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# Emergency Simulations: Administrators’ Guide

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And a very special and very well-deserved thank you to my colleague Amy Hilleboe, the Simulations Project Manager, for your analytical strengths, your optimism, and your unending enthusiasm for this important capacity-building project.

Jeff Klenk

About this Guide

The Emergency Capacity Building (ECB) Project is a collaborative effort of the seven agencies of the Inter-agency Working Group on Emergency Capacity: CARE International, Catholic Relief Services, the International Rescue Committee, Mercy Corps, Oxfam GB, Save the Children, and World Vision International. These agencies and their partners are jointly addressing issues of staff capacity, accountability and impact measurement, risk reduction and the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in emergencies, with the goal of improving the speed, quality and effectiveness of the humanitarian community in saving the lives, safeguarding the livelihoods and protecting the rights of people affected by emergencies. For further information, please visit www.ecbproject.org or email info@ecbproject.org.

This Emergency Simulations Project was conceived as part of the ECB Project to help build NGO staff capacity to prepare for, plan and manage a response to emergency situations. The intent was to provide NGOs active in emergency response with simulation tools that could be easily adapted to the many different hazards and emergency response situations they confront around the world.

This document is intended to guide NGO managers, facilitators and trainers through the preparation and implementation of the simulations prepared under the auspices of the Emergency Capacity Building (ECB) Project. During the project, two emergency preparedness and response simulations were designed, developed, and piloted. This Guide incorporates the lessons learned from those two pilots.

We wish you luck in your capacity-building efforts!
Overview: Aims, Objectives & Audience
This section provides an overview of the aims, objectives, and appropriate audiences of each of the two ECB simulations.

Simulation #1: Single-Agency Preparedness & Response Systems Focus

Overall Aim
The overall aim of ECB Simulation #1 is to build the capacity of mid-level national and international staff to plan and implement a response to emergency situations in accordance with their agency’s systems, policies, and procedures.

Learning Objectives
After participating in ECB Simulation #1, participants should be able to:

1. describe the likely impact of a small or large-scale emergency operation on their country office’s regular programs and staff
2. list the key emergency functions, roles & responsibilities of HQ, regional, country office, and/or sub-offices including lines of authority
3. describe how to request and obtain additional human & material resources as needed for an emergency response
4. describe the process of developing key agency emergency preparedness & response documents, including preparedness plans, contingency plans, sitreps, and emergency budget proposals
5. list the key steps required to launch and/or join an emergency needs assessment
6. list a number of the key constraints on effective management & coordination imposed by an emergency and recommend actions/mechanisms to minimize the impacts of those constraints
7. identify the international standards – e.g. Sphere, codes of conduct, humanitarian principles, etc. - that should apply in preparing and implementing an emergency response
8. apply basic security and stress management procedures to apply when working with emergency teams

Audience
The primary audience of this simulation exercise is the mid-level management – and primarily national - staff of the NGOs participating in the simulations project. These staff generally include:

program/project personnel involved in managing projects (writing project proposals, managing and administering project budgets and resources, monitoring project progress, etc.) in the participating NGOs’ county/field offices; and

other middle-management staff involved in conducting the daily operations of those country/field offices
These are the staff likely to be called upon to participate in an emergency response: to conduct rapid assessments, make early response recommendations to senior managers, and administer both short and longer-term emergency operations. They are also staff who often lack depth of emergency experience and could most benefit from a focused simulation exercise given that their regular portfolios focus on development work.

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**Simulation #2: Multi-Agency Coordination Focus**

**Overall Aim**
The overall aim of ECB Simulation #2 is to build the capacity of mid-senior level NGO staff to plan a coordinated, multi-agency response to an emergency situation.

**Learning Objectives**
After participating in ECB Simulation #2, participants should be able to:

1. list the main challenges to the effective management of a coordinated, multi-agency response to emergency, and recommend actions/mechanisms to minimize their impact
2. list the key aims, functions and responsibilities of an emergency coordination process, as well as the role that their agency would play in that process
3. analyse and describe management behaviors that either foster or inhibit multi-agency collaboration and coordination
4. describe the process of identifying key gaps in emergency sectors, activities, or tasks, and produce a gap identification sheet (also known as a responsibilities matrix) to track efforts to fill those gaps
5. identify and apply international standards – e.g. Sphere, codes of conduct, humanitarian principles, etc. – to ensure that the agreed, coordinated response meets accepted standards

**Audience**

The primary target audience of ECB Simulation #2 is mid-senior level management staff of NGOs responsible for the various preparedness and response coordination mechanisms that their agencies have agreed to implement in times of crisis.

*Tip:

The Learning Objectives presented here are those worked out by the NGO representatives to the Simulations Project. You are encouraged to review and adjust them as needed to fit the needs of the staff participating in your simulation exercise. These needs should be identified when you conduct your training needs assessment (see the section on “Training Needs Assessment” in this Guide.)*
What’s on the CD?
This ECB Simulations package includes a CD (Windows operating system) which contains all of the materials required to run Simulations #1 and #2.

It is highly recommended that you review all of the materials provided for the simulation you plan to run before starting to adapt them to your particular country context and needs. (For guidance on adapting materials refer to the section on “Materials Adaptation” in this Guide.)

The ECB Simulation files are organized on the CD into the folders listed below (CD folders are listed alphabetically and in bold italics; filenames are listed as bullet points):

**ECB Simulation #1 - Single Agency Systems**

**ECB 1 Assessment Mission Materials**
- Assessment Mission Image Sources.doc
- ECB 1 Assessment Mission Quotes.doc

**ECB 1 Evaluation Form**
- ECB 1 Simulation Evaluation Form.doc

**ECB 1 Hour Zero Task Sheet**
- ECB 1 Hour Zero Task Sheet.doc

**ECB 1 Message Form Template**
- ECB 1 Message Form Template.doc

**ECB 1 NGO Management Memos**
- ECB 1 NGO Mgmt Memos-6 hour.doc

**ECB 1 Org Logos for Memos & Roleplayer Materials**
- ECB 1 Organizational Logos used in the Simulations.doc

**ECB 1 Participant Reflection Sheet**
- ECB 1 Personal Reflection Sheet.doc

**ECB 1 Participant Briefing Note**
- ECB 1 Participant Briefing Note.doc

**ECB 1 Roleplayer Materials**
- ECB 1 Role Guides.doc

**ECB 1 Simulation Presentation Overheads**
Emergency Simulations: Administrators’ Guide

What’s on the CD?

- ECB 1 - Day 1 - Simulation Overheads.ppt
- ECB 1 - Day 2 - Debriefing Overheads.ppt

**ECB 1 Simulation Times Newspapers**
- ECB 1 The Simulation Times.doc
- Guidance Note on Simulation Times.doc

**ECB 1 UN SitRep Memo Generator**
- ECB 1 UN SitRep Memo Generator-3 Region.xls

**ECB Simulation # 2 - Multi-Agency Coordination**

**ECB 2 Assessment Mission Materials**
- Assessment Mission Image Sources.doc
- ECB 2 Assessment Mission Quotes.doc

**ECB 2 Evaluation Form**
- ECB 2 Simulation Evaluation Form.doc

**ECB 2 Hour Zero Task Sheet**
- ECB 2 Hour Zero Task Sheet.doc

**ECB 2 Message Form Template**
- ECB 2 Message Form Template.doc

**ECB 2 NGO Management Memos**
- ECB 2 NGO Mgmt Memos-6 hour.doc

**ECB 2 Org Logos for Memos & Roleplayer Materials**
- ECB 2 Organizational Logos used in the Simulations.doc

**ECB 2 Participant Reflection Sheet**
- ECB 2 Personal Reflection Sheet.doc

**ECB 2 Participant Briefing Note**
- ECB 2 Participant Briefing Note.doc

**ECB 2 Roleplayer Materials**
- ECB 2 Role Guides.doc

**ECB 2 Simulation Presentation Overheads**
- ECB 2 - Day 1- Simulation Overheads.ppt
- ECB 2 - Day 2 - Debriefing Overheads.ppt
What’s on the CD?

**ECB 2 Simulation Times Newspapers**
- ECB 2 The Simulation Times.doc
- Guidance Note on Simulation Times.doc

**ECB 2 UN SitRep Memo Generator**
- ECB 2 UN SitRep Memo Generator-3 Region.xls

**Simulation Administrators Guide & Cover**
- Simulation Administrators Guide.doc
- Simulation Administrators Guide Cover.ppt

**Simulation Project CD Label**
- Simulation Project CD Label.doc
Assembling the Simulation Administration Team

Each simulation requires a minimum of two administrators who are prepared to run all aspects of the simulations:

- organising the event;
- preparing the materials;
- setting up the venue;
- running the simulations (and making whatever revisions may be needed “on the fly”); and
- debriefing the exercise.

The administrators must have extensive experience in emergency preparedness and response and preferably with an emergency response NGO.

They must also have extensive experience in group facilitation, possess advanced planning and organisational skills, and be able to work calmly under stressful conditions.

The Simulation Administration Team should be supported by one or two clerical support staff who:

- are skilled in Word document production
- can print Excel documents
- can take instructions and respond calmly under stressful conditions.

Tip:

Assuming that in many cases it may be difficult to identify two individuals with all of the skills noted above, then the “second best” option would be to identify an agency staff person highly experienced in emergency response and a second person – either in-house staff member or an external consultant – skilled in group facilitation and training.
Training Needs Assessment

A training needs assessment should ideally be conducted one to two months before a simulation is run. Country office staff should be contacted and prepared to provide Simulation Administrators with key information on:

1. country context and the particular emergency scenario to be the focus of the simulation
2. key agency emergency preparedness and response system features
3. external stakeholders and any particular partnership or coordination concerns
4. critical gaps in staff knowledge, skills, and attitudes

Details on each of these four categories of the training needs assessment follow:

**Country Context Review**

Country context information is essential to the “fine-tuning” of simulation objectives, tasks, and memo traffic. Key information needs include:

- Simulation participants: Their positions, roles in agency or partner emergency preparedness and response (EPR) and key knowledge, skills or attitudes (KSA) capacity-building needs that the country office hopes to address through training – including the simulation. Also any previous EPR training that participants have had.
- Hazard inventory: Most frequent causes of disasters in the country: sudden-onset disasters, slow-onset disasters, complex emergencies, etc. Areas and population groups most likely affected.
- Summary of agency and partner programs in the country. Of particular importance are ongoing programs likely to be affected by disaster.

**EPR Systems Review**

The EPRS systems review examines how the country office and partners currently approach EPR planning and implementation:

- Preparedness efforts: Are there ongoing preparedness planning / contingency planning efforts?
- Response policies & procedures: What particular policies & procedures should be tested by the simulation?
- Documentation: What key preparedness planning and operations planning documents should the simulation use (e.g. agency contingency planning formats, standard sitrep formats, emergency project proposal & budget templates, etc.)?
- Technical areas: What key sectors, logistics, communications, or other technical areas of concern to the country office should the simulation address?
External Stakeholder Review

The objective of the stakeholder analysis is to identify the main emergency actors in the country, their roles in EPR, and their relevance to the EPR activities of the NGO running the simulation:

- Which government agencies, UN agencies and other NGOs are involved in EPR in the country? Which of these have relations with the NGO running the simulation?

