

The Implementation of Humanitarian Projects: The "How to" Approach of the United Nations' OCHA¹

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to outline some of the details of the United Nations' entities project management dynamic while taking into consideration the context of their work as well as the conditions surrounding them. The idea is to find out how their projects can succeed in their unstable environments, risky supply chains, and the difficulties surrounding the coordination of multistakeholder projects. In this paper we will be presenting the implementation process of humanitarian projects while outlining the "How to" approach of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The paper proposes a descriptive approach to explaining the implementation process of the entity's projects.

Key Words: United Nations; Humanitarian Projects; Project Management; OCHA; Project Delivery.

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Focus – The United Nations' OCHA

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) oversees emergency responses to save lives and protect people during humanitarian disasters (OCHA, 2023). The OCHA assists humanitarian groups in appropriately and effectively meeting the needs of individuals in crisis, understanding, and analyzing their needs, and mobilizing international help. This is accomplished by deploying the necessary instruments and services to assist humanitarian groups in ensuring that no one affected by a humanitarian disaster is left behind (Gettliffe, 2021).

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Figure 01. OCHA Logo

Based on their mission, the OCHA contributes to a "principled" humanitarian response by performing their global core functions (OCHA, 1998; Stensland & Sending, 2011; Foran et al., 2012; Gettliffe, 2021; OCHA, 2023):

- **Coordination:** The entity coordinates humanitarian activity to enhance reach, improve prioritizing, and decrease duplication. This ensures that relief and protection reach those in need.
- **Advocacy:** OCHA's public and private advocacy aims to promote respect for international humanitarian law (IHL), reach out to disadvantaged groups, convey emergencies globally, and assist people in obtaining humanitarian aid.
- **Policy:** The agency frequently creates and publishes humanitarian policy to assist define humanitarian agendas. The goal is to increase the responsiveness of the involved governments, NGOs, and the commercial sector, as well as As well as the efficacy of humanitarian efforts.
- **Information Management:** The OCHA provides information management services for the humanitarian community. The goal is to respond quickly by gathering, sharing, and utilizing data and information, which will support coordination, decision-making, and advocacy efforts.

- **Humanitarian Financing:** The office uses various financing instruments to meet humanitarian needs, increase cooperation, and align with development funds.

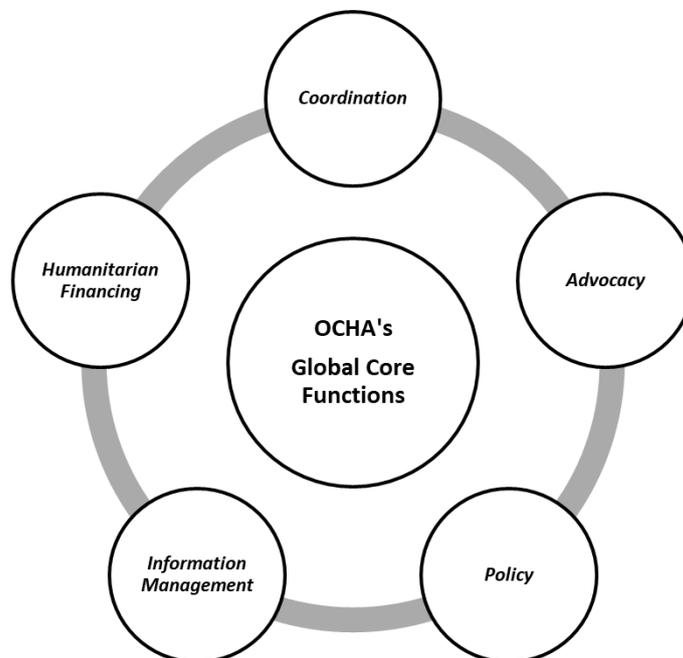


Figure 02. OCHA's Global Core Functions

1.2. OCHA's Work Philosophy

OCHA has a very special humanitarian philosophy towards project management activities. Indeed, in an emergency and at the request of the affected national government, OCHA will coordinate response efforts to ensure that they reach the poor – those most in need (OCHA, 1998; Gettliffe, 2021; OCHA, 2023). This coordination not only aims to reduce duplication in these response efforts, but also ensures that the assistance provided is predictable and prioritized according to community needs (while also considering to a crisis) (Foran et al., 2012).

When analyzing crisis situations (considering the specifics of each event) – they consider the specific needs of women, men, children, the elderly, people with disabilities, etc. (OCHA, 2023). This allows them to provide a global view of global demand based on specific data. In doing so, it enables OCHA to help the humanitarian community reach a common understanding of the humanitarian context and develop a common plan for response (Gettliffe, 2021).

On another note, OCHA is currently leading the international community's efforts to develop a sustainable humanitarian framework with a focus on national leadership, management tools and Stronger, more predictable finances (Gettliffe, 2021). Additionally, the organization promotes interaction between civil and military entities in humanitarian response operations, bridges gaps in environmental emergency management, and maps stockpiles of reserves. reserve global emergency relief on behalf of the humanitarian community (OCHA, 1998). Additionally, OCHA encourages efforts to prepare vulnerable communities, especially in disaster-prone countries, so that they are less exposed to the impact of unexpected emergencies (Bruderlein, 1998; OCHA, 2023). Finally, OCHA works with national governments, regional agencies, and others to test and deploy measures that help save lives in emergencies, and we provide tools such as emergency planning, risk mapping and early warning reporting (Foran et al., 2012).



Figure 03. OCHA Strategic Framework

1.3. OCHA’s Humanitarian Program Cycle

The Humanitarian Program Cycle (HPC) refers to the series of coordinated actions taken in the management of international humanitarian responses (preparation-management-implementation) (OCHA, 1998; Foran et al., 2012). It consists of five seamlessly coordinated elements, with each step building logically on the previous step and leading to the next. These should be implemented, wherever possible, in collaboration and with the support of national and local authorities (Gettliffe, 2021; OCHA, 2023).

Successful implementation of the humanitarian program cycle depends on effective emergency response, effective coordination with national/local authorities and humanitarian actors and information management (OCHA, 2023).

