
Advanced Certificate in Global Humanitarian Partnerships

Risk Management in Humanitarian Operations

****Acceptable Risk:**** The level of risk that is deemed tolerable or acceptable in a humanitarian operation, taking into account the potential benefits, costs, and negative consequences.

****Contingency Planning:**** The process of identifying and preparing for potential risks and emergencies that may arise during a humanitarian operation.

****Hazard Analysis:**** The process of identifying and assessing potential hazards or risks in a humanitarian operation, including their likelihood and potential impact.

****Risk Assessment:**** The process of evaluating the potential risks and hazards in a humanitarian operation, and determining the level of risk and the measures needed to mitigate or manage it.

****Risk Management:**** The systematic process of identifying, assessing, and prioritizing risks, and implementing measures to mitigate or manage them in a humanitarian operation.

****Risk Mitigation:**** The process of reducing or eliminating the potential risks and hazards in a humanitarian operation.

****Risk Monitoring:**** The ongoing process of tracking and monitoring risks and hazards in a humanitarian operation, and adjusting risk management measures as necessary.

****Risk Owner:**** The individual or organization responsible for managing a particular risk in a humanitarian operation.

****Risk Register:**** A document or database that tracks and records the identified risks, their assessment, and the measures taken to mitigate or manage them in a humanitarian operation.

****Risk Tolerance:**** The level of risk that an individual or organization is willing to accept in a humanitarian operation.

****Risk Treatment:**** The process of selecting and implementing measures to mitigate or manage risks in a humanitarian operation.

****Threat Analysis:**** The process of identifying and assessing potential threats, such as natural disasters, conflicts, or political instability, in a humanitarian operation.

****Vulnerability Assessment:**** The process of identifying and assessing the vulnerabilities of individuals, communities, or systems in a humanitarian operation, such as their susceptibility to harm or negative impacts from risks and hazards.

Acceptable Risk:

Acceptable risk refers to the level of risk that is deemed tolerable or acceptable in a humanitarian operation, taking into account the potential benefits, costs, and negative consequences. This level of risk is determined through a risk assessment process, where the risks and hazards are evaluated and weighed against the potential benefits and impacts of the operation. Acceptable risk is not the same as no risk, but rather it is the level of risk that has been deemed acceptable based on a thorough understanding of the potential impacts and the measures in place to mitigate or manage the risks.

For example, in a humanitarian operation providing food assistance in a conflict-affected area, the risk of theft or diversion of food aid may be deemed acceptable if the benefits of providing food assistance to vulnerable populations outweigh the negative consequences of some food being lost to theft. In this case, the risk assessment process would have considered the measures in place to mitigate the risk of theft, such as security measures, monitoring, and accountability mechanisms, and determined that the remaining risk is acceptable.

Contingency Planning:

Contingency planning is the process of identifying and preparing for potential risks and emergencies that may arise during a humanitarian operation. It involves developing plans, procedures, and resources to respond to potential risks and emergencies, such as natural disasters, conflicts, or political instability. The goal of contingency planning is to minimize the impact of potential risks and emergencies, and ensure that the humanitarian operation can continue to provide assistance and support to the affected population.

For example, in a humanitarian operation providing health services in a disaster-prone area, a contingency plan would be in place to respond to potential disasters, such as earthquakes or floods. The plan would include procedures for evacuating staff and patients, securing medical supplies and equipment, and establishing alternative service delivery locations. The contingency plan would also include training and exercises to ensure that staff are prepared to respond to potential disasters, and that the plan is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.

Hazard Analysis:

Hazard analysis is the process of identifying and assessing potential hazards or risks in a humanitarian operation. It involves identifying the sources of potential hazards, evaluating their likelihood and potential impact, and determining the measures needed to mitigate or manage the hazards. Hazard analysis is an essential component of risk management, as it provides the foundation for identifying and assessing risks, and developing measures to mitigate or manage them.

For example, in a humanitarian operation providing water and sanitation services in a post-conflict area, a hazard analysis would be conducted to identify potential hazards, such as contaminated water sources, inadequate sanitation facilities, or poor hygiene practices. The hazard analysis would evaluate the likelihood and potential impact of each hazard, and determine the measures needed to mitigate or manage the hazards, such as water treatment, construction of latrines, and hygiene promotion.

Risk Assessment:

Risk assessment is the process of evaluating the potential risks and hazards in a humanitarian operation, and determining the level of risk and the measures needed to mitigate or manage it. It involves identifying

and assessing the likelihood and potential impact of risks, and determining the measures needed to reduce or eliminate the risks. Risk assessment is an ongoing process, and it is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that it remains relevant and effective.

For example, in a humanitarian operation providing education services in a conflict-affected area, a risk assessment would be conducted to identify and assess the potential risks, such as the risk of attack on schools, the risk of recruitment of children into armed groups, or the risk of gender-based violence. The risk assessment would evaluate the likelihood and potential impact of each risk, and determine the measures needed to reduce or eliminate the risks, such as school security measures, community engagement, and psychosocial support.

Risk Management:

Risk management is the systematic process of identifying, assessing, and prioritizing risks, and implementing measures to mitigate or manage them in a humanitarian operation. It is a proactive and ongoing process that aims to minimize the impact of potential risks and hazards, and ensure that the humanitarian operation can continue to provide assistance and support to the affected population.

For example, in a humanitarian operation providing food assistance in a disaster-prone area, a risk management plan would be in place to identify, assess, and manage the potential risks, such as the risk of food contamination, the risk of theft or diversion of food aid, or the risk of disruption of food supply chains. The risk management plan would include measures to mitigate or manage the risks, such as food safety protocols, security measures, and contingency plans.

Risk Mitigation:

Risk mitigation is the process of reducing or eliminating the potential risks and hazards in a humanitarian operation. It involves identifying and assessing the risks, and developing and implementing measures to reduce or eliminate the risks. Risk mitigation is an ongoing process, and it is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that it remains relevant and effective.

For example, in a humanitarian operation providing health services in a conflict-affected area, risk mitigation measures would be in place to reduce or eliminate the potential risks, such as the risk of attack on health facilities, the risk of theft or diversion of medical supplies, or the risk of inadequate staffing. The risk mitigation measures would include security measures, such as armed guards or secure storage facilities, accountability measures, such as regular audits and inventory checks, and staffing measures, such as recruitment and retention strategies.

Risk Monitoring:

Risk monitoring is the ongoing process of tracking and monitoring risks and hazards in a humanitarian operation, and adjusting risk management measures as necessary. It involves regularly reviewing and assessing the risks, and updating the risk management plan to ensure that it remains relevant and effective. Risk monitoring is an essential component of risk management, as it helps to ensure that the humanitarian operation is prepared to respond to potential risks and hazards, and that the measures in place to mitigate or manage the risks are effective.

For example, in a humanitarian operation providing shelter assistance in a disaster-affected area, risk monitoring would involve regularly reviewing and assessing the risks, such as the risk of further damage to shelters, the risk of theft or vandalism of shelter materials, or the risk of inadequate shelter maintenance. The risk monitoring process would include regular inspections of shelters, inventory checks of shelter materials, and community engagement to identify and address potential risks.

Risk Owner:

The risk owner is the individual or organization responsible for managing a particular risk in a humanitarian operation. The risk owner is responsible for identifying, assessing, and managing the risk, and ensuring that the measures in place to mitigate or manage the risk are effective. The risk owner is also responsible for reporting on the risk to senior management, and ensuring that the risk is included in the risk management plan