- Partnership: Which agencies are considered the main partners of the NGO? How are roles with the NGO’s partners defined? Who does what? How should the simulation address the NGO’s concerns about partnership? Which aspects of the partnership should necessarily be included in the simulation?

- Coordination: Is there a standing body for NGO coordination? Do NGOs have regular contact with host government or UN coordination mechanisms? Should these dynamics of collaboration be built into the simulation?

KSA Gap Analysis

Here, in interviews with country or regional office senior managers, Simulation Administrators should try to identify key KSA gaps – that is, the gaps between the office’s roles and responsibilities with respect to EPR and the staff’s ability to fulfill those roles and responsibilities. In conducting these interviews, the Simulation Administration team poses questions to senior managers such as:

- What are the key staff roles in country (or regional) office EPR functions?
What particular knowledge, skills, & attitudes are required to perform these functions?

What concerns do supervisors have regarding their staff’s capacity to carry out these EPR functions? What gaps are there in staff KSA?

How might a simulation help to address these gaps? Should the simulation be accompanied by other training activities to ensure these needs are met?

Having identified key KSA gaps, then Simulation Administrators must:

- Identify the particular gaps that can be addressed through the simulation and those that are likely to require additional workshop time or other training activities
- Fine-tune the simulation’s learning objectives. As noted previously, the Learning Objectives presented at the beginning of this Guide were generated by the NGO representatives to the Simulation Project. You are encouraged to adjust the Learning Objectives to fit the needs of the staff who will be participating in your simulation exercise.
- Clarify how simulation materials should be adapted to address KSA gaps

**Tip:**

You are likely to find that some managers who, while certain that staff capacity building is clearly a need, nonetheless find it difficult to specify exactly which emergency skills should be the focus of the simulation. It may be helpful for them if you develop a checklist of agency-specific needs with regard to emergency knowledge, skills and attitudes, and then send it to the managers in advance of your interview to enable them to focus their analysis.
Materials Adaptation

Overview

On the basis of the training needs assessment, the simulation administrators must then tackle the task of adapting the materials to the country or regional office’s expressed needs. Administrators should take careful note:

Each ECB Simulation requires several days of materials review, editing and preparation. Be sure to schedule time for this materials adaptation – no matter how many times you have run the simulation. Each context is different; each set of materials will require adaptation.

The materials in this package were produced for a flood disaster simulation pilot in Ethiopia and subsequently adapted for a refugee emergency simulation pilot in Sierra Leone. Simulation organisers must be prepared to review these materials, make decisions about what can be borrowed from the pilots, and what, on the basis of the training needs assessment, will have to be generated anew.

The following table lists the various materials, file types & folders (i.e. the folder in which each document or PPT can be found), and estimates of production time. The estimated total for producing a full set of simulation materials – including review, editing, writing, and printing – ranges between 2 ½ and 4 ½ days. The precise figure will depend upon one’s familiarity with:

- the particular hazard type and its likely impacts;
- the affected area and population;
- the NGO’s preparedness and response systems (for ECB simulation #1) or coordination practices (for ECB simulation #2);
- policies and practices of the major emergency stakeholders in the international humanitarian system; and
- Microsoft Office software.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Simulation Materials</th>
<th>File Type &amp; Folder</th>
<th>Estimated production time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment Images.</strong> 20 – 30 disaster impact images. Must be identified, downloaded and printed anew for each simulation exercise. Provides visual data and realism for Assessments. URLs for finding appropriate images are provided in the <em>Assessment Mission Materials</em> guidance.</td>
<td>Microsoft PowerPoint File Folder: Assessment Mission Materials</td>
<td>½ to one full day to identify and download 60 minutes (should be color printed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment Mission Quotes.</strong> Set of emergency assessment quotes (“findings”) from key informants, affected population, government officials, etc. These are used to provide data to Assessment teams during exercise. Will require significant review and editing to ensure quotes fit specific types of hazard impacts and specific population.</td>
<td>Microsoft Word Document Folder: Assessment Mission Materials</td>
<td>½ to one day review, writing &amp; editing 10 minutes printing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation Form.</strong> Should be edited and printed debriefing day (or on last day of training.)</td>
<td>Microsoft Word Document Folder: Evaluation Form</td>
<td>15 minutes review &amp; editing 5 minutes printing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hour Zero Task Sheet.</strong> Handout for participants to be distributed to be handed to participants during instruction session. Minor editing.</td>
<td>Microsoft Word Document Folder: Hour Zero Task Sheet</td>
<td>15 minutes review &amp; editing 5 minutes printing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Message Forms.</strong> 200 pieces printed on carbonless, triplicate forms. Used by participants during simulation to submit required reports, project proposal, sitreps, etc. (White copy goes to recipient; yellow to simulation administrators for task tracking; pink to file.)</td>
<td>Microsoft Word Document Folder: Message Form Template</td>
<td>Professionally printed as triplicate form. (If form is unavailable, simulation should have photocopier available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NGO Management Memos:</strong> Memos from role-players and other agency offices providing information or requiring tasks to be conducted; released throughout duration exercise. These memos will require much review and extensive editing prior to each new exercise.</td>
<td>Microsoft Word Document Folder: NGO Management Memos</td>
<td>1 – 2 days review, writing &amp; editing (depending upon familiarity with humanitarian agency systems &amp; practices) 15 minutes printing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant Briefing Note.</strong> Handout for participants to be distributed during</td>
<td>Microsoft Word Document</td>
<td>15 minutes review &amp; editing</td>
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### Simulation Materials

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<th>Estimated production time</th>
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<tr>
<td>instruction session. Minor editing.</td>
<td>Folder: Participant Briefing Note</td>
<td>5 minutes printing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant Reflection Sheet.</strong> Filled out at end of exercise by participants to capture impressions.</td>
<td>Microsoft Word Document Folder: Participant Reflection Sheet</td>
<td>5 minutes printing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role-player Guides.</strong> Roles for “other” stakeholders (Big donor, Government Agency, Media, etc.)</td>
<td>Microsoft Word Document Folder: Role-player Materials</td>
<td>1-2 hours editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Simulation Times Newspapers.</strong></td>
<td>Microsoft Word Document Folder: Simulation Times Newspapers</td>
<td>No preparation time needed (i.e. printed during simulation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UN SitRep Needs &amp; Numbers Memos:</strong> UN OCHA (Or UNHCR in refugee emergency) Sitreps, released every 15 minutes throughout exercise. Provide data on increasing death counts, displacement totals (also disaggregated by gender and age cohort), and priority humanitarian needs. File is easily updated and tailored to needs of each specific simulation.</td>
<td>Microsoft Excel Workbook Folder: UN SitRep Memo Generator</td>
<td>30 minutes review, setup and editing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Estimate of Time to review, adapt & prepare materials** | 2 ½ to 4 ½ days

---

**A Note on the “Generator”**

The UN SitRep Generator, a Microsoft EXCEL-based file, has been developed to enable you to easily adapt the UN situation report memos to reflect your agency details, the emergency scenario you are using in your simulation, the priority needs imposed by the emergency and the simulation calendar. These memos are critical to both simulations: they provide the “data” on the crisis: the numbers of affected and displaced, the priority needs, the calendar for the simulation. You should take the time to familiarize yourself with the functioning of the Generator. Instructions are available on the first worksheet in the EXCEL file (Click the first tab at the bottom left of the screen.)

**Note:** Each time you open the Generator file, you will see a pop-up that asks you to “disable” or “enable” macros. This is normal. Simply click “enable” and continue.

Before setting up the “Generator”, you should work out the actual simulation calendar with the senior managers of the host country: that is, decide what period or phase of the emergency should be represented by each hour of the simulation. The
Generator enables you to assign any duration of time to each Hour. For example, Hour One could represent the actual first hour of a crisis (if you wish to simulate the initial tasks of a response, etc.), or Day One of the crisis, or Days One through Four, or Week One, and so forth. Likewise, later hours could represent several weeks or months after the crisis. The determination of the calendar really depends on the learning objectives and the phase(s) of emergency response that you wish to simulate.

**Tip:**

If your agency wishes to focus the simulation on the first few days of the crisis response, then you might decide to assign Hour One to represent “Day One” of the crisis, Hour Two to “Day Two” and so forth.

If the longer-term aspects of the emergency response are critical to your capacity building efforts, then you might decide to assign a longer-term focus to the later hours of the simulation (e.g. Hour Five might correspond to Month Three.)
Equipment & Supplies Planning

While some emergency simulations make intensive use of critical relief equipment and supplies (e.g. tents, blankets, cooking sets, vehicles, helicopters, military assets), the ECB simulations have intentionally been designed to minimise equipment needs and, thereby, make implementation more likely for NGOs that may not have access to extensive resource bases. Nonetheless, there are a few essential equipment and supply requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Equipment &amp; Supplies</th>
<th>When Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECB Simulation CD</td>
<td>Before &amp; during simulation/debriefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Laptops with Microsoft Office Suite</td>
<td>Before &amp; during simulation/debriefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 Laser Printers</td>
<td>Before &amp; during simulation/debriefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 reams of A4 paper</td>
<td>Before &amp; during simulation/debriefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 LCD PowerPoint Projector &amp; Screen</td>
<td>During simulation/debriefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 Extension cords</td>
<td>During simulation/debriefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 flip charts, paper, 15 markers</td>
<td>During simulation/debriefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pad &amp; pen per participant</td>
<td>During simulation/debriefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 Roles, Masking Tape</td>
<td>During simulation/debriefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 carbonless, triplicate Message Forms</td>
<td>During simulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Scissors</td>
<td>During simulation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Optional equipment and supplies that, if available, can enrich the simulation include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Optional Equipment &amp; Supplies</th>
<th>When Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 – 10 Handheld radios</td>
<td>During simulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photocopier (this item may be essential if simulation Message Forms cannot be printed as carbonless triplicate forms.)</td>
<td>During simulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle with security &amp; safety supplies</td>
<td>During simulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wireless network to enable emailing info</td>
<td>During simulation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Venue & Conference Room Setup

Venue Requirements

Venue requirements for both simulations are similar, although the layout of each is different. Either simulation requires:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Venue Requirements</th>
<th>When Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - Large conference room needed during the simulation and the debriefing (calculate approximately 5 sq. m. per participant and this will be ample)</td>
<td>During simulation/debriefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 Other breakout rooms for those role playing external stakeholders (calculate approximately 5 sq. m. per role-player in each room and this will be ample.)</td>
<td>During simulation only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 office space to be used by simulation administrators and by those playing media/journalists (calculate approximately 5 sq. m. per organiser or role-player and this will be ample.)</td>
<td>During simulation only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tips:

Try to ensure that your simulation administration office is close to the conference room. If the only room offered is too far away to allow for quick visits to the conference room, then have the venue staff set up your office in a corner of the conference room. You need to be able to monitor closely the goings-on.

