### Summary

Some insights into many of the typical problems found in the health action technical sector, illustrations of the minimum standards and associated key indicators, as well as a practical hands-on exercise.



### Aim

This module aims to provide participants with a better understanding of how the Sphere standards and indicators for the health action technical chapter, together with the rights-based approach, can assist them and the people they serve in humanitarian preparedness and response.

### Learning objectives

*By the end of this session, participants will be able to:*

* Locate the technical chapter on health action in the Sphere Handbook and describe some of its minimum standards, associated key indicators, key actions and guidance notes
* Illustrate how the minimum standards and key indicators can be practically implemented
* Advocate for the implementation of the Sphere minimum standards.

### Key messages

* The 17 health action standards and their supporting activities and indicators form an integrated system of analysis of needs, provision of services, management, and monitoring and evaluation.
* Failure to meet the standards in the food, nutrition, shelter, water and sanitation sectors has a direct impact on health, as it can lead to increased morbidity and mortality.
* The health action technical chapter standards cannot be achieved without also taking into account the Sphere Humanitarian Charter, the Protection Principles and the Core Standards, as well as the cross-cutting themes and the other technical chapters.

#### Preparation & resources

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| For the facilitator | For each participant | For each group of 3-5 participants |
| * Sphere Handbook * Pocket calculators * Review slides 2 to 22 and preselect a few problems of specific interest to your participants, (about 3 out of the 10 problems). Mask the slides you won’t use by right clicking on the slide and selecting ‘mask’ at the bottom of the list so they do not appear in the presentation. | * Sphere Handbook & highlighter * Print Handout ‘The minimum standards in health action’ in colour, if possible. Cut out all 18 images and place in an envelope. There should be one envelope per table/group. * Print Handout ‘Communicable diseases following natural disasters’ | * Flipchart stand, paper and marker pens (various colours) * Pocket calculators |

### You may also want to look at:

* **Module A1-A2-A3** – What is Sphere?
* **Module A4-A5** – Sphere in context
* **Module A7** – Sphere cross-cutting themes
* **Module A8** – Sphere Core Standards
* **Module A9-A13** – Sphere and the Rights-Based Approach (RBA)

### To know more:

* **Browse** ‘The Sphere Project in brief’: [www.sphereproject.org/about](http://www.sphereproject.org/about)
* **Read** the chapter ‘What is Sphere?’ of the Sphere Handbook (p. 4-17)
* **See** the video ‘Humanitarian Standards in Context – Bringing the Sphere Handbook to Life’: [www.sphereproject.org/resources](http://www.sphereproject.org/resources)

#### Session plan

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| Activity | Description | Timing |
| Introduction | The Sphere health action standards and indicators, together with the rights-based approach, can assist you and the people you serve in humanitarian preparedness and response. | 5' |
| Slide presentation  ‘Some problems in health action’ | Present the preselected slides (you should have chosen in advance about 3 out of the 10 problems of specific interest to your participants and context from slides 3 to 23). Keep the session engaging and moving quickly.  Explain how the preselected slides depict the various types of recurring problems that often arise in disaster-affected areas, and refugee camp populations in particular.  Present each problem and read out the associated questions as well as the possible answers. Use your own examples and stories to illustrate each of these problems and call for examples from others in the group who may have encountered them. Prompt participants to share about other problems which they may have faced in disaster response situations, from camp and/or other environments. | 15' |
| Group work  ‘Sphere minimum standards in health action’ | Divide participants into 4 groups of 3-5 people. If some participants have a relevant technical background, make sure to assign them to different groups as resource persons.  Distribute one envelope per group. Each envelope should contain the 17 pictures + 1 overview picture (see Handout ‘The minimum standards in health action’).  In each group, have one participant choose a picture and read the corresponding standard aloud to the group. All group members should look for this minimum standard in the Handbook. The participant who has chosen the picture should make sure it is clear to the rest of the group. Next, have another participant choose a picture, etc., until all 17 have been presented. The overview picture, which could come up at any time and which names the 17 health action standards (highlighted in the diagram on p.290) should also be presented.  In every case, challenge the group to ‘test’ the standard and agree whether or not it is, in fact, universal in nature and globally applicable. | 15' |
| Slide presentation  ‘Visualising the health action terminology, indicators and guidance notes’ | Show slide 24 and highlight the relationships between the components of the Sphere Handbook. Point out that indicators should be selected and adapted to one’s context.  You should have chosen in advance approximately 3 examples most appropriate for your context from slides 26 to 40. Run the presentation with the corresponding slides. Use the questions in the presentation to get active participation from the group. Clearly read aloud one key action and one guidance note associated with each indicator to ensure that participants understand the structure: Minimum standards / Key actions / Key indicators / Guidance notes.  Raise specific questions on the cross-cutting themes (gender, environmental impact, disaster risk reduction, etc.), principles (on roles and responsibilities, for example), rights or Protection Principles and Core Standards to ensure participants always consider them – even when they focus on technical standards and indicators. | 15' |
| Practical group exercise  ‘Analyse health issues and causes’ | State that this exercise will allow participants to practice what they are learning.  Ask the groups to reflect on:   * What were the main health issues following major disasters you faced? * What were the primary causes?   They should refer to the Handbook to give proper feedback and write down any references they have used. | 15' |
| Plenary feedback | Receive feedback from the groups in plenary. Have one group present its findings and have the other groups contribute only new findings.  Then ask:   * Do these health problems arise from the disaster itself, or from the early failures of the humanitarian response to the disaster?   Distribute the Handout ‘Communicable diseases following natural disasters’ as a take-away. | 15' |
| Plenary brainstorm and wrap-up  ‘Sphere RBA and transversal aspects’ | While doing this exercise, ask the following questions:   * How have you considered the Humanitarian Charter, the Protection Principles, the Core Standards, the cross-cutting themes and all the technical chapters?   Ask participants how they feel and what they would do differently next time.  Recap the key messages of the module and use slide 41 to conclude the session. | 10' |

### Tips for facilitators

* If you are not an expert in health action (a doctor, nurse, or another public health professional), you may want to ask someone who is an expert in WASH to support you during this session. Ideally, this person is one of the participants.

**Acknowledgement**: InterWorks Sphere technical sectors course materials have been used and adapted to design this module: [www.interworksmadison.com/publications-training-resources/sphere](http://www.interworksmadison.com/publications-training-resources/sphere).