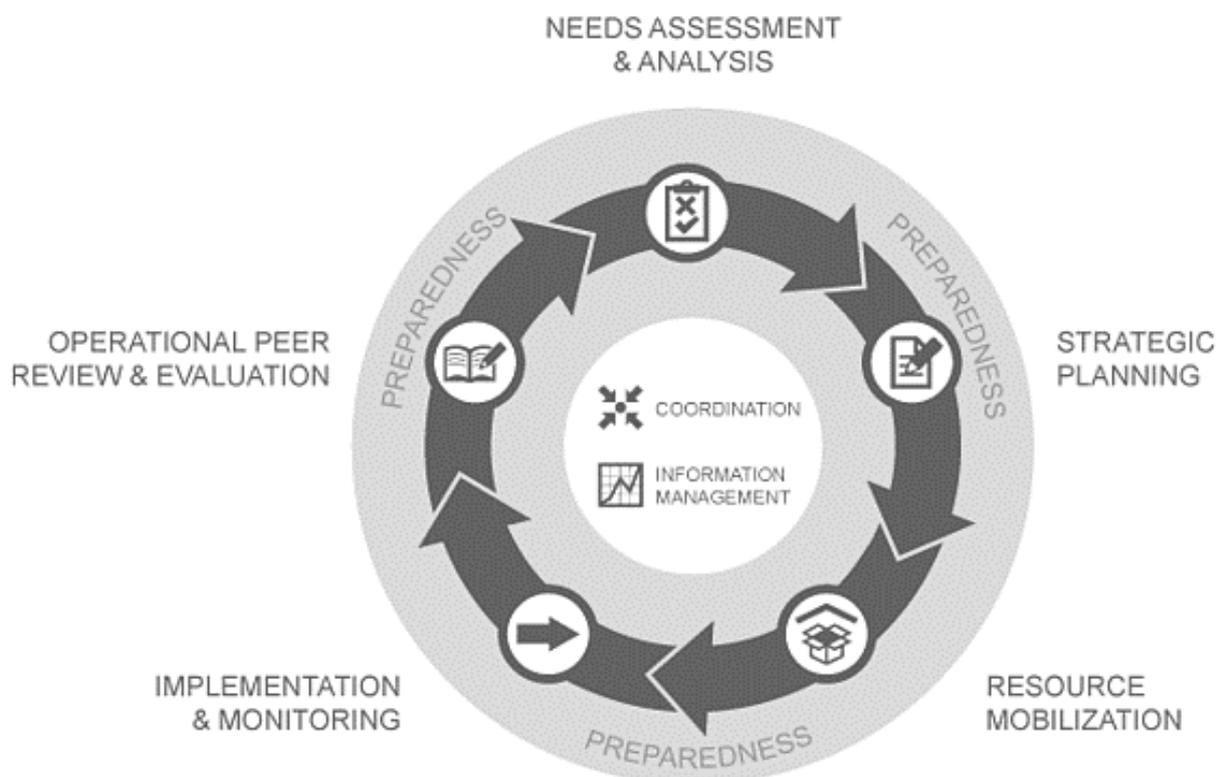


Figure 04. Humanitarian Program Cycle

The cycle's actions, described below, are interdependent and must be managed transparently using a consistent approach and common toolset (OCHA, 1998; Foran et al., 2012; Gettliffe, 2021; OCHA, 2023):

- **Emergency preparedness:** It is a separate element and the foundation of the entire cycle.
- **Timely, coordinated assessments and analysis:** It identifies the needs of those affected and provides an evidence-based basis for response planning.
- **Coordinated planning:** It helps formulate strategic goals, what needs to be done to achieve them and what the costs will be.
- **Funding and other resources:** They are mobilized for the system based on and in support of the strategic response plan.
- **Monitoring of agreed output and outcome indicators and the tracking of financial information:** They are mobilized to the system on the ground and support the strategic response plan.

Although the implementation of this cycle must be flexible and adaptable to the circumstances of different countries, it must at least address the above factors (OCHA, 2023). Where possible, support national and local partners, including NGOs, civil society, and communities, and complement or build on existing frameworks; it will contribute to a response that builds resilience to future disasters (Foran et al., 2012).

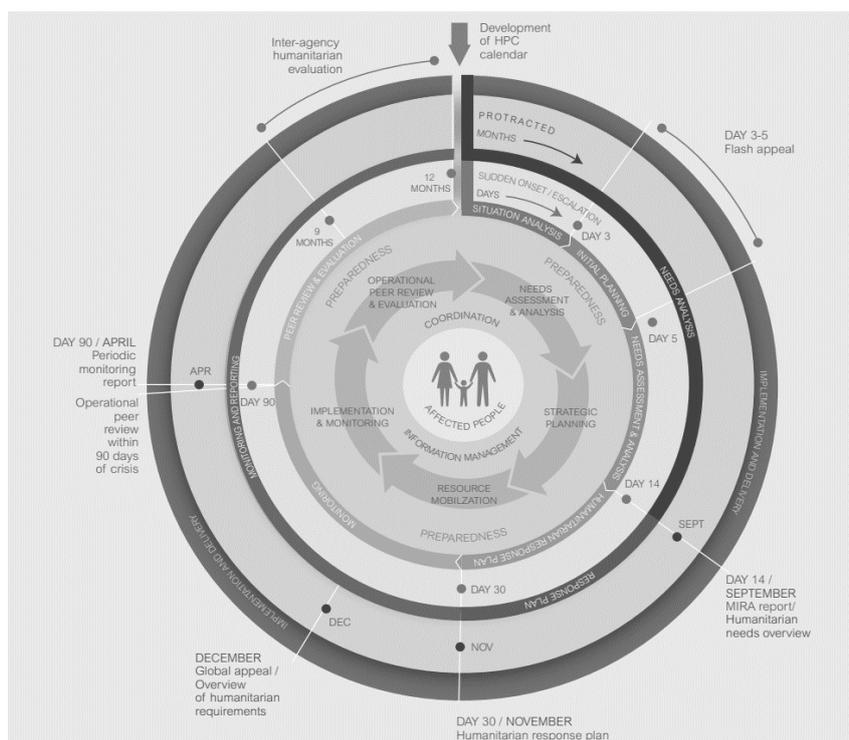


Figure 05. Detailed OCHA's HPC

2. Humanitarian Cycle Program Outline

2.1. An Action-based Work Dynamic

The HCP dynamic has as an ultimate objective to ensure that the humanitarian response deliver assistance to those in need as the result of effective and timely decision-making and planning – these include (OCHA, 1998; Stumpfenhorst et al., 2011; Foran et al., 2012; Gettliffe, 2021; OCHA, 2023):

- A mechanism to deploy strong, sustainable, and experienced humanitarian leadership to guide the humanitarian response from of the outset of a major crisis.
- The strengthening of humanitarian leadership capacities as well as rapid deployment of humanitarian leaders at various levels – to ensure the coordination of the project.
- Improving strategic planning at the concerned country's level that highlights the collective results that the humanitarian community sets out to attain and identifies how clusters and organizations will contribute to them.
- Enhancing accountability of the HCP coordinator (HC) and members of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) for the achievement of collective results.
- Streamlining the coordination mechanisms that were adapted to operational requirements and contexts to better facilitate and delivery.

Even though the HPC is the closest thing to a standardized framework to the UN's humanitarian projects – there is no “one size fits all” approach given the particularity of each situation / crisis. Hence, HCP tools should be applied with flexibility and compliance to the working conditions and concerned situation to ensure solid responses (OCHA, 1998; Stensland & Sending, 2011; Foran et al., 2012; Gettliffe, 2021; OCHA, 2023):

- that are based on evidence and concrete data;
- that set priorities based on urgencies and needs;
- that do periodic reporting regarding the delivery of humanitarian protection and assistance.

The international entities such OCHA must address disasters and other type of emergencies to ensure a solid response capacity of affected countries – given both the magnitude and duration of many emergencies – that go beyond the response capacity of many affected countries' governments (Foran et al., 2012; Gettliffe, 2021)

The Humanitarian Program Cycle (HPC) is a considered to be a new way of working, building on the past experiences of international humanitarian assistance and intervention. The HCP defines the roles and responsibilities of the implicated parties as well as the way that they interact with other, with international-national-and local authorities, with civil society, as well as with people affected by crises (OCHA, 2023).

