

# Lessons from Past Emergencies

FOR ECUADOR EARTHQUAKE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

# LESSONS FROM PAST EMERGENCIES

## For Ecuador Earthquake Emergency Response

### About the Recommendations Package

WFP's Emergency Preparedness and Response Support Division (OSE) has gathered lessons from earlier emergencies and developed a set of recommendations applicable to the context of Ecuador Earthquake emergency. The below summary offers information on potential challenges and practices that have been proved useful in past emergency responses. A comprehensive database of recommendations gathered from Lessons Learned Exercises can be found on the [OPweb: http://opweb.wfp.org/learned/](http://opweb.wfp.org/learned/).

### Implementing a CR-EMOP

- When applying the CR-EMOP modality, ensure that reported requirements are realistic in terms of expected resources availability and operational constraints.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>
- Explain the CR-EMOP modality to governments, donors and other partners, and follow this up through in-country consultations where a CR-EMOP is being launched.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>

### Emergency management

- Design corporate protocols with criteria for assigning an EC to an affected country and the selection of the EC; and with prototype messages to governments, UN agencies, donors, CPs, media and other partners that explain the management structure.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>
- Explore the possibility, when applicable, of locating the Corporate Response Director as close to the operation as possible.<sup>[Philippines 2014]<sup>1</sup></sup>
- Improve liaisons between the RB, CO, and HQ on regularizing the OTF schedule to facilitate better organization and turnout.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>
- Prepare Notes for the Record of Strategic Task Force meetings for future reference.<sup>[Syria 2014]</sup>

### External coordination

- Ensure that WFP has the capacity to handle the significant information management aspects of civil-military coordination.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Consider early high-level outreach to militaries in relevant emergencies.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Work to streamline coordination between aviation and cluster counterparts.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Engage in and commit to interagency efforts in Accountability to Affected Populations.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Recommendations from the 2013 Philippines Corporate Response Lessons Learned Exercise are draft recommendations.

## Deploying and retaining the right staff

### Pre-deployment

- Ensure emergency medical services and partner agreements are identified and communicated to staff, e.g. by inclusion in information packages. *[Haiti 2010]*
- Administrative notes, including a checklist of pre-departure tasks to be completed, should be sent out by HR to the releasing unit at HQ or the RB, so it is certain that all staff receive it. It should also include material on staff integration, such as: cultural differences, information on how national staff may be experiencing the emergency differently, and best practices for staff integration. *[Nepal 2015]*
- A country's gender profile should be included in the pre-deployment briefing package. *[Nepal 2015]*
- Provide staff with clear guidance on the basics of wellbeing in emergencies, including stress management and rest-period. *[Haiti 2010]*

### Deployment

- Continue to deploy experienced regional national staff at the onset of emergencies. Incorporate the significant strengths of national staff into deployment planning while prioritising staff wellbeing following large shocks. *[Haiti 2010]*
- Ensure HR capacity to identify and deploy regional national staff. *[Haiti 2010]*
- Use an Emergency Response Roster to ensure rapid identification and deployment of staff with the necessary skill-sets and competencies (emergency experience, language etc.) for deployment in corporate responses. *[Haiti 2010]*
- Place greater emphasis on ensuring a handover-period for staff arriving and departing. *[Haiti 2010] [Syria 2014]*
- Deploy engineers to assess measures that should be taken for the continued use of damaged offices, staff residences and accommodation where deployed emergency staff will be housed. *[Nepal 2015]*
- Ensure that the engineer/s is/are deployed at the immediate outset of an emergency to support operations and continue throughout the operation, and link with longer-term rehabilitation projects where applicable. *[Nepal 2015]*
- Deploy PI staff immediately to the country to manage mass communications and work with the media. The operation must allow for an increase in staff, or at least staff rotation to avoid burnout. This should be a national/local language speaker staff present in senior management, programme and logistics meetings. *[Haiti 2010] [Syria 2014]*
- Ensure readiness to deploy experts in aviation coordination, both for civilian and for civil-military aviation coordination. *[Haiti 2010]*
- Deploy adequate numbers of staff experienced in operation, database, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and staff speaking the local language. *[Syria 2014]*
- A strong financial team should be deployed as part of the support services in the early days of the response to streamline financial systems and procedures and develop local capacity. *[Philippines 2014]*
- Plan deployment of a senior staff including HR, OIM, donor relations, procurement, admin and security. *[Haiti 2010] [Philippines 2014] [Syria 2014]*
- Ensure that deployment planning includes provisions for continuity of individuals serving as cluster coordinators, as well as dedicated reporting, information management and GIS personnel. *[Haiti 2010]*
- During corporate responses consider designating a single person in-charge of IT deployment for the entire operation. *[Haiti 2010]*

## Staff wellbeing

- Administration's initial focus should be on staff wellness and wellbeing functions to ensure responders have adequate accommodation, sanitation, food, and water and office space.<sup>[Philippines 2014]</sup>
- Deploy a staff health and wellbeing counsellor in responses, and do a trauma risk assessment of staff in a CO affected by a disaster.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>
- Ensure counsellors continue to be deployed to future emergencies as required also consider deploying them to R&R locations.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>