Conference Room Setup

The layout of the large conference room is similar for either ECB simulation, although the uses of particular tables or sites depends on which ECB simulation you are planning to run.

Layout of the breakout rooms to be used as the offices of external stakeholders, while similar for both simulations, depends on which external stakeholder roles you are assigning. Generally a small table and 2-3 chairs per table for each role will suffice.

The diagrams on the next two pages offer guidance on conference room setup/use for the two simulation exercises, and venting & debriefing sessions. You are, of course, encouraged to set up the rooms with the layout most appropriate to the needs of your particular simulation exercise.
ECB Simulation #1: Single Agency Focus

Proposed Conference Room Setup

ECB Simulation #2: Multi-Agency Coordination

Proposed Conference Room Setup
Both ECB Simulations (#1 and #2):

Proposed Setup for “Venting” Session

Proposed Setup for Debriefing Sessions
Role-players & Role-playing

Given the uncertainty as to whether or not agencies in the future would be able to identify and obtain staff to role-play external stakeholders, the simulations have been designed so that they can be run without any role-players or external stakeholders. (The memo traffic is designed to make demands and require the tasks that could likely arise from interactions with external stakeholders such as donors, the host government, the media or the UN.)

Role-playing External Stakeholders

Several roles have been developed to enrich the simulations in situations where staff or others are available to fill them. The face-to-face interactions between the NGO participants and those who are role-playing donors, government response agencies, UN agencies, and the media add a degree of complexity, dynamism, and, quite simply, *fun* that the memo traffic alone cannot.

---

Tip:

When assigning roles, seek guidance from senior managers in the country.

Try to have those familiar with the intricacies of the UN play the UN roles - the same with the person playing the “Big Donor” and with whoever plays the government official. The journalist roleplayer must be someone who can write quickly on a laptop.
The following table provides guidance on the current set of roles that have been developed for use in either of the ECB simulations. They are listed in order of priority need: the first role is considered the “most essential” to the conduct of the simulations, and so forth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>Essential? or Useful?</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representative, Big Donor</td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>The role of “Big Donor” has replaced the USAID and EU roles (Roles 15 – 19 below) for reasons explained below.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This role ensures extra pressures will be put on staff to produce requested situation reports and emergency response project proposals and budgets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The role has intentionally been made generic to enable whoever plays the role to draw on his/her own knowledge of donor relations – whether that knowledge comes from experience with EU, USAID, JICA, or other donor bodies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media / Reporter</td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>This role adds additional pressures to NGO participant as they undertake required tasks. It is a vehicle for disseminating information (through the “Simulation Times” newspaper) about the specific decisions and actions that are being taken in the current exercise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The media role also enables a critical debriefing point with regard to media preparedness: i.e., Were participants prepared to use the media as an opportunity, a tool, to push the NGO’s messages, or did they try to avoid interviews?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If there are an unusually high number of participants, you can assign two to three as reporters. (CNN and BBC roles are provided below.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official, Host Government Agency responsible for emergencies</td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>This role will have to be revised in each country to reflect the actual agency specific to the host Government agency responsible for emergency preparedness, response, and/or coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This role is useful as a vehicle for requiring NGO participants to attend meetings or submit information, thereby increasing management and response implementation pressures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCHA Senior Emergency Officer</td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>This role should be assigned if possible, especially in ECB simulation #2. It adds pressures on the NGO leader to coordinate the emergency response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Note: If you are running a refugee emergency simulation, use Role # 5 (the UNHCR officer)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>Essential? or Useful?</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR Emergency Preparedness &amp; Response Officer</td>
<td>Essential (refugee emergency scenario)</td>
<td>This role should be only be assigned if you are running a refugee emergency simulation. It adds pressures on the NGO leader coordinate the response with UNHCR. Note: If you are NOT simulating a refugee emergency, use Role # 4 (the OCHA officer) instead of this UNHCR role: OCHA is generally present to assist coordination of UN responses other than refugee responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Assessment Officer, UN World Food Programme</td>
<td>Useful</td>
<td>This role can encourage logistics-oriented tasks and activities. It can be used to force the NGO participants to focus on the short-term, logistical needs of an emergency relief response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Programme Officer, UNICEF</td>
<td>Useful</td>
<td>This role can encourage protection-oriented tasks and activities. It can be used to force NGO participants to focus on the short-term, wa/san needs of an emergency relief response, but also longer-term needs (child education, livelihoods, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP Senior Recovery Advisor</td>
<td>Somewhat Useful</td>
<td>This role is assigned only if there is a perceived need to focus on (1) early recovery and/or (2) the long-term needs arising from the emergency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC World Journalist</td>
<td>Assign only if large number of role-players</td>
<td>See comment for Role #2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN Journalist</td>
<td>Assign only if large number of role-players</td>
<td>See comment for Role #2.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tip:

During the pilot implementation phase, several NGO managers recommended that actual representatives of external stakeholders be invited to participate in the simulations. Others argued against inclusion of external stakeholders, noting that the presence of officials might inhibit mid-level staff from taking actions that could possibly expose existing preparedness & response weaknesses.

There is no simple answer to this; each context is different. Each hosting agency will have to consider how the inclusion of external officials will impact the simulation and whether their inclusion would add value to the exercise or not.
Role-playing the Affected Population / Community

If there are individuals available who can role-play members of the affected population (and of the communities that are hosting the affected in a displacement scenario), it would be extremely useful to have one or more of these individuals at each of the two (or in some simulations, three) assessment sites. As the assessment missions are generally carried out in the early stages of the simulation, these “affected population” role-players would need to be available only through lunch.

These role-players should be briefed on:

- the areas from which they were supposedly displaced (or in which they are the resident “hosts”)
- their age, livelihoods, family situation (etc.) prior to the crisis
- the reasons for their displacement
- what they lost due to the displacement and what they brought with them
- their current needs

These role-players should be sufficiently knowledgeable about the area and population to be able to make up needs information statements on the fly in response to participants’ assessment questions.

Tip:

Sometimes it is possible to employ local staff who are not otherwise involved in the simulation to play the role of affected community members.

It may be particularly valuable to ask these local staff if they have family who might be able to help out as well. If both male and female individuals (ideally of various age cohorts) are represented in the “affected community,” then one can work into the simulation debriefing and/or follow-up training sessions cross-cutting issues of age and gender disaggregation in assessment data collection and analysis and in any follow-up response proposals.
Preparation & Implementation - ECB Simulation #1

Preparing for Simulation #1

This section provides guidance on preparing to run ECB Simulation #1 (Single Agency Preparedness & Response Systems.) Tasks are logically sequenced to assist your planning.

Several Weeks Before the Exercise

Objectives & Scenario

Contact senior management of the host country office and identify learning needs of office staff and/or specific individuals and the emergency preparedness and response tasks and emergency “phases” that should be included in the simulation. (See Section 5 of this Guide.)

Set simulation objectives with senior managers of host country office. Of particular importance here is clarifying whether the simulation is viewed as a means of (a) training staff in current systems, (b) exposing the need for changes to the system, (c) identifying staff for potential emergency assignments, or (d) a combination of all three.

Identify a local simulation project manager.

Determine with senior managers the country context of the simulation (i.e. the hazard & emergency response scenario to be used in the simulation.)

Audience & Participation

Develop - and agree on - criteria for simulation participation with senior managers.

Identify which stakeholders to include in simulation and edit role-guides as needed.

Decide with senior managers if other emergency stakeholders (e.g. government, UN, NGO, media, private sector, community representatives, etc.) are to be invited. Be sure to consider the impact on the simulation that the presence of external officials could potentially have.

Venue, Equipment, Supplies

Agree with simulation project manager on venue & room needs.

Inform simulation project manager of essential equipment & supply needs.
Ask simulation project manager to arrange with the training venue for a box/sack lunch for participants for the day of the exercise; and for a sit-down meal for the debriefing day.

Materials Preparation

Edit the “Generator”: NGO data, affected regions & data, calendar (calendar setup should be discussed with senior managers of hosting country to ensure the simulation focuses on those phases of emergency response of interest to their office – e.g. the immediate-term, first few days, first week(s), first month(s), etc.

Edit the Management Memos and update the memo tracking sheet. Be sure to copy and paste appropriate organizational logos in the memos and use “Search & Replace” feature to update NGO, government agency, names of affected regions, etc.

Identify 20-30 appropriate electronic images/photos relevant to type of hazard, location of affected areas and affected populations (for use as Assessment Mission data). Prepare PowerPoint file of images for printing – preferably in color if possible.

Edit Assessment Mission Quotes to support simulation objectives and reflect Assessment photos as needed.

Arrange to have 100 Message Forms printed (white, yellow, and pink triplicate, carbonless forms). (Print approximately five message forms per participant.)

Edit other simulation materials as needed.

Tip

When collecting images for use as Assessment Data, try to obtain high resolution images to enable assessment teams to focus in on details that might be missed in lower-resolution photo. If possible try to find electronic images of at least 200k in size. Here, bigger is definitely better.

Several Days Before the Exercise

Ensure local simulation project manager informs venue about room setup needs.

With senior management, select a participant who will acts as the simulation exercise “leader” (this staff member will essentially act as the clearinghouse for incoming Memo traffic and delegator of tasks as needed).

Prepare a proposed debriefing agenda and check with senior managers.
Update presentation overheads as needed.

Print all materials.

Re-confirm with simulation project manager that there will be two computers and a printer available throughout the exercise and debriefing.

Identify locations to be used as “Assessment Mission” sites (preferably out of sight and a several minute walk from the main conference room). You will need two or three sites (i.e. one site per affected region as set up in the Generator.)

**Tip:**
The debriefing overheads will likely be edited once more after the simulation exercise as unforeseen events or issues arise and management decisions are made to include them as debriefing points.)

---

**The Day Before the Exercise**

Ensure conference room, stakeholder breakout room, and, if available, simulation administration office are set up as planned.

Ensure flip charts, paper, markers are available.

Ensure equipment – laptop, LCD projector, printer, etc. – are functioning as expected: test them!

Verify with venue organizer that box/sack lunch will be available on day of exercise and normal, sit-down meal is arranged for debriefing day).

Ensure name tags for participants are available.

Ensure role-guides for external stakeholders are available; arrange external stakeholder table signs on tables or taped to walls.

**The Day of the Exercise**

Tape Assessment Mission photos and quotes to walls at selected Assessment Mission Sites (if sites are indoors, this can be done the evening before; if the sites are outdoors be sure they are protected from wind or rain).

Set up the “OCHA Humanitarian Information Centre” (UNHCR in a simulated refugee emergency) on wall in the Conference Room. This is where the OCHA Sitrep memos produced by the “Generator” will be posted every 15 minutes.
Tape a copy of the simulation calendar to the wall near the “OCHA Humanitarian Information Centre.”

Set up the Simulation Administration office with laptop and printer for the Media to use. Arrange all the memos by hour of delivery on a table for easy viewing.

Tape a copy of the Memo Tracking Form to the wall by your desk.

Test all equipment once again.

Assign one simulation administrator responsibility for delivering memos and the Simulation Times newspaper.