The HCP consists of an ensemble of interlinked tools and processes to assist the humanitarian coordinator (HC) as well as the Humanitarian Country Team (HCP) to improve the delivery of humanitarian assistance through better preparing, priority setting, coordination and monitoring the collective response through informed decision-making (Foran et al., 2012). To properly implement the program, each implicated party will be required to change its practices, its mindset, behavior, culture, and institutional system to channel all efforts on the collective respond – to ensure improved outcomes (OCHA, 1998; Gettliffe, 2021).

2.2. HPC Strategic Process

The HPC consists of six “sequential” elements (Emergency Response Preparedness; Needs Assessment and Analysis; Strategic Response Planning; Implementation and Monitoring; Resource Mobilization; and Operational Peer Review and Evaluation) and two key “enablers” (Coordination and Information Management) – which are always considered as ongoing in

support of the successful implementation of the humanitarian response projects (OCHA, 1998; Bhattacharjee & Lossio, 2011).

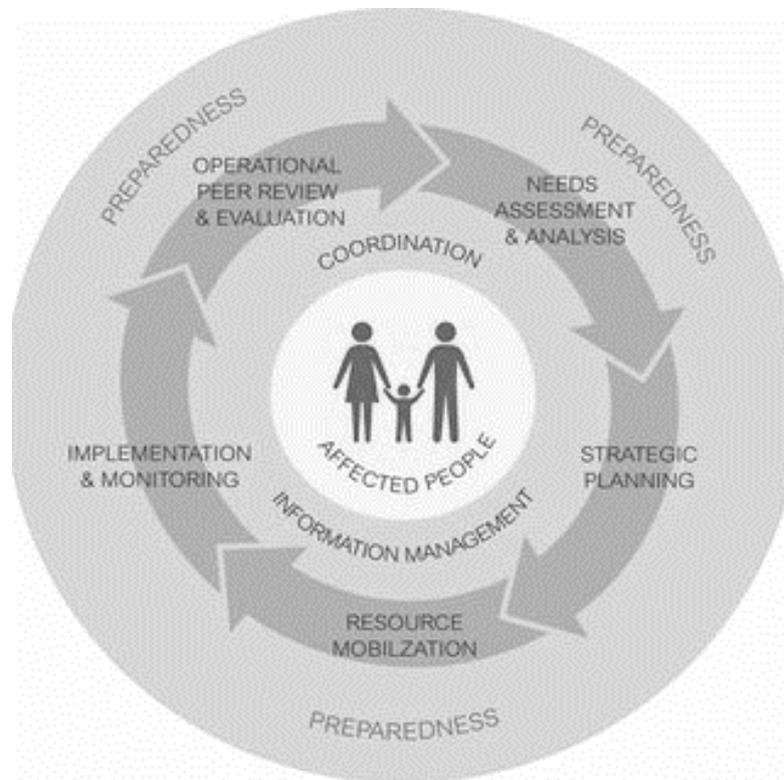


Figure 05. HCP Components

The six “sequential” elements and two key “enablers” combine into one single strategic process that runs through the cycle of inter-agency coordination and response, with one step logically building on the previous and leading to the next (Gettliffe, 2021).

These elements and enablers combine into a single, transparent strategic process, across the response cycle and cross-sectoral coordination, with each step logically building on the previous step and leads to the next step (Foran et al., 2012). That is, HPC enables stakeholders to jointly define the overall shape of the humanitarian response, examine each actor's role vis-à-vis other organizations and actors, and understand what needs to be done. at a certain time in accordance with agreed objectives (OCHA, 1998; OCHA, 2012). to ensure a coherent, effective, and responsible response.

The humanitarian planning cycle emphasizes the need to (OCHA, 1998; Bhattacharjee & Lossio, 2011; Foran et al., 2012; OCHA, 2012; OCHA, 2023):

- Be as prepared as possible before a humanitarian crisis occurs. Preparedness includes minimum and advanced preparedness measures, such as general risk analysis, contingency planning, and retaining or integrating contingency plans into development plans.
- The plan is based on a joint analysis of risk and evidence. Implicated organizations must collect, analyze, and share information before and during a crisis. They must also conduct joint risk analysis and needs assessments with national authorities and development organizations whenever possible. Finally, they must adjust and update plans to consider new information; and ensure that decisions are based on evidence.
- Set goals from the outset and ensure that they are fed back. To achieve this, those involved need strong and accountable leadership and a solid coordination structure.
- Strengthen local decision-making by being as close as possible to the people affected by the crisis. It is important to work with and listen to those affected by the crisis, local NGOs, central and local authorities, and existing humanitarian organizations in the country.
- Monitor humanitarian action and adapt strategies and plans based on the response. This requires regular monitoring and evaluation.
- Plan their exit strategy from the outset and clearly articulate how an effective transition and handover to national, local and development partners will take place.

For the humanitarian planning cycle to be meaningful, all organizations must commit to and own the planning cycle with roles, responsibilities and deadlines clearly defined and communicated (OCHA, 2023). The process and its results must be accessible and useful to humanitarian workers, while also cost-effective in terms of time, money, and effort (OCHA, 2012; Gettliffe, 2021). Senior Leadership of responsible organizations working together to ensure that the overall response is evidence-based, well-planned and executed, and that all stakeholders contribute to the effort shared (Foran et al., 2012).

2.3. The Implicated HCP Parties

HCP implementation involves all stakeholders in decision making, adopting a collaborative approach to achieve goals (OCHA, 2012). It supports and supplements the capacity of comparable countries to respond to a humanitarian crisis. Even if institutional and decision-making approaches differ in the context of a crisis, the application of HCP must still be carried out according to the following groups (Stumpfenhorst et al., 2011; Foran et al., 2012; Gettliffe, 2021; OCHA, 2023):

- Led and managed by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) – the project manager.
- Managed by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT).
- Supported by inter-cluster coordination cluster.
- Includes many parties at international, national, and regional levels.
- Support the national government of the crisis-affected country.
- With the direct participation of the people affected by the crisis.

2.4. Resiliency, Flexibility and Adaptability

As has been explained, the overall goal of the crisis response project is to ensure that an appropriate humanitarian response provides life-saving assistance to those in need (Gettliffe, 2021). This will be the result of an effective and rapid response through calculated planning and decision-making, as well as strong collaboration, inter-organizational cooperation, efficiency, etc. (Foran et al., 2012).

Given that each crisis is different than the other given that its conditions, its environment, the coordination structures, etc. are different – hence, when it comes to HCP there must be a scope for significant adaptation of the elements (i.e. resources, structures, team, timeline, etc.) to meet conditions on the ground (OCHA, 2012). In other words, the HCP's elements, timeline, etc. must be adapted to the particulars of the crisis – which will solidify the resiliency of the humanitarian project and its sustainability (Gettliffe, 2021; OCHA, 2023).

3. Humanitarian Program Cycle Dynamic

3.1. Outline

The Humanitarian Program Cycle (HPC) has specific tools and elements that can be applied to all humanitarian crises – even though their application should be done by adapting its context (flexibility) (Gettliffe, 2021). The implementation of HPC covers the operationalization of all its elements to ensure project delivery of the affected people quickly, effectively, and efficiently (OCHA, 2012; OCHA, 2023).