## Crafting inclusive and dynamic programmes

- Explore feasibility of proactively addressing reconstruction strategies from the beginning of emergencies, potentially via a dedicated team of representatives from the relevant Country Office, Regional Bureau and Headquarters.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- When undertaking new operations, ensure appropriate contracting and monitoring in line with WFP's standards and procedures.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>
- Ensure that all programmatic needs as per WFP's mandate are included and operationalized in the initial response.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>
- Support measures to continue to strengthen early identification, outreach and coordination with local civil society, NGOs and affected communities in programme design and implementation.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Ensure that initial impact assessment tools are available offline for easy access during an emergency.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Explore feasibility of proactively addressing reconstruction strategies from the beginning of emergencies, potentially via a dedicated team of representatives from the relevant Country Office, Regional Bureau and Headquarters.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- The blended programming approach of cash and food should be adapted to future emergencies where appropriate.<sup>[Philippines 2014]</sup>
- New M&E indicators and requirements should not be tested in an emergency setting with limited human resources and under time pressure; information should not just be collected because it is stated in a strategic document. Flexibility is needed to adapt to the context.<sup>[Philippines 2014]</sup>
- Use the mobile app for registrations for SCOPE.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>

## Involving affected populations

- When setting up Users Committees, include a representation of both men and women, and the elderly, people with disabilities, and minority communities to enable them to be in decision-making, leadership, planning and implementation roles that affect their lives.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>
- Account for local factors (e.g., literacy, access to radios) and include questions in In-depth Emergency Food Security Assessments (EFSAs) to assist in identifying most effective communication modalities.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Implement beneficiary feedback and complaints mechanisms along with the guidelines/SOPs/at the onset of an emergency based on an analysis of the most appropriate mechanism, and conduct sensitization with the beneficiaries to ensure it is being used.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>
- Obtain feedback from local audiences to continuously evaluate public reception and interpretation, using this information to adjust messaging as necessary.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Ensure the toll-free hotline number availability to beneficiaries, whether it is on the back of a bankcard or through other means.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>

## Assessing and acting upon security risks

- Explore methods for streamlining security briefings during deployment to large-scale emergencies. Consider conducting briefings in Headquarters or supporting offices, and include standard security information and checklists in staff pre-deployment packages.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Consider maintaining central/regional stocks of visibility items (e.g. vests and caps clearly marked “WFP SECURITY”) for rapid deployment with security officers.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Increase efforts to recruit security personnel conversant with the local language.<sup>[Syria 2014]</sup>
- Ensure specialised equipment is available to security officers deploying from headquarters, including sat-phones, solar chargers, and optimized laptops.<sup>[Haiti 2010] [South Sudan 2012]</sup>
- Consider compiling and maintaining a list of satellite phone numbers in all Country Offices, to be available in Regional Bureaux in sudden-onset emergencies.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>

## Establishing communication and mobilizing resources

### Liaising with media, partners and donors

- COs should be consulted in the design of online fundraising campaigns to ensure consideration of cultural and other sensitivities.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>
- Handover notes from DROs should include contributions in the pipeline, proposals being prepared or under consideration etc.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>
- Improve the strategic coordination between public and private partnerships, and Communications in regards to visibility by showcasing our partnerships.<sup>[Philippines 2014]</sup>
- Heads of Sub-Office should be entrusted to talk with local media with support from the communications unit at the CO.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>
- Ensuring that field-based Public information officers have clear instructions about minimum video, imagery and information requirements and priorities within the first 48 hours, including donor visibility.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Prioritize social media and resource it appropriately in an emergency.<sup>[Syria 2014]</sup>
- Ensure sufficient consultation with government while balancing neutrality and efficacy.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Carefully plan and coordinate local messaging with national and international media public information activities.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Ensure media training is given to key staff, as close as possible to the outset of an emergency.<sup>[Syria 2014]</sup>
- Consider ensuring that field staff are briefed on the utility of field-level engagements with donors, balancing donor liaison with priority operational tasks.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>

### Boosting internal information flows

- The OIM team, Communications team, and EC should have daily morning briefs to determine daily messaging to ensure that external situation reports align with other external communication.<sup>[Philippines 2014] [Nepal 2015]</sup>
- Clear processes for the timely clearing of reporting products should be developed and upheld during an emergency operation.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>
- Continue to include Gender and Protection (along with other cross cutting areas) in the daily operational update agenda.<sup>[Nepal 2015] [Syria 2014]</sup>

## Facilitating Logistics, Procurement and Administration

### Facilitating financial and administrative processes

- Utilisation of and transition from cash payments in remote area operations should be well planned; this should include the process of granting advances to suppliers.<sup>[Nepal 2015]</sup>
- Ensure readiness to deploy cash resources in support of aviation in emergencies.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Where needs and risks warrant, consider increasing cash reserves held at Country Offices, applying WFP standard finance procedures.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Ensure supporting offices are ready to provide temporary support to WINGS II and other corporate processes during periods of interrupted connectivity.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Review mechanisms for coordinating consolidated shipments including standby partners' equipment to avoid customs delays.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>

### Setting up a functioning supply-chain

- Continue the use of the Supply Chain Working Group/Dashboard in large-scale emergencies.<sup>[Syria 2014]</sup>
- Assess the best way to build the Supply Chain Working Group by clarifying membership, roles and responsibilities, as well as associated timelines.<sup>[Syria 2014]</sup>
- Support the rapid availability of personal transport equipment for deployment in emergencies such as earthquakes where debris or traffic may impede quick movement of staff between key locations.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Consider procedures for designating a single Country Office focal point for all procurement requests during emergencies.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- Ensure country-level staff are present or deployed to manage NFI procurement.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>
- For large emergencies requiring high commodity volumes, enter into long-term commodity purchase contracts from selected origins.<sup>[Syria 2014]</sup>
- Explore ways of expediting the process of customs clearances with governments and develop measures to facilitate adequate documentation relating to cargo from NGOs.<sup>[Haiti 2010]</sup>

For more information contact:  
[lldatabase.HQ@wfp.org](mailto:lldatabase.HQ@wfp.org)



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