Assign the other simulation administrator responsibility for tracking Message forms as they arrive in the simulation office and noting which tasks have been completed.

## Running Simulation #1 (Day One)

This section offers guidance on the actual running of ECB Simulation #1. The section is organized according to the sequencing of the simulation exercise sessions run on Day One (the simulation exercise day.)

The simulation calendar generally runs as follows:¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Real Time</th>
<th>Simulation Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0800 – 0900</td>
<td>Welcome, Introductions, Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0900 – 1000</td>
<td>Hour 0 - <em>The time before the crisis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 – 1100</td>
<td>Hour 1 – First few days of the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1100 – 1200</td>
<td>Hour 2 - Week 1 of the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1200 – 1300</td>
<td>Hour 3 - Week 2 of the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1300 – 1400</td>
<td>Hour 4 - Month 1 of the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1400 – 1500</td>
<td>Hour 5 - Month 3 of the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1500 – 1600</td>
<td>Break &amp; Personal Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600 – 1700</td>
<td>Venting (or “De-pressurisation”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Remember: The EXCEL “Generator” file enables you to easily change the “calendar time” represented by Hours One through Five of the Exercise. For example, Hour One could represent the actual first hour of a crisis (if you wish to simulate the initial tasks of communicating, alerting, etc.), or Day One of the crisis, or Days One through Four, or Week One, and so forth. Likewise, later hours could represent several weeks or months after the crisis. The determination of the calendar really depends on the phase(s) of emergency response that you wish to simulate.
Welcome & Instructions
Ideally, you should start this session at 08:00 to end the day at 17:00. If this is not possible, aim for a 09:00 start: starting at the “top of the hour” will greatly facilitate the timing of simulation memo traffic delivery.

Use the Simulation Overheads PowerPoint File to provide guidance as follows:

- Explain objectives.
- Hand out the “Participant Briefing Note.”
- Explain “scenario” (i.e. participants are gathered to conduct contingency planning exercise.)
- Identify external stakeholder roles and their purpose.
- Present various techniques of information flow.
- Explain use of message form. Explain routing of form copies.
- Emphasize participants should try to get real data and apply minimum standards to their reports, proposals, and other submissions.
- Explain simulation calendar and meaning of “Hour Zero” (that this is a time to prepare for emergency – not to “relax.” Be sure to announce to those selected to role-play external stakeholders that they should meet with you (or whichever facilitator has been assigned to brief them) during Hour Zero to be coached on their roles.
- Hand out the “Hour Zero” task sheet and explain the preparedness assignment that the simulation participants (not the external stakeholders) will be expected to undertake.
- Appoint a “leader” from the participants – this is the person who will receive and distribute most of the memos and delegate tasks as needed to the simulation participants. (This person should be agreed with senior managers in advance.)

Hour Zero

Ensure that the leader engages the participants in the Hour Zero contingency planning task

Take the external stakeholders to another room, give them their role guides, and explain that they should play their roles as they think best (within reason – i.e. within the general parameters of their role guides.)

Go over the various emergency scenarios with the stakeholders. Tell them not to talk about the specific emergency scenarios with participants until they actually happen.

Tell the Big Donor: S/he should decide on a “pot of funds” available for the emergency (presumably in the US$5 – 10 million range for an emergency involving a few hundred thousand affected people). S/he should feel free to release funds or withhold them depending upon the quality of proposals/reports submitted by participants.
Tell the Government Agency Representative: S/he may control the coordination process or leave it to the UN. Sh/e may be very restrictive vis a vis the participants or leave them to respond however they see fit. S/he should not hesitate to call the NGO into meetings to discuss the emergency.

Tell the UN Coordinator (OCHA or UNHCR): S/he should try to get the NGO involved in the UN’s efforts: response, cluster coordination, etc. The idea is to add complexity to the decisions that the NGO will make with regard to the response.

Tell the Journalist: S/he will have to produce at least one story every hour. S/he should have her/his articles written (in the simulation administration office ) by twenty minutes before every hour to enable editing, printing and distribution before the hour is up. S/he may be a very responsible journalist – or not. Tell her/him to visit the sites where the assessment photos and quotes are displayed to get an overview of the situation.

Tell the other roleplayers, if any, to follow the guidance in their role guides.

Deliver the Hour Zero Memos (Management memos beginning with \textit{MM 0} according to schedule throughout the hour.

**Hours One through Five**

Deliver the Hour One through Hour Five Management Memos (Distribution times for the Management memos are marked in the upper left hand corner: e.g. the number “\textit{MM 1:15}” indicates that the memo should be distributed 15 minutes after the start of Hour One; the number “\textit{MM 3:45}” indicates that this memo should be distributed 45 minutes after the start of Hour Three.

If there have been no assessment teams deployed by the middle – end of hour two, urge the leader to get the teams “on the road.” Make sure the leader understands that there are sites at the training venue simulating the affected areas; indicate to her/him where the “affected areas” (the assessment sites) are in the simulation.

As you receive your yellow copies of message forms, use the Memo Tracking Form to note that assigned tasks have been completed, whether or not the response is worth noting in the debriefing sessions, and any comment you have regarding the quality of the response.

Note: If your receive both the white and yellow copies of a Message form, this means the message has been written expressly to you; you should pay special attention to these.

Make sure the journalist(s) are circulating and interviewing the participants and roleplayers. Ensure they writing their articles on the computer every hour by twenty minutes before the hour (if they are slow typists, urge them to start writing at 30 minutes past each hour. You should then review, edit, “publish” (print), and distribute one copy of the newspaper per participant; the goal is to publish the Simulation Times
every hour. Keep the newspaper to one page only to facilitate printing and distribution.

Monitor participant meetings and activities, and feel free to generate additional memos and tasks as needed.

Monitor the leader. If s/he is handling the pressures of the job, fine. If s/he wants to be relieved of her/his duties, there is absolutely no problem in “re-assigning” the leadership to another participant.

Communicate regularly with the external stakeholders/roleplayers – the journalist(s) in particular - to stay abreast of new developments. Try to be aware particularly of developments that seem to foster (or hinder) achievement of simulation objectives. Jot these down for use in the debriefing sessions.

Intervene as needed if participants seem unsure of procedures.

At the end of Hour Five (or whatever the last hour of your simulation is in the event that you are running an abridged version), tell participants and roleplayers the simulation is over.

Hand out the “Personal Reflection Sheet. Tell participants to take their break, write their responses to the questions, and bring their reflections to the conference room in one hour (normally 16:00.) Tell the participants that the reflections are “their own”, that the “Personal Reflection Sheets” will not be collected, but that they should try to spend some time reflecting in order to preserve their experience for the coming day of debriefing.

Break & Personal Reflection

This hour includes time for (a) the afternoon coffee/tea break and (b) participants to write their responses to the personal reflection sheet which you should have handed out at the end of Hour Five.

Set up the conference room seating for the Venting session (See Section 7 of this Guide.)

Collect the images that you have taped on the walls at the Assessment Mission sites (assuming you may want to keep these printed images for future simulations.)

Venting (or “De-pressurisation”)

The Venting session is held on the simulation exercise day - immediately after the hour devoted to afternoon break and personal reflection. “Venting” – sometimes called “de-pressurisation” – is the process of releasing the emotional tensions and stress that some of the participants tend to build up during the simulation. It is not intended to be an analysis of the simulation; rather it is a session whose purpose is to enable participants to “come out” of their roles and to leave behind the scenario they have been immersed in for several hours.

2 For those familiar with Kurt Lewin’s “Experiential Learning Cycle”, this session represents the phase of the cycle during which the individual reflects on the “concrete experience” of the simulation.
Once everyone – participants, roleplayers, organisers – is seated in the “ring” (see section on “Conference Room Setup):

Tell the participants this is simply an opportunity for them to give their perspective on “what happened” during the exercise. Tell them that you will all analyse in detail the challenges of the simulation tomorrow, but for now you are just interested in hearing their general impressions. Note that each will have about a minute or so.

Start anywhere in the ring and ask a participant “What happened today? What did you perceive?” After s/he speaks for a minute (less if fine as well), thank her/him, and move on to the next. “And you? What were your impressions?” There is often much humor expressed in this session. If so, laugh, encourage it, play on it if you can find a way. If a participant is relating a particularly humorous incident, you might give her/him a bit more time; this session is meant to release emotions and stress and there is no better way to do that than through the use of humor.

After you have gone around the ring completely, remind them that they will all be involved in analysing the simulation results during the next day of debriefing, starting at 09:00 (normally). Tell them to bring their Personal Reflection Sheets to the debriefing session (you don’t have to collect these sheets; they are for the participants’ own use.)

Thank them for a good day of learning. Encourage a round of applause, and tell them they are free to leave.

**Debriefing Simulation #1**

This section offers guidance on the debriefing of ECB Simulation #1, generally conducted the day after the exercise.

**Rationale**

Debriefing is an essential phase in the simulation experience. Learners are encouraged to make connections between the experiences gained from the simulation and their real-life experience. In essence, this is the phase during which the lessons from the exercise are identified, analysed, generalised, and learned (see Annex 1: The Experiential Learning Cycle.)

There are numerous reasons for spending the time to debrief the simulation experience fully:

- To answer learners’ questions
- To sort out and clarify learners’ thinking
- To reinforce specific learning points
- To link key simulation actions, decisions, and topics to “real life”

Debriefing generally occurs after the simulation has been completed. There are some cases, however, where the simulation administrators may decide during the simulation exercise to hold short debriefing sessions as needed to point out critical issues.
Debriefing - ECB Simulation #1 Pilot, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, March 2007

Approach
The debriefing is intended to allow participants to analyse the various challenges confronted and measures taken (or not taken) in the simulation exercise. As each simulation will inevitably pose its own unique learning opportunities – i.e. issues, concerns, challenges unique to each exercise – the approach to debriefing should emphasize flexibility and adaptation.

It may become clear during the actual simulation or the venting sessions, or through informal talks held after the exercise that a previously unanticipated issue or set of issues took center stage and became a critical concern of the participants. Simulation administrators are encouraged to adapt the debriefing as needed to ensure that such issues are analysed and discussed as needed.

Duration
Many simulation organisers make the mistake of thinking that the exercise is in and of itself the actual learning experience and, as a result, tend to undervalue the importance of debriefing the exercise. In fact, the simulation exercise it is only one aspect of the learning experience. True learning requires reflection, generalisation of lessons learned, and some thinking about how the lessons learned from the exercise might be applied in one’s actual working life. These aspects of learning require a well-planned, facilitated debriefing of the simulation exercise.

A general rule: plan to spend at least as much time debriefing/analysing the simulation as you spent in the actual exercise – if not longer. That is, if you have run the full six hourlong simulation (including Hour Zero), you should plan on a full day of debriefing and analysis (09:00 – 17:00 with time for coffee breaks and a sit-down lunch.) Even an “abridged” version of the simulation – say, two or three hours of exercise, including Hour Zero – will still likely require at least a half day of debriefing to reap the benefits of the exercise.
Focus on Learning Objectives

Remember: the simulation is conducted to achieve - or work towards achieving – defined learning objectives. The facilitation team should ensure that debriefing sessions tackle the issues and concerns inherent in those objectives.