3.2. Element 01 – Preparedness

3.2.1. Identify what needs to be prepared

Pre-established Humanitarian project preparedness measures will aim to add the proactive approach to the all-in-all project – making humanitarian response more timely, compliant to the context, and more cost-effective (Gettliffe, 2021). Hence, Emergency Response Preparedness (ERP) involves all implicated parties to coordinate their efforts and actions in anticipating crises that are likely to occur through prospections, building scenarios, and contingency response plans (OCHA, 2023). The ERP must include putting in place key project components of the overall humanitarian response plan (Foran et al., 2012).

3.2.2. Reviewing when preparations are due

Within the context of crisis-response management and scenario building – the HC must continuously review their ERP to guarantee swift decisive actions – in unstable environments (Foran et al., 2012).

3.2.3. The ERP Elements

The ERP is a continuous process that seeks to both define and decrypt risk and engineer actions accordingly by drawing a prospective-predictable framework of multi-crisis preparedness. This process will have to take in mind – three main elements (Bruderlein, 1998; Foran et al., 2012; Gettliffe, 2021; OCHA, 2023):

- **Risk Analysis & Monitoring Tools / Processes:** Both incidents and hazards are identified and subsequently ranked as either low, medium, or high risk based on their impact and likelihood (short, medium, and long term). This results risk profile for the concerned society / environment. The risk analysis is to be conducted with the implicated parties to build a solid ERP framework.

- **Minimum Preparedness Actions:** Such actions (i.e. risk monitoring, coordination, joint assessment, information management, etc.) will need to identify the needed steps that are to be taken to ensure that HPC can be implemented effectively when a crisis occurs.
- **Contingency Planning & Advanced Preparedness Actions:** The idea is to prepare all implicated project actors so that they can properly respond to any given scenario. This is done by the formulation of a global contingency plan where each implicated party is fully aware of its contents. This will enable them to coordinate some advanced preparedness actions such as identifying capacities, reviewing the logistics requirements, etc. Hence, the contingency plan aims to ensure that what the HCT prepares for is compliant for what it will responding to.

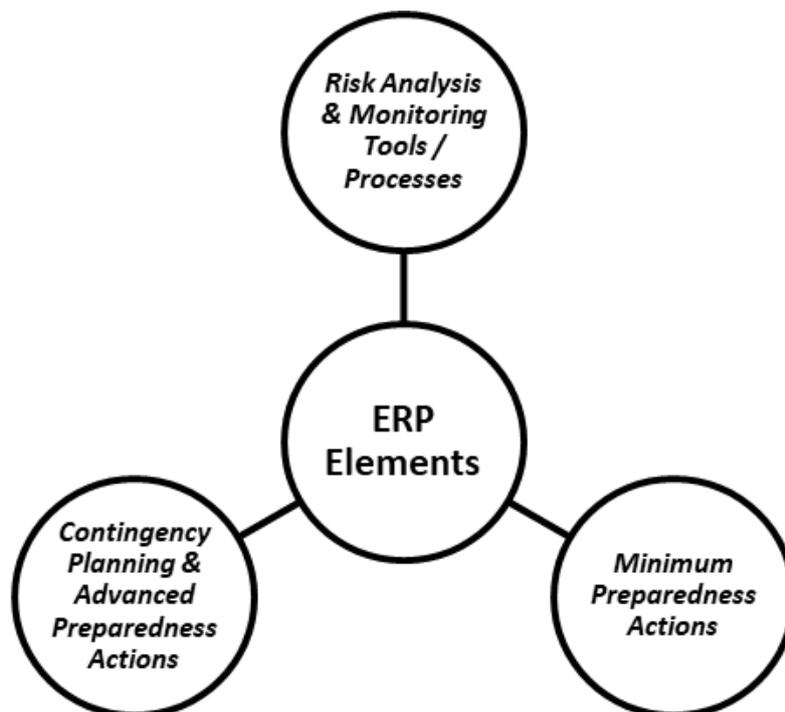


Figure 06. ERP Elements

3.2.4. Assigning Roles

The HC in coordination and collaboration with all implicated parties will be responsible for a proper – calculated distribution of roles and assigning responsibilities. In this context, further reserve / urgent / back-up tasks and missions might be assigned to each party as needed while considering the impact of each identified risk and mitigation procedure (Bruderlein, 1998; Foran et al., 2012).

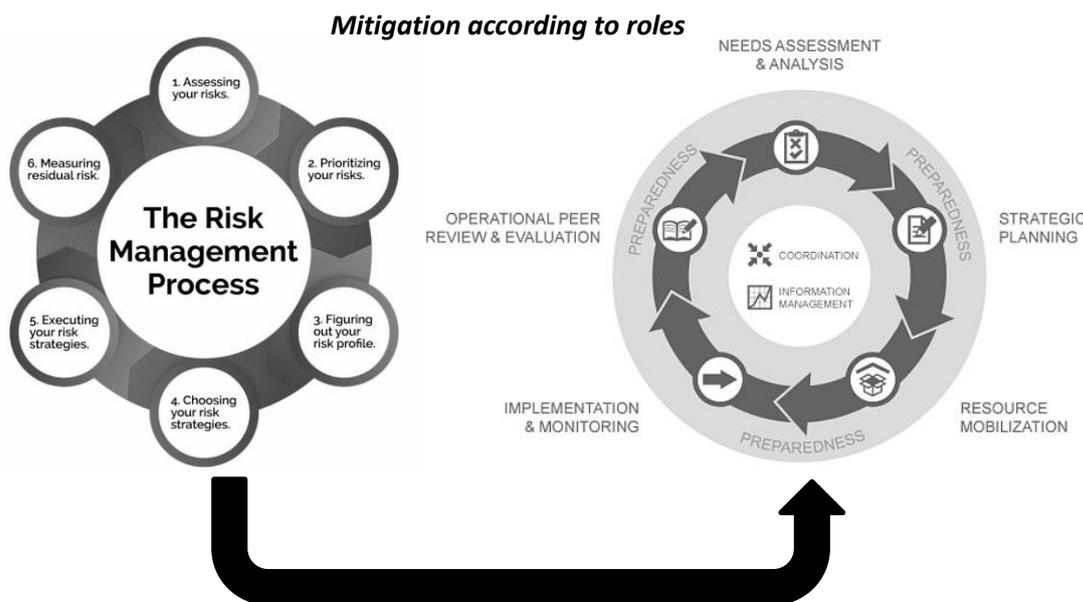


Figure 07. Assigning Roles for better Contingency Results

3.3. HPC’s Needs Assessment and Analysis

3.3.1. Outline

HPC’s needs assessment aims to provide the evidence needed to validate a humanitarian response project (Gettcliffe, 2021). Data extracted from such assessments will enable the HPC project team define and adopt the project’s strategic objectives, outline the adopted planning requirements, as well as identify the required resources; subsequently, this will facilitate inter-organization planning and coordination, hence, harmonizing activities (i.e. sharing data, using of same models, etc.) (Foran et al., 2012; OCHA, 2023).

