CARE Office Capacity Assessment Questionnaire

This questionnaire is to help an office determine where it has strengths and gaps in staffing, skills and systems for an emergency response. It defines four levels of capacity, and for each one describes the outcomes that a office with strong capacity in that area could achieve. The CARE office can then assess its abilities to achieve those outcomes.

You should review the questionnaire as part of the annual emergency preparedness planning process. This allows offices to identify in advance weaknesses that may affect their ability to respond in an emergency and plan accordingly. It also means that the assessment only requires review and updating in the aftermath of a disaster.

The questionnaire is an important means of communication with CEG and others about the strengths of an office and what support is required. It can, for example, feed into sitreps to highlight staffing needs. When staffing and skills gaps are identified, the office can request specialized staff deployments to address these gaps. Immediately after a large disaster, the questionnaire will help to identify the top priorities for recruitment and deployment. Additionally, it is compulsory for accessing CI ERF support.

The questionnaire is structured so that capacity to respond can be assessed for both type 1, 2 and 4 emergencies (See Pocketbook). Whether you’re using the tool just after an emergency has struck, or for preparedness, it will be difficult to know what size of response will be required. Thinking about the definitions of a type 1, 2 or 4 emergency can help you gauge how much work might be involved—but remember that emergency responses often create even more work than you might think. In a type 4 emergency, an office will almost always need support in a particular area, but completing the questionnaire will help identify relative strengths and priority areas.

**Definition of capacity levels**

There are four levels of capacity.

***Level 4—Outstanding competence and capacity***

The office is easily able to achieve the programme and operational outcomes described. It has more than enough capacity to respond. It can consistently perform tasks at the required level and maintain its capability in the field.

***Level 3—Strong competence and capacity***

The office can achieve all the required programme and operational outcomes described. It has enough capacity to respond. Some areas need some minor support, but this could be delivered remotely. It needs more support (mentoring, coaching, formal training, monitoring and evaluation) to keep the team’s skills up to standard. Some systems and procedures may need to be revised, but the CO has the knowledge, skills and staff numbers to do this.

***Level 2—Moderate competence and capacity***

The office is competent in some respects but not at the required level in others. It can meet some of the outcomes described but probably not all of them. Not all parts of the team are equally competent. It is not able to respond without overwhelming some team members or dropping some priorities.

***Level 1—Low competence and capacity***

The office may not be able to meet several of the outcomes for the area of capacity. It has gaps in competence in several areas and/or is not able to respond.

These judgments may be a bit subjective. However, when considering staff knowledge and skills, look at the CARE Emergency Toolkit section on human resources. This contains sample terms of reference for staff with various specialities on the CARE Roster for Emergency Deployment. Do staff have skills equivalent to these? You will also need to consider the number of staff available. They may have great skills, but one person can only do so much work.

The CET also contains information about what is needed in all the areas of capacity (e.g. information management) during an emergency. Think about whether the office can achieve this.

**Completing the questionnaire**

*Please answer all questions (write N/A if the question is not relevant).*

*Return the completed questionnaire to CEG and if applicable the Lead Member (line manager, RMU and emergency director) within two days of the emergency alert.*

*You should complete the questionnaire during an EPP workshop, and at regular intervals after a response has begun, if needed.*

*To complete the questionnaire, you should review the definitions of type 1, 2 and 4 emergencies. For each line in the table, look at the descriptions of what your office would be able to do if it had strong capacity in this area, and decide how well the office you’re assessing could do these things in a type 1, 2 or 4 emergency. Write the level of capacity (see definitions above) in the appropriate column and make any notes that you think are relevant.*