For example, if one of the simulation objectives is “to enable participants to describe how to request and obtain additional human & material resources needed for an emergency response,” ensure that somewhere in the debriefing this issue is addressed. That is, if participants have addressed this concern in the simulation exercise, ask how they proceeded: “What worked?” “How did you obtain these resources?” “What opportunities did you find?” “What other avenues might you have taken?”

If they haven’t addressed this key concern in the simulation, then be sure to have the participants explain why not and how they might address this issue in a real emergency.

The critical point is to structure the debriefing questions to ensure that participants address key agency EPR concerns.

Developing the Agenda

The debriefing agenda should be adapted to ensure a focus on (a) the particular objectives of the simulation as worked out in advance with senior managers of the country or regional office, and (b) issues or challenges that arose during the exercise and appear to provide key learning opportunities. In general, the debriefing should include the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session &amp; Topic</th>
<th>Recommended Process</th>
<th>Time (est.)</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of key decisions (made or not made) that influenced simulation outcomes and the factors that led to those decisions</td>
<td>Small group brainstorming and prioritization followed by reports back to plenary and plenary discussions of results</td>
<td>1 ½ to 2 hours</td>
<td>This is particularly useful for agencies that are using the simulation in part to examine how well certain staff perform in stressful conditions: what kind of decisions are made, which decisions are deemed important or urgent, which decisions are delegated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of agency systems, policies, procedures that were (or were not) applied</td>
<td>Small group brainstorming and prioritization followed by reports back to plenary</td>
<td>1 ½ to 2 hours</td>
<td>This is useful for identifying the key gaps in agency preparedness &amp; response systems - or in the staff’s understanding of those systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation focused on preparedness &amp; response systems that were not used or were used improperly</td>
<td>Plenary presentation with Q&amp;A / discussions</td>
<td>½ to 1 hour</td>
<td>A resource person knowledgeable in the agency’s systems should make this presentation; the facilitator should ensure an interactive approach to enable participant concerns/questions to be addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action planning</td>
<td>Individual or small group discussions with</td>
<td>1 to 2 hours</td>
<td>This session is intended to ensure participants consider the application of the lessons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Emergency Simulations: Administrators’ Guide
Preparation & Implementation – ECB Simulation #1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session &amp; Topic</th>
<th>Recommended Process</th>
<th>Time (est.)</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>feedback of one or two likely follow-up actions from each individual or small group</td>
<td>learned from the exercise to their “real lives.” The facilitator, in getting reports back on individual or group actions should encourage them to be specific in their actions: what will they do, by what date, with whom, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The agenda used for the debriefing of the ECB Simulation #1 pilot in Ethiopia was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0900 – 1030</td>
<td>Analysing Decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1030 – 1045</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1045 – 1130</td>
<td>Decision-Making in Emergencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1130 – 1300</td>
<td>Analysing Use of Response Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1300 – 1400</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1400 – 1530</td>
<td>Simulation Design Analysis(^3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1530 – 1545</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1545 – 1700</td>
<td>Action Planning (next steps)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Identifying Key Issues

Ideally, you – with input from the country office senior management – will have already identified the key issues and concerns on which the debriefing will focus. If this has not been done, a useful means of identifying these issues or concerns at the start of the debriefing is to ask participants to jot down on index cards their views on what they perceive as the most important issues raised during the exercise. Have the participants write one issue per card and hand them in to the facilitator (each participant may submit as many issues as needed, but be sure to tell them to include only one issue per card to facilitate grouping.)

The cards can be taped to the wall or flip chart and organized into general categories (such as: preparedness & response) or into more detailed categories as needed (such as: contingency planning, logistics, communications, decision-making, leadership, delegation, technical sectors, stress management, reporting, etc.)

\(^3\) This session – analysis of the simulation design – was held because the simulation was a pilot and still in the design stage. This session would presumably not have to be held once the simulation materials and process were adapted and suited to your particular agency’s needs.
The actual categories chosen to organize these issues will depend upon the learning objectives and identified staff needs with regard to EPR knowledge, skills and attitudes.) Different categories of issues can then be assigned to different groups for analysis and discussion. Another technique is to post categories of issues around the conference room and let the participants self-select into discussion groups by moving to that area of the conference room.

Use of the Experiential Learning Cycle

Use the Experiential Learning Cycle (review Annex 1 of this Guide) to structure the debriefing agenda and to ensure that participants have the opportunity to develop plans to feed simulation lessons back into the country office’s operating reality:

The coordination simulation has clearly provided you with a wealth of “concrete experience” shared by participants with regard to agency EPR systems. They have been asked to reflect individually on the experience (i.e. responding to the questions on the “Personal Reflection Sheet.) Time for sharing individual reflections should be built into the beginning of the debriefing day. Subsequent sessions should be structured to engage the group of participants in the process of generalization – and then to discuss the application of lessons learned about agency EPR systems from the simulation and debriefing to real life.

Note how in the sample agenda used in the Ethiopia Pilot, debriefing sessions were devoted to “Analysing Decisions” and “Analysing EPR Systems.” These sessions enabled participants to share their reflections on several key simulation topics and then, in small groups, to identify the “generalized” lessons learned from their experience.

Note also in the sample agenda, there was a session called “Action Planning.” This session enabled participants to take the generalized lessons they themselves had identified and develop action plans – to enable application of those lessons to real life.
Debriefing Techniques

Facilitation and presentation techniques used for the debriefing will depend upon the particular learning objectives as well as your own training/facilitation skills. Techniques you may find useful include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technique</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plenary presentations</strong> by the facilitator, resources persons or the participants themselves</td>
<td>Plenary presentations should generally be prepared in advance of the debriefing day and focused on the learning objectives of the simulation as agreed with the senior managers of the hosting NGO. You may find, however, unforeseen events of issues that arise during the simulation require that one or more presentations be developed the evening after the exercise – before the debriefing, In either case, the facilitator should review the presentation materials with the presenter in advance of the presentation session and coach the presenter in the use of participatory, interactive style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plenary discussions</strong></td>
<td>This ECB Simulation effort is an initiative in adult learning and capacity-building: adult learning principles should be observed throughout all debriefing sessions. Whenever plenary discussions are held, the facilitator should encourage questions and answers from the participants themselves. A participatory rather than directive approach to learning is appropriate here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Small group / team-based discussions or analyses of key simulation challenges or lessons</strong></td>
<td>More work, more analysis, and more lessons are produced in small groups. Participants who will naturally tend to remain quiet in plenary often “come alive” in small groups. This mode is highly recommended for a probing analysis of the simulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Written assignments</strong> by participants intended to encourage individual reflection and application of lessons learned.</td>
<td>The participants should note their simulation lessons on the Participant Reflection Sheet directly after the simulation exercise. If there is time for additional written assignments, these may be useful in getting individuals to reflect more deeply on their or others’ actions in the simulation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preparation & Implementation - ECB Simulation #2

Preparing for Simulation # 2
This section provides guidance on preparing to run ECB Simulation #2 (Multi-Agency Coordination Focus.) Tasks are logically sequenced to assist your planning.

Several Weeks Before the Exercise

Objectives & Scenario

Contact senior management of the hosting NGO(s) and identify the key learning needs with respect to emergency coordination of the various NGOs and those particular staff who will are likely to be participating. Find out which emergency coordination mechanisms, if any, currently exist, how they function, why they function well/poorly, how they are perceived by the participating agencies, what additional measures might be taken to improve them, etc.

Set simulation objectives with senior managers of the hosting NGO(s). Of particular importance in this case is to ascertain whether this simulation is perceived (a) as a means of solidifying support for an existing coordination system or process, or (b) as a means of exposing the inadequacies of a poorly functioning coordination process in the country and rallying support for a new and different process.

Identify a local simulation project manager – and focal points for the other NGOs who will participate in the simulation.

Determine with senior management the country context of the simulation (i.e. the hazard & emergency response scenario to be used in the simulation.)

Audience & Participation

Propose - and agree on – the NGOs that will participate and which (and how many) of their staff will attend. Stress that there is a two-day commitment for the exercise (unless you are running an abridged version which can be completed within one day.)

Decide if emergency stakeholders other than the participating NGOs (i.e. government, UN, media, private sector, affected community representatives, etc.) are to be invited to participate.

Identify which stakeholders to include in simulation and edit role-guides as needed.

Venue, Equipment, Supplies

Agree with simulation project manager on venue & room needs
Inform simulation project manager of essential equipment & supply needs
Ask simulation project manager to arrange with venue for box/sack lunch for participants for day of exercise; sit-down meal for debriefing day.

Materials Preparation

Edit the “Generator”: NGO Coordination Leader data, affected regions & data, calendar (calendar setup should be discussed with senior managers of hosting country to ensure the simulation focuses on those phases of emergency response of interest to their office – e.g. the immediate-term, first few days, first week(s), first month(s), etc.

Edit the Management Memos and update memo tracking sheet. Be sure to copy and paste appropriate organizational logos to memos and use “Search & Replace” feature to update NGO, government agency, names of affected regions, etc.

Identify 20-30 appropriate electronic images/photos relevant to type of hazard, location of affected areas and affected populations (for use as Joint Assessment Mission data). Prepare PowerPoint file of images for printing – preferably in color if possible.

Edit Assessment Mission Quotes to support simulation objectives and reflect Assessment photos as needed.

Arrange to have 100 Message Forms printed (white, yellow, and prink triplicate, carbonless forms). (Print approximately five message forms per participant.)

Edit other simulation materials as needed.

Tip

When collecting images for use as Assessment Data, try to obtain high resolution images to enable assessment teams to focus in on details that might be missed in lower-resolution photo. If possible try to find electronic images of at least 200k in size. Here, bigger is definitely better.

Several Days Before the Exercise

Ensure local simulation project manager informs venue about room setup needs.

With senior management, select participant to act as “leader” of the coordination process/body (this person essentially acts as the clearinghouse for incoming Memo traffic.)

Prepare proposed debriefing agenda and check with senior managers.

Update presentation overheads as needed.
Print all materials.

Re-confirm with simulation project manager that there will be two computers and a printer available throughout the exercise and debriefing.

Identify locations to be used as “Assessment Mission” sites (preferably out of sight and a several minute walk from the main conference room). You will need two or three sites (i.e. one site per affected region as set up in the Generator.)

**The Day Before the Exercise**

Ensure conference room, stakeholder breakout room, and, if available, simulation administration office are set up as planned

Ensure flip charts, paper, markers are available

Ensure equipment – laptop, LCD projector, printer, etc. – are functioning as expected: test them!