3.3.2. Joint Needs Assessment – Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA)

3.3.2.1. Definition

The Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) is usually used in the case of sudden emergencies and crises (Stumpfenhorst et al., 2011). It is carried out based on secondary and primary data collection, analysis, and general reporting. Based on their findings, HPC participants can develop a common strategic plan, mobilize resources, and monitor the situation.

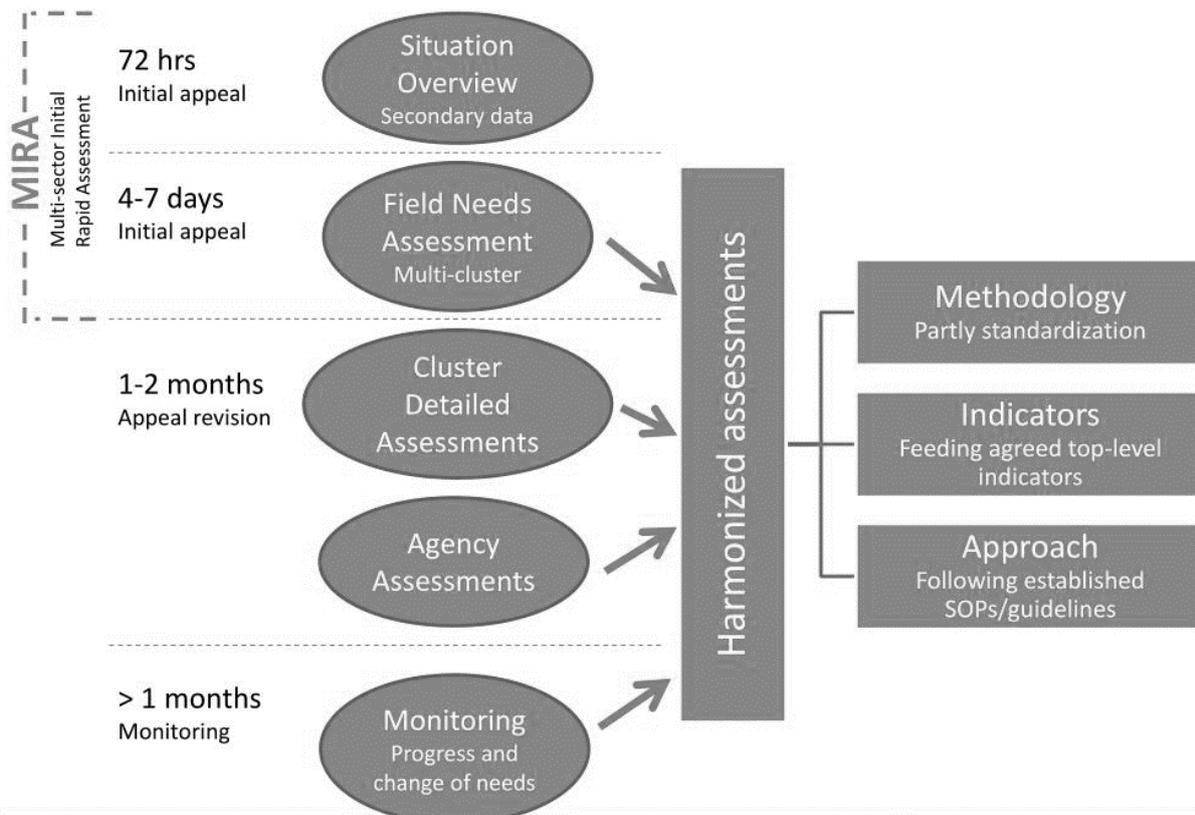


Figure 08. MIRA Process

3.3.2.2. When is MIRA Deployed

A MIRA process should be initiated as soon as a crisis occurs and more precisely within 72 hours of the incident (Gettliffe, 2021). A MIRA should be finalized within two weeks (maximum) to inform the humanitarian response plan in close coordination between the HC and the HCT as well as the other implicated HPC actors based on a suitable project timeline (Stumpfenhorst et al., 2011; Foran et al., 2012).

3.3.2.3. Purpose of the HPC's Needs Assessment

When it comes to the purpose, it aims to identify the needs of project based on the crisis by the affected communities, to determine the key humanitarian issues based on the available and approved data sources, to provide an overview of the need analysis to underpin the humanitarian response plan, and to identify the gaps in needs assessments which need to be filled (Foran et al., 2012).

3.3.2.4. Actions that Should be Executed

When conducting this assessment process – the implicated team must start by analyzing secondary data prior and during crisis-occurrence to identify cluster information gaps (Stumpfenhorst et al., 2011). On another note, the implicated parties must agree on a single – common data collection tool to fill information gaps identifies during the already conducted secondary data analysis (Gettcliffe, 2021). Also, the implicated parties must ensure that common primary data collection efforts at community level have also adopted common sampling tools that are very detailed to have the best representation of the perceived needs of the affected people (OCHA, 2023). Furthermore, the team must ensure open and transparent communication with involved community representatives for better information management and flow (Foran et al., 2012). Once done, both primary and secondary data analysis must be crisscrossed – from a qualitative horizontal analysis approach. The analysis must then be communicated with the concerned – affected country's government to properly disseminate the analysis so that the cluster can be informed of the humanitarian project (Stumpfenhorst et al., 2011; OCHA, 2023). Finally, the results should be communicated to those affected through the most easy and accessible mechanism on how to receive feedback.

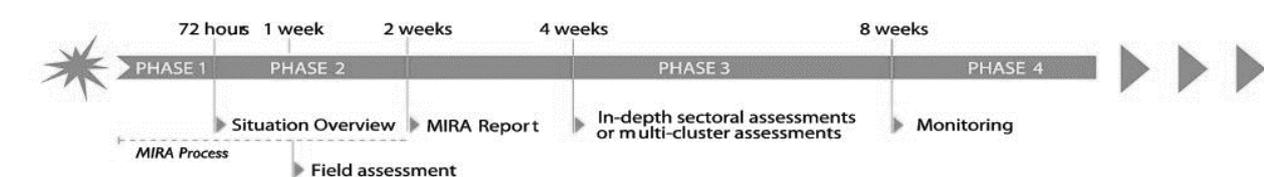


Figure 09. MIRA Process

3.3.3. Joint Needs Analysis – An HPC Overview

3.3.3.1. Definition

The HPC overview from a joint needs analysis aims to compile and analyze information about the needs, vulnerabilities, and capacities of the affected community (OCHA, 2023). Such an analysis is based on existing data (both primary and secondary) that are obtained from various sources and cross-sectional assessments – to determine the country’s humanitarian risk profile. Hence, it is revised regularly (Gettliffe, 2021).

3.3.3.2. When to deploy the Joint Needs Analysis

Developing an overview of humanitarian needs is the first step in implementing the HPC during a protracted crisis and is undertaken before strategic response planning. Its application (or modification) in the event of a new crisis must be determined by the HC and HCT based on operational on-site requirements (Foran et al., 2012).

3.3.3.3. The Purpose of the Joint Needs Analysis

The purpose of the Joint Needs Analysis within the HPC is to identify the immediate emergency needs and key humanitarian issues based on multiple data sources (Foran et al., 2012). This will help provide severity analysis and needs prioritization to support humanitarian response planning (OCHA, 2023).

