© Daniel Pilar / Welthungerhilfe

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PLANNING (EPReP)

May 2022

Emergency Preparedness & Response Planning is a prerequisite for effective, efficient, and timely humanitarian assistance to communities and people affected by a crisis, and as such assures a crucial life-saving role. UNOCHA defines emergency preparedness as "the knowledge and capacity developed by governments, recovery organizations, communities and individuals to anticipate, respond to and recover from the impact of potential, imminent or current hazard events, or emergency situations that call for a humanitarian response."
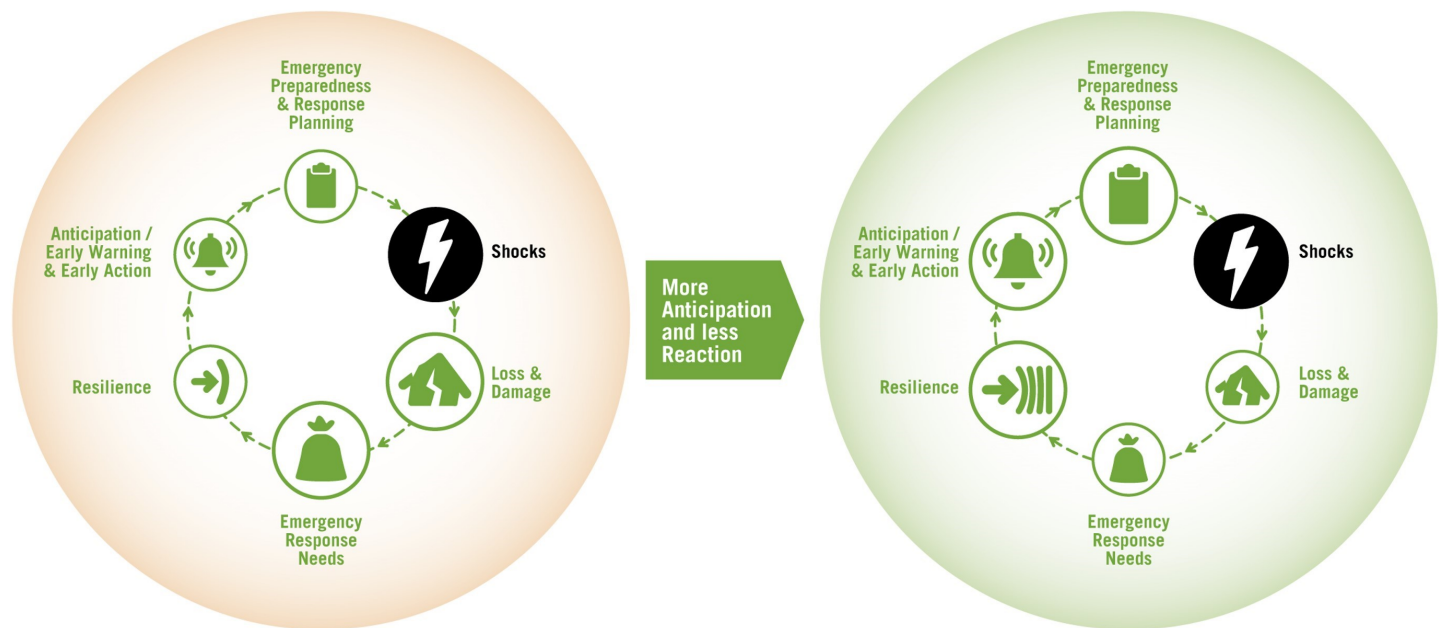
Definitions

Welthungerhilfe (WHH) aims at reducing the scale of humanitarian needs of the population affected by shocks and disasters. This is supported by the paradigm shift of Welthungerhilfe: By putting more focus on Resilience, Anticipation / Early Warning & Early Action, Welthungerhilfe strives to avoid and mitigate loss and damage. However, the extent of Shocks caused by extreme natural events or human-induced crises is rarely fully foreseeable. Despite the improved resilience of the people at risk, and the adoption of preventive measures, people can find themselves in life-threatening, precarious situations. For these situations, it is particularly important to be prepared and to plan at an early stage so that one can react quickly and appropriately to a crisis if necessary. Therefore, Welthungerhilfe implements Emergency Preparedness & Response Planning (see **Figure 1**).