Verify with venue organizer that box/sack lunch will be available on day of exercise and normal, sit-down meal is arranged for debriefing day)

Ensure name tags for participants are available

Ensure role-guides for external stakeholders are available; arrange external stakeholder table signs on tables

**The Day of the Exercise**

Tape Assessment Mission photos and quotes to walls at selected Assessment Mission Sites (if sites are indoors, this can be done the evening before)

Set up the “OCHA Humanitarian Information Centre” (UNHCR in a simulated refugee emergency) on wall in the Conference Room. This is where the OCHA Sitrep memos produced by the “Generator” will be posted every 15 minutes

Tape a copy of the simulation calendar to the wall near the “OCHA Humanitarian Information Centre”

Set up the Simulation Administration office with laptop and printer for the Media to use. Arrange all the memos by hour of delivery on a table for easy viewing.

Tape a copy of the Memo Tracking Form to the wall by your desk.

Test all equipment once again.

Assign one simulation administrator responsibility for delivering memos and the Simulation Times newspaper.
Assign the other simulation administrator responsibility for tracking Message forms as they arrive in the simulation office and noting which tasks have been completed.

**Running Simulation #2 (Day One)**

This section offers guidance on the actual running of ECB Simulation #2. The section is organized according to the sequencing of the simulation exercise sessions run on Day One (the simulation exercise day.)

The simulation calendar generally runs as follows:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Real Time</th>
<th>Simulation Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0800 – 0900</td>
<td>Welcome, Introductions, Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0900 – 1000</td>
<td>Hour 0 - <em>The time before the crisis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 – 1100</td>
<td>Hour 1 – First few days of the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1100 – 1200</td>
<td>Hour 2 - Week 1 of the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1200 – 1300</td>
<td>Hour 3 - Week 2 of the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1300 – 1400</td>
<td>Hour 4 - Month 1 of the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1400 – 1500</td>
<td>Hour 5 - Month 3 of the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1500 – 1600</td>
<td>Break &amp; Personal Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600 – 1700</td>
<td>Venting (or “De-pressurisation”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Welcome & Instructions**

Ideally, you should start this session at 08:00 to end the day at 17:00. If this is not possible, aim for a 09:00 start: starting at the “top of the hour” will greatly facilitate the timing of simulation memo traffic delivery.

Use the Simulation Overheads PowerPoint File to provide guidance as follows:

- Explain objectives.
- Hand out the “Participant Briefing Note”.
- Explain “scenario” (i.e. NGO representatives are gathered in the capital city to conduct a contingency planning exercise).

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4 Remember: The EXCEL “Generator” file enables you to easily change the “calendar time” represented by Hours One through Five of the Exercise. For example, Hour One could represent the actual first hour of a crisis (if you wish to simulate initial coordination tasks, etc.), or Day One of the crisis, or Days One through Four, or Week One, and so forth. Likewise, later hours could represent several weeks or months after the crisis. The determination of the calendar really depends on the phase(s) of emergency response that you wish to simulate.
Identify external stakeholder roles and their purpose.

Present various techniques of information flow.

Explain use of message form. Explain routing of form copies.

Emphasize participants should try to get real data and apply minimum standards to their reports, proposals, and other submissions.

Explain simulation calendar and meaning of “Hour Zero” (that this is a time to prepare for emergency – not to “relax”.

Hand out the “Hour Zero” task sheet and explain the preparedness assignment they are expected to undertake.

Appoint a coordination “leader” from the participants – this is the person who will receive and distribute incoming memo traffic. This person should be agreed with senior managers in advance.

Hour Zero

Ensure that the coordination leader engages the participants in the Hour Zero contingency planning task

Take the external stakeholders to another room, give them their role guides, and explain that they should play their roles as they think best (within reason – i.e. withing the general parameters of their role guides.) Note to them that some have the aim of trying to ensure that good and effective coordination takes place among the NGOs; others have an interest in ensuring that individual NGOs work closely with them rather than through the coordination process.

Go over the various emergency scenarios with the stakeholders. Tell them not to talk about the specific emergency scenarios with participants until they actually happen.

Tell the Big Donor: S/he should decide on a “pot of funds” available for the emergency (presumably in the US$5 – 10 million range for an emergency involving a few hundred thousand affected people). S/he should feel free to release funds or withhold them depending upon the quality of proposals/reports submitted by participants

Tell the Government Agency Representative: S/he should oversee a nationwide coordination process (apart from the inter-NGO coordination process ongoing in the conference room.) S/he may decide to control this overall coordination process or leave it to the UN. Sh/e may be very restrictive vis a vis the participants or leave them to respond however they see fit. S/he should not hesitate to call NGOs into meetings to discuss the emergency and try to get the NGOs to conduct the response as s/he sees fit.

Tell the UN Coordinator (OCHA or UNHCR): S/he should try to get the NGOs involved in the UN’s efforts: response, cluster coordination, etc. The idea is to add complexity to the decisions that the NGOs will make with regard to participating in the emergency response.
Tell the Journalist: S/he will have to produce at least one story every hour. S/he should have her/his articles written (in the simulation administration office ) by twenty minutes before every hour to enable editing, printing and distribution before the hour is up. S/he may be a very responsible journalist – or not. Tell her/him to visit the sites where the assessment photos and quotes are displayed to get an overview of the situation.

Tell the other roleplayers, if any, to follow the guidance in their role guides.

Deliver the Hour Zero Memos (Management memos beginning with MM 0 according to schedule throughout the hour.

**Hours One through Five**

Deliver the Hour One through Five Memos (Management memos beginning with MM 1 to MM 5 according to schedule throughout the hour.

If there have been no assessment teams deployed by the middle – end of hour two, urge the coordination leader to try to convince the NGOs to get a coordinated assessment team “on the road.” Make sure the coordination leader understands that there are sites at the training venue simulating the affected areas; indicate to her/him where the “affected areas” (the assessment sites) are in the simulation.

As you receive your yellow copies of message forms, use the Memo Tracking Form to note that assigned tasks have been completetd, whether or not the response is worth noting in the debriefing sessions, and any comment you have regarding the quality of the response.

Note: If your receive both the white and yellow copies of a Message form, this means the message has been written expressly to you; you should pay special attention to these.

Make sure the journalist(s) are circulating and interviewing the participants and roleplayers. Ensure they writing their articles on the computer every hour by twenty minutes before the hour (if they are slow typists, urge them to start writing at 30 minutes past each hour. You should then review, edit, “publish” (print), and distribute one copy of the newspaper per participant; the goal is to publish the Simulation Times every hour. Keep the newspaper to one page only to facilitate printing and distribution.

Monitor participant meetings and activities, and feel free to generate additional memos and tasks as needed.

Monitor the coordination leader. If s/he is handling the pressures of the job, fine. If s/he wants to be relieved of her/his duties, there is absolutely no problem in “re-assigning” coordination leadership to another participant.

Communicate regularly with the external stakeholders/roleplayers – the journalist(s) in particular - to stay abreast of new developments. Try to be aware particularly of developments that seem to foster (or hinder)
achievement of simulation objectives. Jot these down for use in the debriefing sessions.

Intervene as needed if participants seem unsure of procedures.

At the end of Hour Five (or whatever the last hour of your simulation is in the event that you are running an abridged version), tell participants and roleplayers the simulation is over.

Hand out the “Personal Reflection Sheet. Tell participants to take their break, write their responses to the questions, and bring their reflections to the conference room in one hour (normally 16:00.) Tell the participants that the reflections are “their own”, that the “Personal Reflection Sheets” will not be collected, but that they should try to spend some time reflecting in order to preserve their experience for the coming day of debriefing.

Break & Personal Reflection

This hour includes time for (a) the afternoon coffee/tea break and (b) participants to write their responses to the personal reflection sheet which you should have handed out at the end of Hour Five.

Set up the conference room seating for the Venting session (See Section 7 of this Guide.)

Collect the images displayed at the Assessment Mission sites (assuming you may want to keep these printed images for future simulations.)

Venting (or “De-pressurisation”)

The Venting session is held on the simulation exercise day - immediately after the hour devoted to afternoon break and personal reflection. “Venting” – sometimes called “de-pressurisation” – is the process of releasing the emotional tensions and stress that some of the participants tend to build up during the simulation. It is not intended to be an analysis of the simulation; rather it is a session whose purpose is to enable participants to “come out” of their roles and to leave behind the emergency coordination scenario they have been immersed in for several hours.

Once everyone – participants, roleplayers, organisers – is seated in the “ring” (see section on “Conference Room Setup):

Tell the participants this is simply an opportunity for them to give their perspective on “what happened” during the exercise. Tell them that you will all analyse in detail the challenges of the simulation tomorrow, but for now you are just interested in hearing their general impressions. Note that each will have about a minute or so.

Start anywhere in the ring and ask a participant “What happened today? What did you perceive?” After s/he speaks for a minute (less if fine as well), thank her/him, and move on to the next. “And you? What were

5 For those familiar with Kurt Lewin’s “Experiential Learning Cycle”, this session represents the phase of the cycle during which the individual reflects on the “concrete experience” of the simulation.
your impressions?” There is often much humor expressed in this session. If so, laugh, encourage it, play on it if you can find a way. If a participant is relating a particularly humorous incident, you might give her/him a bit more time; this session is meant to release emotions and stress and there is no better way to do that than through the use of humor.

After you have gone around the ring completely, remind them that they will all be involved in analysing the simulation results during the next day of debriefing, starting at 09:00 (normally). Tell them to bring their Personal Reflection Sheets to the debriefing session (you don’t have to collect these sheets; they are for the participants’ own use.)

Thank them for a good day of learning. Encourage a round of applause, and tell them they are free to leave.

**Debriefing Simulation #2**

This section offers guidance on the debriefing of ECB Simulation #2, generally conducted the day after the exercise.

**Rationale**

Debriefing is an essential phase in the simulation experience. Learners are encouraged to make connections between the experiences gained from the simulation and their real-life experience. In essence, this is the phase in which the lessons from the exercise are analysed, generalised, and learned (see Annex 1: The Experiential Learning Cycle.) There are numerous reasons for spending the time to debrief the simulation experience fully:

- To answer learners’ questions
- To sort out and clarify learners’ thinking
- To reinforce specific learning points
- To link key simulation actions, decisions, and topics to “real life”

Debriefing generally occurs after the simulation has been completed. There are some cases, however, where the simulation administrators may decide during the simulation exercise to hold short debriefing sessions as needed to point out critical issues.
Approach

The debriefing is intended to allow participants to analyse the various challenges confronted and measures taken (or not taken) in the simulation exercise. As each simulation will inevitably pose its own unique learning opportunities – i.e. issues, concerns, challenges unique to each exercise – the approach to debriefing should emphasize flexibility and adaptation.

It may become clear during the actual simulation or the venting sessions, or through informal talks held after the exercise that a previously unanticipated coordination issue or set of coordination issues took center stage and became a critical concern of the participants. Simulation administrators are encouraged to adapt the debriefing as needed to ensure that such issues are analysed and discussed as needed.

Duration

Many simulation organisers make the mistake of thinking that the exercise is in and of itself the actual learning experience and, as a result, tend to underestimate the importance of debriefing the exercise. In fact, the simulation exercise is only one aspect of the learning experience. True learning requires reflection, generalisation of lessons learned, and some thinking about how the lessons learned from the exercise might be applied in one’s real working life. These aspects of learning require a well-planned, facilitated debriefing of the simulation exercise.