**CARE OFFICE:**

**Date:**

**Emergency name and type:**

**Your name**:

| **Area of capacity** | **Capacity level  (1, 2, 4)** | | | **Comments, gaps, needs** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type 1 ,2** | **Type 4** | |
| **1. Preparedness:** The office has an emergency preparedness plan, updated within the last year, based on a thorough risk and office/partner capacity analysis |  | |  |  |
| **2. Assessment:** The office and partners can produce quick, high-quality, participatory and gender-balanced emergency assessments. It has access to both suitable staff and tools for conducting emergency assessments. The office has links to coordination mechanisms that allow it to become involved in joint needs assessments. |  |  | |  |
| **3. Response strategy:** The office can develop immediate emergency response strategies and plans based on CI priority response sectors. |  |  | |  |
| **4. Programme implementation and management**: The office with partners (if applicable) is able to complete the proposed programme activities on time, on budget and to the required quality standards. |  |  | |  |
| **5. Core sectors—give separate responses for each sector:** (NB—this section is to determine which sectors the office/partners has existing expertise in, not to say that it is compulsory to have expertise in all sectors.)  **WASH:** The office/partners have sufficient numbers of trained staff to carry out the emergency response. These staff have experience with emergency operations in this sector.  **Shelter:** The office/partners have sufficient numbers of trained staff to carry out the emergency response. These staff have experience with emergency operations in this sector.  **Food security:** The office/partners have sufficient numbers of trained staff to carry out the emergency response. These staff have experience with emergency operations in this sector.  **Sexual and reproductive health:** The office/partners have sufficient numbers of trained staff to carry out the emergency response. These staff have experience with emergency operations in this sector. |  |  | |  |
| **6. Coordination:** The office has skilled staff with time to participate in coordination mechanisms with local authorities, the UN, donors and other agencies |  |  | |  |
| **7. Prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse:** Staff members and partners are aware of the PSEA policy. Systems exist in both the CARE office and partners to respond to claims of SEA. Staff members and partner staff sign a code of conduct upon recruitment that includes a section on PSEA, and this is covered in their orientation. Information on reporting mechanisms for claims of SEA is available in the head office and field offices. |  |  | |  |
| **8. Humanitarian accountability:** The office and partners are able to ensure programme quality and accountability. Senior management in the office and partners are aware of the obligations of the office under the CARE Humanitarian Accountability Framework. The office and partners have sufficient staff with the knowledge of how to adapt accountability systems and implement them in emergency operations. Suggested accountability systems are appropriate for rapidly changing emergency conditions. |  |  | |  |
| **9. Gender:** The office and partners can develop and implement gender equality programming in emergencies. Can carry out appropriate gender analyses of a situation as required. Is able to create gender balanced teams for assessment, implementation, monitoring and evaluation as required. The office is able to draw up and implement a suitable gender action plan and has a gender in brief. |  |  | |  |
| **10. Partnership:** The office has experience working with partners in emergencies. The office EPP included partnership and capacity assessment of our partners has been undertaken which is reflected in other answers. |  |  | |  |
| **11. Advocacy:** The office has the skills and experience it needs to: analyse policy (including specific humanitarian policy); assess advocacy risks; develop suitable policy and advocacy positions and materials; develop necessary strategic alliances |  |  | |  |
| **12. Monitoring and evaluation:** The office and partners can put in place M&E systems suitable for emergency responses. The office (and partners) have specialist skills in M&E where required (e.g. remote monitoring, or particular donor requirements such as Household Economy Assessment). |  |  | |  |
| **13. Project development and proposal writing:**  The office is able to produce multiple high-quality project proposals for humanitarian funding streams as needed. The office is able to prepare proposals which achieve a 2a or 2b gender marker rating. |  |  | |  |
| **14. Funding and fundraising:** The office has some funding available for immediate relief supplies. Senior staff know how to access the CI ERF. The office is able to work with donors in country to raise or reallocate sufficient funds for the response (in collaboration with CI Members). |  |  | |  |
| **15. Information management:** The office is able to produce multiple high-quality reports for humanitarian donors as needed. The office’s systems for information management can manage multiple requests for programme and programme support information from CI Members per day. The office can promptly deliver high-quality programme reports, sitreps, and other information required to CI Members, donors and other stakeholders. |  |  | |  |
| **16. Media and communications:** The office is able to provide: high-quality photos; press statements; responses to requests for interviews and information; human interest stories. State the languages these can be provided in. |  |  | |  |
| **17. Transition and recovery:** The office is able to plan for transition and recovery adequately alongside emergency operation planning. |  |  | |  |
| **18. Systems:** The office has set emergency procedures on procurement, HR management (including recruitment and stress management) and finance to apply in an emergency.The CO is able to quickly adapt other systems, policies and procedures to the emergency context. |  |  | |  |
| **19. Safety and security:** The office and partners have a safety and security plan. The plan is used and staff are aware of it. The office has an updated risk assessment, including measures to mitigate identified risk. A security focal point exists and understands the responsibilities of that position. Standard operating procedures have been reviewed and are appropriate for the emergency situation. The CARE office can ensure that the risks to CARE staff, partner staff and assets are acceptable. |  |  | |  |
| **20. Staff well-being and support:** HR policies and procedures take sufficient account of the particular needs of emergency staff (focal point, R&R etc.). The office can quickly review and adapt existing procedures to meet the needs of an emergency response. |  |  | |  |
| **21. HR recruitment and management:** The office can hire and orient sufficient numbers of staff in a short period of time. It is able to provide suitable orientation to all newly hired staff. The required number of staff in programme support functions is understood by the CO. Managers (including new managers) know their responsibilities as a manager and are able to cope with a team of the size planned for them. Systems are in place to move staff from ongoing projects to work on the emergency if required. |  |  | |  |
| **22. Financial and contract management:** The office and partners have the compliance systems it needs to be financially accountable in managing emergency contracts. It is able to manage a large increase in budget and in the quantity and urgency of finance work. It is able to handle large payments/cash provision in a timely manner. |  |  | |  |
| **23. Logistics:** The office has access to emergency stockpiles. It has appropriate systems for procurement, transport, storage, distribution and reporting and these can handle a large volume of additional goods, relief items and assets moving through them. It has trained staff who can move quickly and effectively into managing emergency logistics. Programme staff understand the role of the logistics function and the demands upon it in an emergency response. |  |  | |  |
| **24. Procurement:** Systems for procurement are in place in the office and partners and widely understood. The system is adjusted to permit the rapid, efficient and transparent purchase of needed supplies and services.The office has experience of international tenders and procurement. Emergency procurement procedures are in place and ready to be activated. |  |  | |  |
| **25. Administrative support:** The office has enough administrative support for its emergency programme. It has staff to ensure the management of offices, transport, accommodation, visas, and required permits. There is sufficient office space for those working on the emergency response. Suitable accommodation can be provided to staff that require it. |  |  | |  |
| **26. Telecommunications:** The office has the equipment, staff, technical skills and funds to ensure effective voice and data communications. If the emergency is in a place where the office does not normally work, the office can quickly expand its systems into that area (eg through partners). The office is aware of any government or technical restrictions on the types of communications technology that can be used in different areas, and can implement alternatives. |  |  | |  |
| **27. IT:** The office has sufficient computers, laptops, printers, hubs, routers etc. for the emergency operations. The office has sufficient server capacity.Existing networks are able to accommodate numerous new devices, and networks in new locations can be set up quickly.There are staff who can provide guidance on IT equipment and procedures, and undertake basic support. |  |  | |  |

Please attach an organizational chart showing the office normal staffing structure and the proposed emergency staffing structure.

You need an emergency coordinator , information manager, media focal point, proposal writer, logistics specialist, HR manager and finance manager—and likely others too. If you don’t have anyone for these jobs, discuss with CEG how to bring in extra people as soon as possible.