### Summary

An exploration of how the Sphere approach and tools can be used by practitioners throughout all phases of the project cycle (PC): assessment; analysis; design and implementation; monitoring and evaluation; and capitalisation, learning and change.



### Aim

This module aims to provide information on how the Sphere Project approach and tools can support practitioners throughout the project cycle.

### Learning objectives

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

* List and describe the phases of the project cycle
* Explain how the Sphere approach and the Handbook can be used throughout the project cycle
* Promote the use of Sphere throughout the project cycle for enhancing the quality and accountability of humanitarian projects.

### Key messages

* The project cycle is a dynamic way to visualise a project. It is composed of various phases: assessment; analysis; design and implementation; monitoring and evaluation; and capitalisation, learning and change.
* Sphere is built on a rights-based approach and provides tools for four technical chapters: minimum standards ➙ key actions ➙ key indicators ➙ guidance notes, which can all be used throughout the project cycle.

#### Preparation & resources

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| --- | --- | --- |
| For the facilitator | For each participant | For each group of 3-5 participants |
| * Sphere Handbook * Draw the project cycle from the Handout ‘The project cycle’ on a flipchart in advance * OR print it in colour and poster-sized * Guides: ‘Sphere 4 Assessments’(see Annexes to the Sphere Training Package) and ‘Sphere 4 Monitoring and Evaluation’ (available as of March 2015) | * Sphere Handbook * Handout ‘The project cycle’ * Handout ‘The IASC HPC’ * Handout ‘More resources for the project cycle’ | * 5 flipchart stands and paper * 5 baskets with coloured sticky notes, marker pens of various colours, coloured sticker dots or stars, strings, blu-tack/glue, colour cards, scissors, tape, etc. |

### You may also want to look at:

* **Module B2** – Sphere and the project cycle in practice
* **Module B3** – Sphere, DRRM and resilience
* **Module B4** – Sphere for emergency and development
* **Module C6** – Sphere and other Quality and Accountability (Q&A) initiatives

### To know more:

* **Browse** the IASC HPC resources: [www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/pageloader.aspx?page=content-template-default&bd=87](http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/pageloader.aspx?page=content-template-default&bd=87), See 5. Humanitarian Programme Cycle Reference Module Version 1.0
* **Read** the ‘Sphere 4’ Guides: ‘The Sphere 4 Assessments Guide’(see Annexes to the Sphere Training Package) and the ‘Sphere 4 Monitoring and Evaluation Guide’ (available as of March 2015): [www.sphereproject.org/resources](http://www.sphereproject.org/resources/download-publications/?search=1&keywords=assessment&language=0&category=0&subcat-22=0&subcat-29=0&subcat-31=0&subcat-35=0&subcat-49=0&subcat-56=0&subcat-60=0&subcat-80=0)
* **Read** the booklet ‘Quality and Accountability for Project Cycle Management’ by Astrid de Valon and Sylvie Robert, published by Community World Service Asia: [www.cwspa.org/sidebar-items/quality-and-accountability-for-project-cycle-management](http://www.cwspa.org/sidebar-items/quality-and-accountability-for-project-cycle-management)

#### Session plan

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Activity | Description | Timing |
| Introduction | The Sphere approach and tools can support practitioners throughout the project cycle. | 5' |
| Group work  ‘The project cycle’ | Divide participants into 4 groups of 3-5 people. Ensure the groups are balanced and project managers are equitably distributed in the groups.  Ask the groups to draw their representation of a project cycle based on their experience. They can use key words. All participants in the group should contribute, and they should reach a consensus. (5’)  Once finished, put all the flip charts next to each other, on the wall or on their stands, and ask participants to go around and view each of them. (5’)  Your main feedback points should be:   * There is no right or wrong depiction: any drawing/visualization can be considered * However the project cycle should not be depicted linearly: a dynamic and iterative approach is illustrating better to the reality   Use the printed or pre-drawn in advance drawing from the Handout ‘The project cycle’ as a suggested model for this session. Briefly explain the components of each phase. | 10' |
| Group work and feedback  ‘Sphere and the project cycle’ | Ask the same groups to continue the exercise. Distribute one basket per group with supplies (see Preparation & Resources). They have 25’ to:   * Copy the suggested project cycle model (distribute Handout ‘The project cycle’) onto a new flip chart * Highlight on the drawing itself for each phase what in Sphere can be used, using the basket’s contents in a relevant and creative manner   Visit the groups and make sure that everyone browses through the Handbook.  Once completed, place all the flipcharts next to each other on the wall or on their stands. Ask each group to share about their flipcharts for 3’. Allow for questions and answers and guide participants through the Handbook when needed. (5’ per group x 4 = 20’) | 45' |
| Plenary debriefing  ‘Sphere and the project cycle’ | Ask participants to share concrete examples from their group work that demonstrate their consideration of the following sections:   |  |  | | --- | --- | | * The rights-based approach * The Code of Conduct * The Humanitarian Charter * The Protection Principles | * The cross-cutting themes * The Core Humanitarian Standard * The technical chapters: minimum standards ➙ key actions ➙ key indicators ➙ guidance notes |   You should be ready to provide additional information on how each of the Sphere Handbook sections provides guidance for each phase of the project cycle. You can base your inputs on the Sphere 4 guides and the other references suggested as part of the module preparation. | 20' |
| Information sharing  ‘More Sphere tools and other resources for the project cycle’ | Refer to the Sphere ‘How-to guides’, available on the Sphere website: ‘Sphere 4 Assessments’ and ‘Sphere 4 Monitoring and Evaluation’. Mention that these are very useful documents for the project cycle.  Distribute the Handout ‘IASC HPC’. Explain the model and mention how clear links can be made between the HCP and related contributions from Sphere to the project cycle.  Use and distribute as a resource the Handout ‘More resources for the project cycle’. | 5' |
| Wrap-up | Reiterate the key messages of the module.  Reaffirm how the use of Sphere throughout the project cycle can enhance the quality and accountability of humanitarian projects. | 5' |

### Tips for facilitators

* This session is particularly geared towards field practitioners with little knowledge of both the project cycle and Sphere who are willing to quickly learn about Sphere and how they can use it.
* We use five classic project cycle phases and the term ‘project’ for this module, each of which could be tailored to the models or terms of particular agencies.