3.3.3.4. Actions that Should be Executed

The HC and HCT must establish a detailed analysis plan by identifying indicators capable of measuring humanitarian needs. The idea is to collect data that enables the implicated team to prioritize the people’s needs and work best to respond to them (Gettliffe, 2021). On another note, this will also require the conduction of joint cross-sectoral analysis to obtain concrete results that should be co-validated by the implicated project parties as well as the affected people. Once the humanitarian needs overview results are retrieved, they are used to inform humanitarian response planning (Foran et al., 2012). Lastly, the findings are then communicated to those affected by the crisis through the most accessible mechanism. Further, the HC and HCT must communicate identify ways to receive feedback.

3.3.3.5. Assigning Roles and Responsibilities

Humanitarian needs overviews are initiated by the HC and HCT or national authorities and managed by OCHA. The ensemble of the implicated parties participates in the data collection and analysis process. Information management staff will play a crucial role in the update of data collection registry (Gettliffe, 2021).

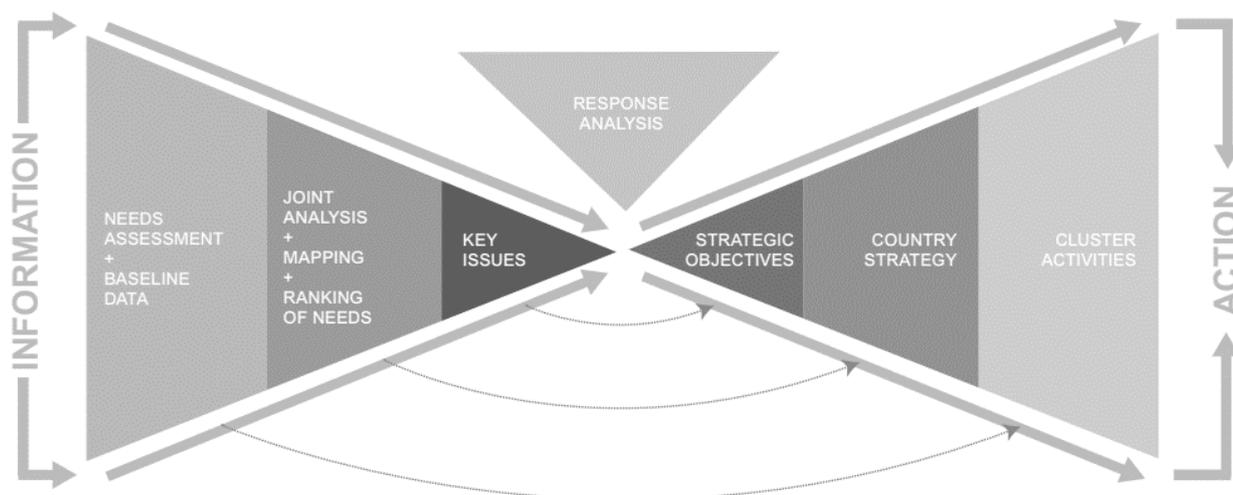


Figure 10. Humanitarian Needs Overview and Response Analysis

3.4. Strategic Response Planning

3.4.1. Outline

Humanitarian response planning helps the humanitarian community respond more effectively to the needs of people affected by a crisis – to focus activities and resources, to ensure that organizations are working toward the same goals, and to assess and adjust the humanitarian community’s response to a changing environment (Gettliffe, 2021). The process is “strategic” because it involves being clear about the overall objectives, being aware of the resources and capacity, and incorporating both into being responsive to a dynamic environment (Foran et al., 2012). The decisions made in response planning shape and guide the collective response. Response planning involves setting strategic objectives developing an approach to achieve those objectives, and making sure roles and responsibilities are clear (OCHA, 2023). As it is impossible to do everything that needs to be done, response planning requires prioritization of possible

actions. Much of the “strategy” lies in making the tough decisions about what is critical to do and how to do it.

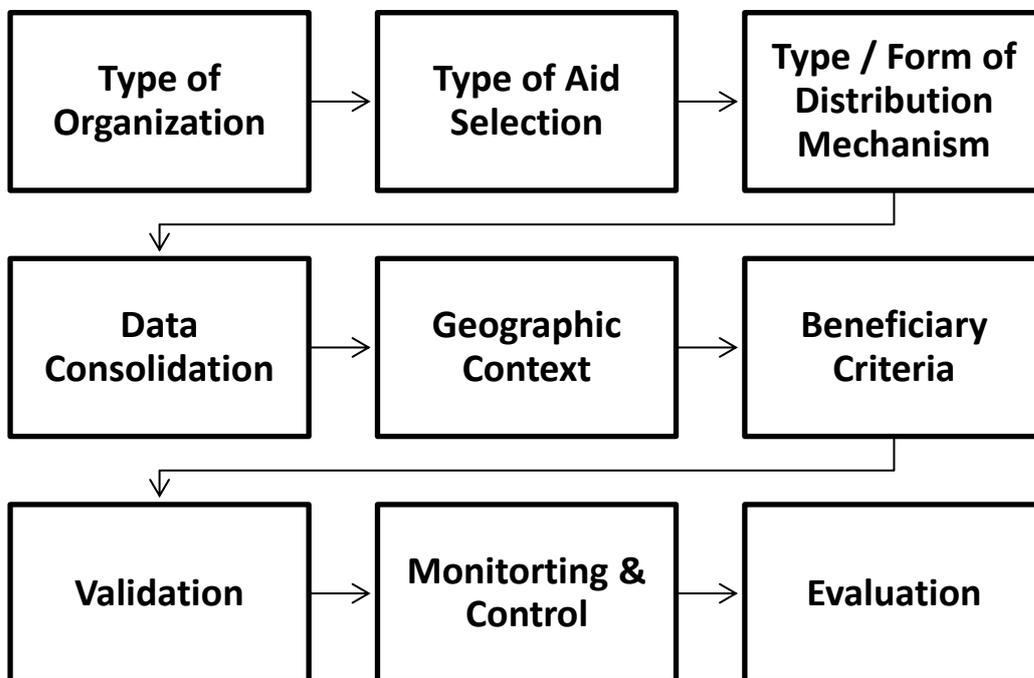


Figure 11. Strategic Response Planning

3.4.2. Flash Appeal in protracted crises

3.4.2.1. Outline

The process of humanitarian response planning can be considered as being “strategic” as it involves clear identification of the overall goals, awareness of available – usable resources and capabilities, as well as the integration of both to respond to a dynamic environment (Foran et al., 2012). Indeed, the decisions made during the response planning process include setting strategic objectives, engineering an approach with the aim to attain those goals, as well as attaining such goals, and ensuring that clear roles and responsibilities. On another note, planning requires setting possible actions by order of priority (Gettliffe, 2021).



Figure 12. Flash Appeal Process

3.4.2.2. The Time Element

Typically, flash appeals are filed three to five days after a sudden emergency or if the CH/HCT identifies the need in the context of long-standing or slow-onset crises, facing immediate needs. significant and/or unforeseeable urgency or change in circumstances (Gettliffe, 2021). That means, the rapid development of the appeal will then be streamlined, communicated, and integrated into the initial planning framework – to identify response priorities and resource needs in the early stages. the beginning of the crisis (Foran et al., 2012).

