

MOST IMPORTANT STAFFING FACTORS FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE

(Source: Cardsort analysis by 102 managers in HQ & field across 7 international NGOs*)

1. Conducting accurate on the ground assessments to quickly create a tactical staffing plan
2. Ensuring a culture of trust exists among national and international staff
3. Quickly identifying and activating people from emergency roster according to needs identified in tactical plan
4. Having an emergency roster of current, former and/or prospective staff that it is sufficiently large and skilled to meet the anticipated need
5. Having sufficient funds available to allow rapid mobilization of staff during emergencies
6. Having a standing international emergency response team
7. Ensuring that all emergency staff receive high quality and timely country orientations (e.g., security)
8. Pre-establishing and enforcing formal lines of authority protocols for different types of emergencies, e.g. who will be in charge when
9. Managing workload and output expectations, especially for high-performing emergency staff
10. Ensuring that managers provide continual and constructive feedback to nationals in emergency roles
11. Ensuring all staff have clear terms of reference and clear roles and responsibilities in place before they are deployed
12. Providing adequate stress management programs
13. Ensuring managers are reviewed and promoted on both program success and people management skills
14. Ensuring that managers provide continual and constructive feedback to internationals in emergency roles
15. Tapping into all internal applicant pools (e.g., nationals) for emergency rosters

Key themes:

Preparing for emergencies

- Large standing teams
- Functioning rosters
- Pre-established lines of authority

Creating and using effective tactical staffing plans during deployments

Managing the work environment

- Orientations
- Feedback
- Trust

16. Providing sufficient orientation for new international hires
17. Proactively training all members of emergency rosters (e.g., regarding humanitarian standards)
18. Ensuring that nationals in emergency roles receive market-appropriate compensation and benefits (e.g. insurance and R&R)
19. Maintaining consistent and efficient procedures for screening, interviewing, selecting and processing international applicants
20. Ensuring all tactical deployment plans provide for the right staffing mix and level to handle the expected program size
21. Including adequate admin and HR specialists during the initial assessment and scale up periods
22. Providing sufficient orientation for new national hires
23. Ensuring that internationals in emergency roles receive market-appropriate compensation and benefits (e.g. insurance and R&R)
24. Ensuring that all emergency staff receive high quality and timely project orientations
25. Managing for continuity in emergency staffing by planning for succession for emergency roles
26. Ensuring communication and collaboration between HR and country programs/functions
27. Offering a meaningful and sustainable career path ,especially for high-performing emergency staff
28. Developing and adhering to careful selection criteria and processes for emergency rosters

* The Interagency Working Group (IWG) comprises CARE International, Catholic Relief Services, International Rescue Committee, Oxfam GB, Mercy Corps, Save the Children USA and World Vision International. Managers were asked to rank staffing factors ranked in order of importance for emergency response. Interviews conducted August – October 2005 including agency CEOs, Vice Presidents of Programs, Vice Presidents of Human Resources, Emergency Directors, other senior staff in Human Resources and Programs departments, Country Directors, Field managers, other members of country management teams. Results showed high degree of consistency between HQ, Field and between HR, Operations. There was no statistically significant variation in the top 28 factors, which are listed here in order of priority as reported by interviewees. More information at www.ecbproject.org