With its 2021-2024 strategy, Welthungerhilfe commits to "invest in anticipation, emergency preparedness, and risk-informed programming" (One Planet Zero Hunger Strategy 2021-2024, p. 10). With EPReP, Welthungerhilfe prepares in programme countries for an effective, efficient, timely, coordinated, accountable, and appropriate emergency response.

Standards

WHH's EPReP eGuide supports the Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning process in every Country Office (CO) and ensures a coherent approach throughout the organization. Further the EPReP eGuide provides concrete steps and tools. Additionally, the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS) reflects on preparedness: Commitment No. 3 specifically states that preparedness plans should be used to guide activities to avoid negative consequences for affected communities and to make them more prepared, resilient and less at risk. Furthermore Commitment No. 8 sets out the need to agree on organizational preparedness level, how to mobilize the needed resources for emergency response. The Sphere Handbook represents another important set of standards which should always be considered within WHH's work. They include Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) as a crosscutting issue and specifically stress the importance of preparedness activities.

More anticipation and preparedness for less losses and better response!

Figure 1: The Humanitarian Paradigm Shift highlights the importance of Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning.

Welthungerhilfe Focus

Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning helps to optimize the speed and volume of critical assistance delivered immediately after the onset of an emergency. A common understanding of hazard exposure and arising risks, with a system to monitor these risks, is the basis for the preparedness planning for emergency response. EPReP is a process that is developed and maintained alongside the regular activities of the country programme, especially during non-emergency phases.

The 7 Steps of Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning

Welthungerhilfe follows seven steps (see **Figure 2**) to carry out Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning. These steps are briefly explained in the following. More detailed information is available in the EPReP eGuide.

Step 1: Geographical Boundaries

Step 1 determines for which region within a country the EPReP is valid. Often the geographical borders of the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan coincide with the administrative borders of the respective WHH programme country, e.g., state, province, or district borders. For the geographical areas in which WHH is already active, particularly rapid emergency response can be provided, since, for example, existing project

offices and working relationships with authorities and institutions as well as with the local population can be used. The definition of geographical boundaries also considers which other humanitarian actors are already active in other areas. Of particular importance are regions where the population is exposed to particularly high risks.

Step 2: Risk Analysis

Risk analysis is a central and common base for both, humanitarian programming and risk informed development programming towards resilience building and sustainability of Welthungerhilfe interventions. Thus, the results of the country risk analysis, executed in this Step 2 of the EPReP, are used in a multi-fold manner in WHH. Hazard risks and their potential impacts are identified and analysed based on the INFORM methodology and complemented with local knowledge. The risk analysis is carried out in three sub-steps:

a) The Hazard Scoring and Specification considers all hazards a country is exposed to. It is done by using the INFORM Index and other available hazard risk information. This information is validated by the country team and other local sources and hazards are scored for the subnational level accordingly. Vulnerability and lack of coping capacity information are taken from the INFORM Index, and are only adjusted slightly, if they differ among different regions in a country. What can significantly differ on subnational level is the hazard and exposure dimension,

for which each hazard is scored on a scale from 0 to 10. The risk for each hazard on subnational level is calculated in line with the INFORM methodology.

b) The Impact Specification is a detailed description of anticipated impacts in the different humanitarian sectors of at least the three highest scoring hazards in a country. Information about specific vulnerabilities related to the context (e.g., children headed households, adolescent girls) need to be included.

c) For the prioritized hazards and risks, decision is taken how to monitor these: based on which indicators and sources, the frequency to monitor the risks and who will be the responsible focal point.

Step 3: Capacity Analysis

In Step 3 WHH's current emergency response capacity (available equipment, resources, capacities, knowledge) in a certain country is analysed. Based on this analysis WHH decides how and in which areas to improve its response capacity. This is important as it helps to determine where and how WHH prepares to respond.

Step 4: Expected Needs, Gaps and Response Decision

Step 4 analyses the sectoral expected needs for the population, collects how sectoral coordination is taking place and how Welthungerhilfe participates in these. Ultimately decision is taken, if addressing these needs and gaps is a priority for Welthungerhilfe. To make the decision, Welthungerhilfe's experiences, capacities, and sectors of intervention, as well as other actors' planned responses are considered (if known).

Step 5: Intervention Triggers

A clear and common understanding of what risks are significant enough to require a coordinated humanitarian response and therefore trigger a response of WHH, is fundamental to the entire EPReP process. Central is an understanding of the questions: At what extent of a crisis or disaster is the self-help capacity of the affected country or province overwhelmed? When is coordinated emergency response involving WHH necessary? Local capacities are considered, for example, the local population and the local and national government. When these capacities are exhausted, the point is reached at which external support is needed. From this threshold, emergency response is triggered. The triggers for intervention are based on and aligned with

the global thresholds, detailed in the Humanitarian Response Matrix.