A general rule: plan to spend at least as much time debriefing/analysing the simulation as you spent in the actual exercise – if not longer. That is, if you have run the full six hourlong simulation (including Hour Zero), you should plan on a full day of debriefing and analysis (09:00 – 17:00 with time for coffee breaks and a sit-down lunch.) Even an “abridged” version of the simulation – say, two or three hours of exercise, including Hour Zero – will still likely require at least a half day of debriefing to reap the benefits of the exercise.
Focus on Learning Objectives

Remember: the simulation is conducted to achieve - or work towards achieving – defined learning objectives. The facilitation team should ensure that debriefing sessions tackle the issues and concerns inherent in those objectives. For example, if one of the simulation objectives is to enable participants to “analyse and describe management behaviors that either foster or inhibit multi-agency collaboration and coordination”, then ensure that somewhere in the debriefing this issue is addressed.

That is, if participants have addressed this concern in the simulation exercise, ask how they proceeded: “Which behaviors seemed to foster the coordination process?” “Which behaviors inhibited coordination?” “What opportunities did you find for enhancing coordination?” “How did you take advantage of them?”

If they haven’t addressed this key concern in the simulation, then be sure to have the participants explain why not and how they might address this issue in a real emergency.

The critical point is to structure the debriefing questions to ensure that participants address key coordination concerns.

Developing the Agenda

The debriefing agenda should be adapted to ensure a focus on (a) the particular objectives of the simulation as worked out in advance with senior managers of the country or regional office, and (b) issues or challenges that arose during the exercise and appear to provide key learning opportunities. In general, the debriefing should include the following:

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<td>Small group brainstorming and prioritization followed by reports back to plenary and plenary discussions of results</td>
<td>1 ½ to 2 hours</td>
<td>This is particularly useful for agencies that are using the simulation in part to examine how well certain staff are able to carry out their NGO-related tasks while at the same time being expected to participate meaningfully in an inter-agency coordination process. This session should consider what it means to coordinate and collaborate in stressful conditions: what kind of decisions are made, which decisions by the coordination group are deemed important or urgent, which decisions are delegated, and which are ignored due to NGO-specific requirements or demands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of the inter-agency coordination process: procedures that were (or were not) applied</td>
<td>Small group brainstorming and prioritization followed by reports back to plenary</td>
<td>1 ½ to 2 hours</td>
<td>This is useful for identifying the key gaps in agency willingness and/or capacity to participate in an emergency coordination process – and in the staff’s understanding of that process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation focused</td>
<td>Plenary</td>
<td>½ to</td>
<td>A resource person knowledgeable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
on various emergency coordination mechanisms, on barriers to coordination and on techniques to foster a coordinated, collaborative emergency response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session &amp; Topic</th>
<th>Recommended Process</th>
<th>Time (est.)</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>presentation with Q&amp;A / discussions</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>in the various models of inter-agency coordination of humanitarian response should ideally make this presentation; the facilitator should ensure an interactive approach to enable participant concerns/questions to be addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action planning</td>
<td>Individual or small group discussions with feedback of one or two likely follow-up actions from each individual or small group</td>
<td>1 to 2 hours</td>
<td>This session is intended to ensure participants consider the application of the lessons learned from the exercise to the actual process of coordination in the country or region. The facilitator, in getting reports back on individual or group actions should encourage them to be specific in their actions: what will they do, by what date, with whom, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The agenda used for the debriefing of the ECB Simulation #2 pilot in Sierra Leone was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0900 – 1030</td>
<td>Analysing Coordination Decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1030 – 1045</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1045 – 1130</td>
<td>Collaborative Decision-Making in Emergencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1130 – 1300</td>
<td>Analysing Coordination Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1300 – 1400</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1400 – 1530</td>
<td>Simulation Design Analysis&lt;sup&gt;6&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1530 – 1545</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1545 – 1700</td>
<td>Action Planning (next steps)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Identifying Key Issues**

Ideally, you – with input from the country office senior management – will have already identified the key coordination issues and concerns on which the debriefing will focus. If this has not been done, a useful means of identifying these issues or concerns at the start of the debriefing is to ask participants to jot down on index cards their views on what they perceive as the most important issues raised during the exercise. Have the participants write one issue per card and hand them in to the

<sup>6</sup> This session – analysis of the simulation design – was held because the simulation was a pilot and still in the design stage. This session would presumably *not* have to be held once the simulation materials and process were adapted and suited to your particular agency’s needs.
facilitator (each participant may submit as many issues as needed, but be sure to tell them to include only one issue per card to facilitate grouping.)

The cards can be taped to the wall or flip chart and organized into general categories (such as: coordination strengths vs. coordination weaknesses) or into more detailed categories as needed (such as: coordination & contingency planning, logistics, inter-agency communications, decision-making in an inter-agency body, coordination leadership, delegation to partners, working with technical clusters or sectors, coordinating emergency information & reporting, etc.)

The actual categories chosen to organize these issues will depend upon the learning objectives and identified staff needs with regard to coordination knowledge, skills and attitudes. Different categories of issues can then be assigned to different groups for analysis and discussion. Another technique is to post categories of issues around the conference room and let the participants self-select into discussion groups by moving to that area of the conference room.

**Use of the Experiential Learning Cycle**

Use the Experiential Learning Cycle (review Annex 1 of this Guide) to structure the debriefing agenda and to ensure that participants have the opportunity to develop plans to feed simulation lessons back into the country office’s operating reality:

The coordination simulation has clearly just provided a wealth of “concrete experience” shared by all participants with regard to coordination. They have been asked to reflect individually on the experience (i.e. responding to the questions on the “Personal Reflection Sheet.) Time for sharing individual reflections should be built into the beginning of the debriefing day. Subsequent sessions should be structured to engage the group of participants in the process of generalization – and then to discuss the application of lessons learned about coordination from the simulation and debriefing to real life.

Note how in the sample agenda used in the Sierra Leone Pilot, debriefing sessions were devoted to “Analysing Coordination Decisions” and “Analysing Coordination Needs.” These sessions enabled participants to share their reflections on several key simulation topics and then, in small groups, to identify the “generalized” lessons learned from their experience.

Note also in the sample agenda, there was a session called “Action Planning.” This session enabled participants to take the generalized lessons they themselves had identified and develop action plans – to enable application of those lessons to real life.

**Debriefing Techniques**

Facilitation and presentation techniques used for the debriefing will depend upon the particular learning objectives as well as your own training/facilitation skills. Techniques you may find useful include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technique</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plenary presentations by the facilitator,</td>
<td>Presentations should generally be prepared in advance of the debriefing day and focused on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resources persons or the participants</td>
<td>the learning objectives of the simulation as agreed with the senior managers of the hosting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>themselves</td>
<td>NGO. You may find, however, unforeseen events of issues that arise during the simulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>require that one or more presentations be developed the evening.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
after the exercise – before the debriefing,

In either case, the facilitator should review the presentation materials with the presenter in advance of the presentation session and coach the presenter in the use of participatory, interactive style.

| Plenary discussions | This ECB Simulation effort is an initiative in adult learning and capacity-building: adult learning principles should be observed throughout all debriefing sessions. Whenever plenary discussions are held, the facilitator should encourage questions and answers from the participants themselves. A participatory rather than directive approach to learning is appropriate here. |
| Small group / team-based discussions or analyses of key simulation challenges or lessons | More work, more analysis, and more lessons are produced in small groups. Participants who will naturally tend to remain quiet in plenary often “come alive” in small groups. This mode is highly recommended for a probing analysis of the simulation. |
| Written assignments by participants intended to encourage individual reflection and application of lessons learned. | The participants should note their simulation lessons on the Participant Reflection Sheet directly after the simulation exercise. If there is time for additional written assignments, these may be useful in getting individuals to reflect more deeply on their or others’ actions in the simulation. |
If You Must Run an Abridged Version

Planning & Implementation

This Guide has been written to help you prepare and run the full, two-day version of either ECB Simulation (one full day of simulation exercise and one full day devoted to the debriefing).

Admittedly, however, it is not always possible to schedule a two day event. In the event that time is limited, it is possible to run a one-day, abridged version of either simulation. (As of the writing of this Guide, CRS had already run on three different occasions an abridged, one day version of ECB Simulation #1.)

If time constraints dictate that you must in fact limit your time to one day, you should plan to run a half day simulation exercise and conduct a half day of debriefing. A half-day of simulation exercise, if well-planned can generate sufficient emergency preparedness & response (Simulation #1) or coordination (Simulation #2) issues and concerns to be analysed during the debriefing phase.

What you should not do is to plan a full day of simulation exercise without a follow-up debriefing phase. Such a schedule would likely serve only to expose participants to emergency preparedness & response or coordination system gaps or weaknesses without the requisite follow-up time for analysis, discussion, and action planning sessions – sessions which are vital to the participants’ learning. Without time for an adequate debriefing of the exercise, there is a real possibility that the simulation will simply serve to raise the level of frustration of participants who will have been exposed to critical agency problems without sufficient time for follow-up during which the reasons for - and possible solutions to - those problems might be understood.

Proposed Calendar for an Abridged Version

The calendar for an abridged, one-day simulation & debriefing might look like the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Real Time</th>
<th>Simulation Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0800 – 0900</td>
<td>Welcome, Introductions, Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0900 – 1000</td>
<td>Hour 0 - The time before the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 – 1045</td>
<td>Hour 1 – Day 1 of the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1045 – 1130</td>
<td>Hour 2 – Week 1 of the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1130 – 1215</td>
<td>Hour 3 – Month 1 of the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1215 – 1230</td>
<td>Venting Session: “What Happened?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1230 – 1330</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1330 – 1500</td>
<td>Debriefing Session # 1 (e.g. Identification of key issues or concerns raised during the exercise.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1500 – 1515</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1515 – 1630</td>
<td>Debriefing Session # 2 (e.g. Analysis of agency system needs &amp; recommendations for changes.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While not ideal, this calendar does represent a practical means of running an ECB simulation as a one-day event in the event that time is constrained.

Note that the simulation “Hours” have each been reduced to 45 minutes in order to enable inclusion of instructions, Hour Zero, three “hours” of exercise, and a half day of debriefing.

**Tip:**

In an abridged version, you will have to take the time to prioritise carefully which of the Management Memos should be delivered and acted upon. Given the time constraints, try to stick to the essentials and not overwhelm the participants by trying to deliver all of the memos in the ECB Simulation package. Remember: Always consider the Learning Objectives and weed out any of the Memos that you deem are not absolutely essential to achieving those objectives.
Annex 1. Experiential Learning Review

The experiential learning cycle, depicted in the diagram, is a learning theory developed by Kurt Lewin (1890-1947). Lewin was a Gestalt psychologist who developed the basis for much of today’s basic learning theory. Kolb, Honey & Mumford and others have all have developed much of their work from this simple idea.

The idea is shown as a cycle involving four steps or phases, and is called Lewin’s Cycle, or the Experiential Learning Cycle depicted here in the diagram. The diagram is cyclical for a reason: each application phase provides yet another experience to feed the cycle: we each continue to live and learn.

