** The ETLP builds interagency leadership capacity for emergency response. Participants in the ETLP include Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) UN member organizations and UN partner NGOs involved in disaster and humanitarian response. A few slots are available for UNHCR staff. Participation is through nomination in response to a call for applications issued twice a year.

Thematic Emergency Management Trainings:

- **Supply:** Designed to equip supply practitioners with the skills necessary for a responsive, consistent, and agile emergency capacity in a humanitarian context. UNHCR staff and external partners engage in a gamified and immersive five-day simulation workshop, focusing on refining critical technical and soft skills for emergency supply management. Organized by the Global Learning and Development Centre (GLDC), participation in the workshop is by nomination in response to a call for applications issued once a year.
- The Digital Identity and Registration Section (DIRS) in the Global Data Service (GDS) organizes the **Emergency Registration Learning Programme (ERLP)**, which prepares members on the Registration functional Roster for emergency mission.
- The Operational Data Systems and Support Section ((ODSSS) in the Global Data Service (GDS) organizes the **Training on Information Management in Emergencies (TIME).** TIME is a weeklong training and simulation for Information Management Officers (IMOs) who are selected for the Emergency Response Team (ERT) roster.
- The Partnership and Coordination Service in the Division of External Relations (DER) offers the **Inter-Agency Coordination Course:** This interactive self-study is available to all UNHCR personnel on Workday and prepares learners to exert their functions more effectively in inter-agency coordination settings. The course is compulsory for members of the annual Emergency Roster for Inter-Agency Coordination ahead of the roster workshop. **Workshop on Inter-Agency Coordination:** Prepares members of the Emergency Roster for Inter Agency Coordination for emergency missions. A call for applications by personnel from NO to P5 is sent once a year through the UNHCR Broadcast.

<u>b) Learning during emergency</u>

All UNHCR workforce are required to complete the [mandatory trainings](#) (accessible to UNHCR staff only) below within the first three months of joining UNHCR. This also applies to workforce recruited during/for an emergency. The trainings are accessible to staff in Workday.

- BSAFE
- UN Programme on The Prevention Of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse Of Authority
- Protection Induction Programme
- Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)
- ICT Information Security Awareness Training (InfoSec)
- Fundamentals of Fraud and Corruption Awareness

The **ERT Baseline Learning Package (ERT BLP)** (accessible to UNHCR staff only) is a series of short e-learnings aimed at transferring critical knowledge in emergency management to colleagues selected to join the Emergency Response Team (ERT). All ERTs must complete the ERT BLP before attending the Workshop on Emergency Management. The Baseline Package is also available to the entire UNHCR workforce in Workday through self-enrollment.

Further **e-Learnings** on a wide variety of topics is available for UNHCR staff in Workday. If mangers in emergencies assess significant knowledge gaps, it is recommended that concerned staff complete selected online learning during the emergency. Managers can create a list of required learning to share with the workforce in an emergency operation. The ECDU is available to support selecting eLearning and to create a list of recommended learnings.

It is the responsibility of managers to provide **guidance, coaching, work shadow opportunities and on the job training** to staff under their supervision. This is even more important during emergencies, where quick ad hoc learning solutions need to be found to bring all colleague up to speed for the emergency response. Managers should pay attention to the different capacities of the colleagues under their supervision and ensure team members share knowledge and learn from each other.

Should managers in an emergency operation notice that a significant number of workforce members is lacking in skills and capabilities to effectively respond to an emergency, ECDU can exceptionally facilitate an emergency webinar to build immediate capacity among the team. Please note, the webinar should not take time away from the operation's emergency response. If management would like to explore this possibility, please contact ECDU.

4. Links

[ERT Baseline Learning Package (ERT BLP) (accessible to UNHCR staff only)](#) [UNHCR intranet: Emergency Learning (accessible to UNHCR staff only)](#)

5. Main contacts

Requests for emergency training support should be directed via the concerned Regional Bureau to the Emergency Capacity Development Unit (ECDU) mailbox in the Division for Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS): hqemfscap@unhcr.org