Step 6: Scenario Development

In Step 6 short and concise scenarios outline how Welthungerhilfe prepares for potential crises and disasters in the identified geographic areas. They consider the population living in these areas, i.e., the population likely to be affected and their expected humanitarian support needs in different localities. In addition, intervention triggers are considered. This scenario development considers lessons learned from past emergency interventions, the involvement and coordination of other actors, the capacity of the country office, and the possibility of support from Welthungerhilfe's emergency response team. The scenario outlines how WHH prepares to respond to a certain kind of disaster.

Step 7: Preparation of Preparedness Action Plan

The Step 7 of the EPReP is preparing the preparedness action plan, which specifies what goals and related actions are needed to be ready for the emergency response. The plan consists of two different types of actions:

a) Minimum Preparedness Actions (MPAs) are not risk or scenario specific. They provide flexibility to respond to different types of emergencies and help to keep the organization operational during emergencies. MPAs include risk monitoring, establishment of coordination and management arrangements, preparing for joint needs assessments, response monitoring, information management, and establishing operational capacity and arrangements to deliver critical relief assistance and protection.

b) Specific Preparedness Actions (SPAs) are complementary activities to plan for the response to a specific risk and scenario. There is one set of SPAs for each developed scenario.
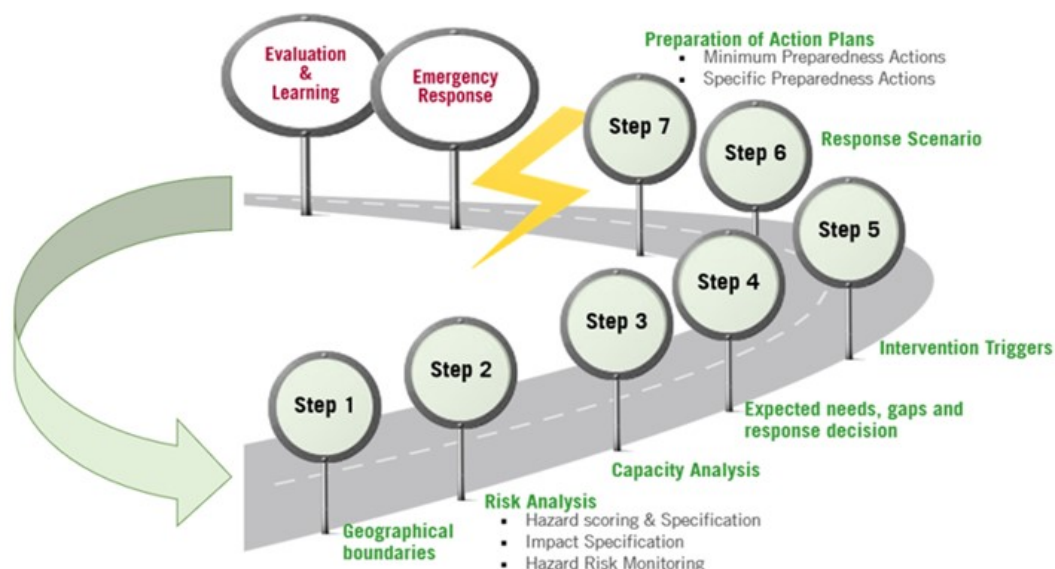

Figure 2: The 7 steps of Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning.

Humanitarian Directorate Support to COs

The Humanitarian Directorate (HD) has developed materials and guidance on EPReP as listed below. Also, HD offers support to the countries developing or implementing their EPReP on request, i.e., with facilitating workshops for the teams on the ground or coaching. The materials and guidance are available in French language as well.

Coordination & Networking

Alliance2015: Joint Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning (JEPReP)

Collaboration in emergencies is one of the key pillars of the Alliance2015 strategy. Alliance2015 members are committed to foster joint emergency response wherever feasible. To achieve this goal, Alliance2015 members engage through the development of Joint Emergency Preparedness and Response plans (JEPReP). The JEPReP sets clear actions and solutions to improve future performance at Alliance2015 country team level and to better engage head office support. If needed, support can be requested to support JEPReP development by the Alliance 2015 Emergency and Operations Lead. Decisions taken and information of the WHH EPReP shall feed into the JEPReP.