**Phase 1: Concrete Experience**

The experience phase is the initial activity and the data-producing part of the experiential learning cycle. This phase is structured to enable participants to become actively involved in carrying out some activity – in doing something. Doing, in this case, is very broadly defined, and includes a range of activities such as:

- simulations
- role plays
- games
- interactive computer game
- skill practice
- case studies
- films, video, slide show
- lecture
This sample list indicates that the range of training techniques varies from the more passive (lecture) to the more active (simulation or role-play). Exactly which technique one chooses to provide this Concrete Experience depends largely on the learning objectives.

**Phase 2: Reflection**

Once the learners have had the “concrete experience”, the facilitator guides them into the process part of the cycle. During this phase, learners reflect on the activity undertaken during the experience phase, and share their reactions in a structured way with the group. This may happen on an individual basis, in small work groups, or in a plenary group setting. Individuals share both their cognitive and affective reactions to the activities in which they have engaged. In addition, with some assistance from the facilitator, they try to link these thoughts and feelings together in order to derive meaning from the experience.

The role of the facilitator is very important during each phase of the cycle. During this process phase, s/he should be prepared to help the participants think critically about the experience and verbalize their feelings and perceptions. The facilitator should, as well, draw attention to any recurrent themes or patterns which appear in the participants’ reactions to the experience. The facilitator’s role here is primarily to help participants to conceptualize their reflections on the experience so that they can move toward drawing conclusions.

**Phase 3: Generalization (or “Abstract Conceptualization”)**

This phase is that part of the cycle during which learners extract conclusions and generalizations which might be derived from, or stimulated by, the first two phases of the cycle. During this phase, learners are helped to “take a step back” from the immediate experience and discussion, and to think critically in order to draw conclusions that might be generalized to real life or to a particular theoretical construct. This stage is perhaps best symbolized by the following questions:

- What did you learn from all this?
- What general lessons can you draw from this?
- What general meaning does this have for you?

The facilitator structures this phase of the experiential learning cycle so that learners work individually at first. They are then guided into a process of sharing conclusions with each other so that they may serve as catalysts to one another. In addition, the facilitator:

- Asks individuals to summarize what they have learned into concise statements or generalizations – and helps them to do so if needed.
- Probes their responses - or “pushes back” - to help learners apply more rigor to their thinking.
- Relates the conclusions reached and integrates them into a theoretical model.
- Makes sure, within available time limits, that each who wishes to share significant insights gets a chance to contribute.
- Helps the group compare and contrast different conclusions, identifying patterns where they exist, and identifying legitimate areas of disagreement.

**Phase 4: Application (or “Active Experimentation”)**

Learners are then guided into the application stage – sometimes known as “active experimentation.” Drawing upon insights and conclusions they have reached during the previous phases, they incorporate the lessons learned into their lives by developing plans for more effective behavior in the future. Ideally, learners are able to apply what they have learned immediately after the end of the learning event. The applications that they plan may relate to their professional or personal life, depending on their specific backgrounds and needs.

Techniques to facilitate this application phase include stimulating learners to:

- Develop individual- or team-based- action plans focused on putting “learning into action.”
- Review each other’s plans, providing consultation and assistance as needed.
- Share their individual plans or parts of plans with the whole group to create a sense of synergy and generate possible new ideas for others.
- Identify other learning needs.

The facilitator assists this process by helping learners be as specific as possible in developing their application plans. For example, if an agency team notes that the members plan to “meet with partner agencies to identify emergency coordination opportunities”, the facilitator might ask them to be more specific:

- Which partners will you meet with?
- Who will be responsible for contacting these partners?
- Where do you to meet? In whose office?
- When will you schedule the meeting?
- Etc…
Annex 2: A Facilitation Primer

The skills required to run plenary debriefing sessions are generally those of the group facilitator. Some key points with regard to facilitation skills follow:

**Active Listening**

Active listening tells your learners that you are paying attention to them and allows you to tune in to their specific issues, challenges and viewpoints. In doing so, you can adapt and refine your teaching strategy for optimum effect. There are a few basic guidelines for becoming a better active listener:

- Focus on listening, not speaking
- Avoid interrupting
- Do not feel compelled to fill the silence
- Show interest and be alert to the participant’s intent
- Seek areas of agreement
- Paraphrase
- Summarize and reformulate what you think the person is trying to say
- Withhold judgement until the speaker is finished
- After listening, ask questions to clarify or check understanding

**The Art of Asking Better Questions**

If your debriefing participants begin to act restless, look bored, or show by non-verbal cues that they do not understand or disagree, you should ask questions to find out what is going on. To do this well, you must know how to formulate and ask questions that help you achieve the learning objectives while keeping the atmosphere positive and upbeat. The way that a question is asked can greatly affect the mood of the session and the information you receive.

Questions can be used to:

- Help determine what the learners already know about a topic, thus allowing you to focus activities on what they need to learn from the debriefing
- Evaluate learner progress and understanding
- Act as a springboard for further discussion and participation
- Attract attention and encourage participation

**Types of Questions**

The least effective question a facilitator can ask is “Do you understand?” This question - as well as other yes/no questions - will often elicit only a non-productive head nod. An “open-ended” question is used to open a discussion and usually cannot be answered with “yes” or “no”. Asking “open-ended” questions should facilitate an analytical review of the situation by the participant, and foster a non-threatening discussion about the topic. More detailed information is likely to be elicited and the answers might open new directions for the discussion. Open-ended questions generally begin with the words *what, where, how, who, and when*. They are very...
useful in clarifying the speaker’s intent and helping to facilitate a full description of the situation or idea.

One note of caution: Questions that start with the word *why* may cause the participant to become defensive and may even limit or stop the discussion. The word *why* is may sometimes be construed as a thinly veiled attack or critique, as it implies that you cannot understand why a person would do or say such a thing.

There are four basic types of questions used by a facilitator in the debriefing setting:

- **General**—these questions elicit a broad range of potential responses, such as: ‘What are the emergency preparedness aims of your NGO?’
- **Specific**—these questions focus on an idea with a limited range of responses, such as: “How did the decision to assemble the first assessment mission impact the eventual response?”
- **Overhead**—these questions are asked of the plenary group, allowing volunteers to respond, such as: ‘Who can tell me what the difference it makes if agency-approved documents – such as sitreps or contingency plan templates or budget formats - are immediately available?”
- **Direct**—these questions are directed to a specific participant with the intent of eliciting an explicit answer such as: ‘How did you calculate water needs of the affected population?’

**General** and **overhead** questions are generally less threatening and therefore better to start a discussion, especially with a group that you may not know well. **Direct** and **specific** questions are best used after participants have become comfortable with group discussion, and after you better understand their level of skill or experience related to the discussion topic.

**Questions to avoid**

- **Unanswerable questions**—Be sure that the questions you ask can actually be answered by the group or by some member of the group.
- **Closed-ended questions**—These refer to questions that elicit answers of simple assent or dissent. Unless followed by open-ended questions (who, what, when, where, how, why), a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer leads nowhere.
- **Vague, indefinite, or ambiguous questions**—To get satisfactory answers you must ask good questions. Sometimes you may need to rephrase your question or break it down into sub-questions if not immediately understood. Above all, avoid trying to trap a participant into an incorrect or misleading answer.
- **Witness box interrogation**—You may have to ask a participant several questions in the interest of clarification; the dynamic, however, should never be that of a courtroom cross-examination where the person answering feels threatened.

**Giving Feedback to Participants’ Answers:**

A key facilitation skill is the ability to give appropriate and timely feedback. Participants learn better when they receive confirmation of the specific things they are doing right and constructive feedback on the exact things they need to improve or change. When providing feedback remember to:

- give feedback with the aim of helping—not judging
- be specific and give concrete examples—avoid generalising
• balance constructive criticism with recognition of what is being done right
• continually provide positive reinforcement and encouragement
• acknowledge and build on the trainee’s strengths

Paraphrasing and Summarizing

In general, people will strive to improve if they have a sense that they are competent and successful during the process. While you will need to point out what specific things they can improve and give specific suggestions for doing so, it is also very important to remain positive and encouraging throughout.

Although relatively simple, paraphrasing participants’ comments and posting them to a flipchart or projected screen can be one of the major tasks that a good facilitator can do. It is often overlooked or seen as redundant, and may be left out of the mix of activities in the debriefing discussion. In the right situations, however, paraphrasing and recording key points has several important uses:

• It clarifies
• It lets participants know they have been heard, and allows them to check that they have been understood correctly
• It facilitates summarizing and drawing of conclusions after an active discussion
• It leaves a record – that may be used later in the session, or in later sessions

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is simply restating what another person has said in your own words. The best way to paraphrase is to listen carefully to what the other person is saying. Actively restrain yourself from converting his/her words to your own opinions. One way to do this is to get the speaker to help you; for example, you might prompt a speaker to be more concise by saying “can you tell me that again in five (or ten or 20…) words or less.”

Use paraphrasing to check your understanding of what the other person says or means. Writing it to the flipchart allows the speaker to agree on your interpretation or to ask for a restatement on your part. Practice paraphrasing with your colleagues and in meetings so you develop the habit of doing it. Use initial phrases such as:

• “In other words…”
• “I gather that…”
• “Let me see if I understand you correctly…”

Summarizing

Summarizing pulls important ideas, facts or data together to establish a basis for further discussion and/or review progress. When you are summarizing, you must listen carefully in order to organize the information systematically. It is useful for emphasizing key simulation concerns or lessons and getting a sense of closure to discussions. Phrases that indicate the summarizing process include:

• “Let’s review…, your main concerns were…”
• “These seem to be the key ideas you have expressed…”
• “What have we said today? We discussed…”
Annex 3: Using Small Groups

Much of the debriefing will be carried out in small group venues. Use your judgment to organize these groups to produce the best results possible (for example, it may be helpful to place at least one of the more highly experienced staff at each table. You may decide, depending upon the context, that it is best to separate senior managers from low-mid level staff – or not. Here you should get some guidance from the hosting NGO.

Each time small groups are used, remind participants to select a small group facilitator and a reporter who will be expected to present the group’s findings to the plenary group. Their specific roles are listed here:

Small Group Facilitator Roles:

At the start of the small group discussions:
- Clarify the task
- Discuss methods
- Remind the group of the time constraints

During the discussions:
- Initiate the debate
- Be impartial
- Encourage participation of all group members
- Focus the group on the tasks
- Reformulate and summarize as needed
- Test the group for an emerging consensus
- Try to lead the group to a conclusion

At the End
- Summarize the lessons, conclusions and key points

Small Group Reporter Roles

Recording:
- Use the flip chart as directed by the workshop facilitator
- Print in large letters. Use dark colors (red does NOT show up well.)
- Record main points as they are expressed by group members
- Ask for clarification if needed
- Don’t continue until the point is clearly recorded
- Rewrite for the report to plenary if necessary and time allows

Reporting:
- Stick to the time limit assigned by the workshop facilitator
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Focus on the main points first and then add detail as time permits
- Remind the plenary group of the task
- Finish with a quick summary of main points