3.4.2.3. Purpose of the Flash Appeal

The Flash Appeal is typically used to provide an initial general analysis of the entire situation. It aims to build a broad support for the orientation of the response project (and its redirection if needed). The process must also outline the priority actions and initial funding requirements due to crises-related changes – hence, it will consider the contextual, institutional, etc. risks from each implicated party’s perspective. (Foran et al., 2012).

3.4.2.4. Actions and Steps

For the Flash Appeal process to be acted, there are several steps to be taken and gradually implemented. First, the project team must consolidate and jointly review the situation and review the current project response data – to develop a new common analysis or use the initial MIRA secondary data analysis (where applicable) (Foran et al., 2012). On another not, the HCT must decide on the scope of the response, strategic goals, scale-up plan, and resource requirements. Then, the team must identify priority activities according to strategic objectives and funding needs based on preliminary costs. Also, the team must ensure that risks and mitigation measures are identified and planned (Gettliffe, 2021). A document must then be written that summarizes what was done. Other non-project-related parties could be consulted (i.e. government, civil society, etc.) to guarantee that better project impact (Bruderlein, 1998). Finally, the plan must be dissemination to all stakeholders to ensure its usage during project implementation (OCHA, 2012).

3.4.3. Humanitarian Response Plan

3.4.3.1. Outline

A humanitarian response plan usually communities the strategy that aims to address the needs and serves as the main basis for both the response project implementation and monitoring. It usually consists of two min part the country strategy (general dynamic outline that highlights the general working mechanisms) and the ensemble of the cluster response plans (how each implicated entity will be working) (Stumpfenhorst et al., 2011; OCHA, 2023). Indeed, the humanitarian response plan must consider issues of project results' sustainability to have a lasting impact (Bruderlein, 1998).

3.4.3.2. The Genesis of the Humanitarian Response Plan

When a crisis takes place – a humanitarian response plan is usually completed within 30 days of the issuance of the flash appeal and builds on the initial planning that was already undertaken. On another note, sometimes – within a protracted crisis-context, most HCTs draft their humanitarian response plans on a yearly basis with quarterly updates (Foran et al., 2012; OCHA, 2023).

3.4.3.3. The Purpose of the Humanitarian Response Plan

The humanitarian response plan aims to set the main strategic objectives of the humanitarian project. It will indicate each project party member's contribution towards the attainment of the set objectives. On another note, it provides strategic objectives, indicators, as well as targets for monitoring and evaluation progress (Bhattacharjee & Lossio, 2011; Sida et al., 2016; OCHA, 2023). Also, the plan will also work to ensure that the risks are identified and contingency measured are put into place. Furthermore, a sustainable approach must be adopted to ensure that the project will provide a path into recovery and building resilience (Foran et al., 2012).

3.4.3.4. Action Plan

To have a well-constructed humanitarian response plan, first the all-in-all humanitarian needs must be reviewed to identify capacities, assets as well as other operational constraints. This will help the project team determine how to address the needs in each context (Foran et al., 2012). On another note, meetings with clusters must be held to determine each of their objectives, resources, and logistics. It is always important to consult government, civil society, the affected people, etc. (Stumpfenhorst et al., 2011; OCHA, 2023). Finally, the strategic objectives can lead to the development of a response monitoring framework (Gettliffe, 2021).

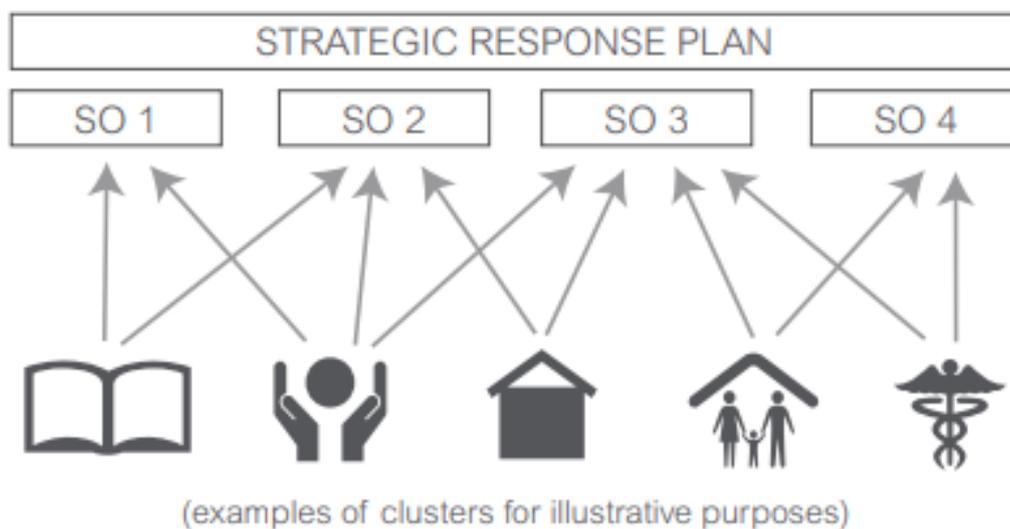


Figure 13. Humanitarian Needs Overview and Response Analysis

3.5. Humanitarian Response Monitoring

3.5.1. Definition

Humanitarian Response Monitoring will help HCs and HCTs review if they have met their objectives (OCHA, 2023). On another note, it provides a base for future decision based on past projects. The aim is to check whether aid was delivered to the affected people as intended as well as to analyze how and why some gaps have occurred (Foran et al., 2012).

3.5.2. When to Implement

Humanitarian response monitoring is a continuous process. The frequency of data collection and reporting mechanisms is determined by both the HC and HCT based on the situation's needs and requirements. It is part of a vigilance observation that should be adopted by the project team.

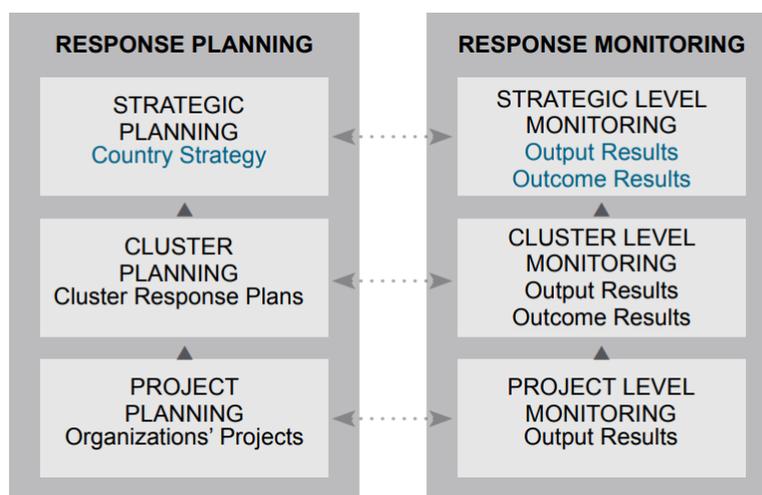


Figure 14. The Response Planning – Monitoring Dynamics

3.5.3. The Purpose of the Humanitarian Response Monitoring

On one hand, the purpose of response monitoring is to provide the implicated project actors with the evidence they need to take decisions and adapt their strategies accordingly (Foran et al., 2012). On another note, the process aims to ensure that the involved clusters remain accountable vis-à-vis their commitments towards the affected people, governments, donors, etc. (Stumpfenhorst et al., 2011; Gettliffe, 2021).