ReliefWeb

ReliefWeb is the leading humanitarian information source on global crises and disasters. It is a specialized digital service of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). They provide reliable and timely information, enabling humanitarian workers to make informed decisions and to plan effective response. They collect and deliver key information, including the latest reports, maps and infographics from trusted sources.

IASC

To support emergency preparedness within the multilateral humanitarian system, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) has developed the Emergency Response Preparedness (ERP) approach. It is part of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle and aims to increase the speed and volume of life-saving assistance delivered in the first four to six weeks following an emergency. The flexible approach is based on identifying and prioritising preparedness actions that enable the humanitarian community to respond effectively in the first few weeks of an emergency. The ERP focuses on the inter-agency level and the cluster/sector level. Additionally, preparedness is as well needed within each responding organization, which WHH tackles with the EPReP process.

For Refugee Emergencies, UNHCR coordinates the Preparedness Package for Refugee Emergencies (PPRE).

COPERNICUS Emergency Mapping Service (EMS) and Risk and Recovery Mapping

Copernicus is the earth observation program of the European Union and the European Space Agency (ESA) funded by the European Commission. Civil society actors like Welthungerhilfe can request to activate and use the Emergency Mapping Service (EMS) and Risk and Recovery Mapping for a wide range of emergency situations resulting from natural or human-induced disasters or for DRR measures. Satellite imagery is used as the main data source for the provided mapping.

Maps are a powerful tool when disaster strikes. Copernicus provides them free of charge and for every country worldwide, given there are no political objections. For the country offices this can provide a quick overview of a situation at hand for improved orientation, coordination, and distribution of resources.

Maps can be delivered within hours after a disaster (EMS) or over a defined period (Risk and Recovery Mapping). The data can include Maps, that show the situation before the disaster struck. Further mapping can give for example information about the extent of a disaster such as flooding or the impact of an earthquake on the housing situation, detailed damage grades, total number of affected population and the number of assets destroyed. Details for the mapping can be agreed when submitting an activation request to Copernicus. Welthungerhilfe is entitled to access Copernicus services via the Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance (Bundesamt für Bevölkerungsschutz und Katastrophenhilfe, BBK).

START Fund

The Start Fund is collectively owned and managed by Start Network's members and supported by several institutional donors. It is an emergency response financing mechanism able to come to a decision for allocating funds within 72 hours after a respective alert. Projects are chosen by in-country committees, made up of staff from Start Network members in-country. This makes the Start Fund the fastest, collectively NGO owned, early response mechanism in the world. The Start Fund is solely intended for underfunded small to medium scale crises. To be able to make use of the Start Fund, the Country Office must prepare for its potential activation and to be able to implement projects within 45 days only.

Welthungerhilfe Emergency Fund

With its Emergency Fund, Welthungerhilfe created an innovative tool to be able to help quickly and unbureau-

cratically in emergencies. Thanks to this fund Welthungerhilfe can be immediately active in emergency situations, without having to wait for earmarked donations and funds. In general, please examine funding opportunities external to Welthungerhilfe's own sources first (i.e., Start Fund), before requesting the Welthungerhilfe Emergency Fund.

Tools

Welthungerhilfe, (2021). *WHH EPReP eGuide and Preparedness Action Plan* (ENG, FR)

Welthungerhilfe, (n.d). EPReP Development Workshop Materials.

Training & Learning

Advanced Training Program on Humanitarian Action (ATHA), (n.d.). *Humanitarian Preparedness, Disaster Mitigation, and Risk Reduction.* [online] https://bit.ly/2YbW5X0

References & Further Reading

ACAPS, (2016). *Technical Brief: Scenario Building.* [online] https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/resources/files/acaps_technical_brief_scenario_building_august_2016.pdf

Alliance2015, (2019). *Joint Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning Checklist.* [to be added when updated]

Catholic Relief Services, (2002). *Emergency Preparedness & Response Handbook.* [online] https://www.crs.org/sites/default/files/tools-research/emergency-preparedness-and-response-handbook.pdf

European Commission, (n.d.). *Copernicus – Disaster Management Service.* [online] https://emergency.copernicus.eu/

Inter-Agency Standing Committee, (2015). *Emergency Response Preparedness (ERP).* [online]

START Network, (2017). *Pre-Alert Guidance Notes.* [online]