3.5.4. Action Dynamic

The response monitoring dynamic takes place in three gradual stages (Stumpenhorst et al., 2011; Foran et al., 2012; Gettliffe, 2021; OCHA, 2023):

- **Preparation:** During the strategic planning process, the implicated project clusters agree on a common monitoring plan. The team then establishes and approves a common response monitoring framework, which defines:
 - What will be monitored;
 - How and when (frequency) will it take place;
 - Who is responsible for monitoring and analysis (role setting);
 - How and when tracking information will be recorded and reported (periodicity);
 - What key measures will be adopted; and
 - What resources are needed.
- **Monitoring:** A continuous response monitoring framework must be applied throughout the implementation of the humanitarian response plan.
- **Reporting:** The project team will use data collected on the overall response in periodic monitoring reports, including analysis of monitoring results and a series of recommendations for corrective action, if appropriate.



Figure 15. The Response Monitoring Dynamic

3.6. Resource Mobilization

3.6.1. Outline

Resource mobilization can be perceived as the fundraising process to finance the humanitarian project response – while remaining compliant with the priorities set in the response plan (Foran et al., 2012). The mobilization also includes managing and coordinating the relationship between the different stakeholders – namely the donors while setting a governance policy for spending follow-ups (OCHA, 2012; OCHA, 2023).

3.6.2. When to Mobilize Resources

Resource mobilization can take place at any point of the entire HPC – even though most humanitarian donors usually tend to make their decisions regarding funds and grants during the last quarter of the calendar year (N) for disbursement early in the next calendar year (N+1) (Gettliffe, 2021). However, in case of sudden crisis and dire need of funds – a disbursement can sometimes be possible within 72 hours (Foran et al., 2012; OCHA, 2023).

3.6.3. The Purpose of Resource Mobilization

The main purpose of the resource mobilization step in the entire HPC is to ensure that the flash appeal and humanitarian response plans are well funded, that funds are allocated according to priority activities, as well as to keep the dialogue with donors on the evolution of needs and that the results were achieved based on the funding received (Foran et al., 2012; OCHA, 2023).

3.6.4. Resource Mobilization Dynamic

The HC and HCT will jointly develop a resource mobilization strategy which include (Foran et al., 2012; Gettliffe, 2021; OCHA, 2023):

- checking for the project's funding requirements.
- Study the affected peoples' needs.
- Check and establish a network with donors.
- Review the financial transactions and alternative transfer canals (other than banking) in case of sudden cuts.
- Setting a central emergency response fund (grant or loan elements)
- Lobbying for more funding to be used to support chronic crises.

3.7. Operational Peer Review

3.7.1. Outline

An operational peer review is an internal, inter-agency / cluster peer support tool, which helps determine whether course corrector to the HPC is needed to ensure the proper delivery of the response project (Stumpfenhorst et al., 2011; Foran et al., 2012; Gettliffe, 2021).

3.7.2. When is it Conducted?

In an ordinary scenario, operational peer reviews are to be conducted within the first three months (90 days) of the response. For any other scenario, an operational peer review may be requested suddenly (as business needed – in compliance with the situation) by either the HC or HCT (Gettliffe, 2021; OCHA, 2023).

3.7.3. The Purpose of the Operational Peer Review

The operational peer review will support the enhancement of the response project as well as it will facilitate the identification of good practices to be shared by the ensemble of the implicated parties to optimize project delivery and results (Foran et al., 2012; Gettliffe, 2021; OCHA, 2023).

3.7.4. Operational Peer Review Dynamic

It all starts with an initial operational peer review process based on a particular context – initiated by either the HC or HCT. The project team must collect and review secondary data and conduct interview and hold meeting with key informants prior to the mission as appropriate. The review mission must be carried out over a period of 7-10 days which utilizes many reviewing measures which includes self-assessment tools, site visits, workshops, etc. (Foran et al., 2012). Once empirical data is retrieved, the team must prepare an analytical report that highlights their recommendations based on the exploratory observations (OCHA, 2023). The entire report will also divulgate the global learning and good practices to fulfill the delivery of the response project in the best way possible that satisfies the affected people (Gettliffe, 2021).

3.8. Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation

3.8.1. Definition

An inter-agency humanitarian evaluation is an independent assessment of the results of the humanitarian response – that is to be conducted by the project’s partners (specific to a particular crisis) (OCHA, 2023). The partners will need to evaluate the extent to which the prospected results have been achieved and how the all-in-all efforts contributed to the overall project’s success (Bhattacharjee & Lossio, 2011; Sida et *al.*, 2016).

3.8.2. When to conduct this evaluation

Such evaluations are usually conducted after the activation of the response project – where final reports are expected 12-15 months after the project’s activation. In other emergency situations affecting a multitude of sectors, an inter-agency humanitarian evaluation may be requested by the HC/HCT and should be conducted within 9 to 12 months of the onset/escalation of the crisis (Bhattacharjee & Lossio, 2011; Foran et *al.*, 2012; Sida et *al.*, 2016).

3.8.3. The purpose of the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation

The main objective of the inter-agency humanitarian evaluation is to contribute to both accountability and strategic learning from the implemented learning system, as well as to seek to promote accountability to affected people through the provision of feedback on the results of the response to affected communities (Bhattacharjee & Lossio, 2011; Foran et *al.*, 2012; Sida et *al.*, 2016).

3.8.4. What needs to be done

The inter-agency humanitarian evaluations are conducted by teams of independent evaluation experts (Bhattacharjee & Lossio, 2011; Sida et *al.*, 2016). They usually assess collective results that have been achieved during an agreed-upon period while focusing on the quality of aid delivered, the degree to which affected people have been protected, and progress towards both the response’s objectives and targets set by the HC and HCT (Foran et *al.*, 2012; Gettliffe, 2021).

3.9. Essential Enablers

3.9.1. Coordination

Effective project coordination is essential to all elements of the HPC. It serves to identify and respond to priority needs, fill gaps, and reduce duplication in humanitarian response (Foran et al., 2012). The coordination process also ensures that each aspect of the program cycle is implemented as a joint effort that leverages available resources and capacity (Bhattacharjee & Lossio, 2011; Sida et al., 2016; Gettliffe, 2021).

3.9.2. Information Management

Humanitarian information management is the systematic process of collecting, collating, storing, processing, verifying, and analyzing data and information and disseminating it to humanitarian actors (OCHA, 2006; Bhattacharjee & Lossio, 2011; Gettliffe, 2021). Information management underpins each element of the program cycle and helps connect them by transferring information from one part to another (OCHA, 2006; Sida et al., 2016). For the program cycle to function properly, data must be shared and collected in a timely manner to inform decision making and analysis (OCHA, 2006; Foran et al., 2012).

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