### Summary

A n overview of ways to use the Sphere approach and Handbook when humanitarian organisations and national authorities interact with one another.



### Aim

This module aims to explore ways in which national authorities can use Sphere, as well as how humanitarian organizations can use the Sphere Handbook to strengthen their relationship with national authorities in preparedness and response.

### Learning objectives

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

* Explain major opportunities and challenges of using Sphere with national authorities in humanitarian planning, preparedness, capacity building and response
* Use the Sphere Handbook in different ways to support interaction with governments
* Describe a successful example of the adoption of the Sphere Handbook by a national authority.

### Key messages

* ‘We recognise the primary role and responsibility of the affected state to provide timely assistance to those affected, to ensure people’s protection and security and to provide support for their recovery’ (Sphere Humanitarian Charter).
* There is a wide variety of ways in which humanitarian organisations and national authorities can adapt and use the Sphere Handbook and the approach it explains.
* Sharing the same operational language facilitates coordination.

#### Preparation & resources

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| --- | --- | --- |
| For the facilitator | For each participant | For each group |
| * Projector, laptop, speakers for the video ‘Humanitarian Standards in Context: Bringing the Sphere Handbook to Life’, to be downloaded in advance, from 17th minute until the end * Handout ‘Questionnaire with answers’ * Flip chart with ‘Type of interaction’ * A very large paper (2 flip charts together), one with ‘opportunities’ as a header, and the other one with ‘challenges’ | * Handout ‘Video case study: Questionnaire’ | * Handout ‘Opportunities and challenges to use Sphere with national authorities’ * Yellow, red and green cards * Blue tack, marker pen |

### You may also want to reference:

* **Module A1** – Sphere: a brief tour
* **Module A10** – Depicting Sphere and the Humanitarian Charter
* **Module B5** – Sphere and coordination
* **Module B6** – Sphere and advocacy

### To know more:

* **Browse** ‘Building Trust in Diverse Teams’: <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/building-trust-in-diverse-teams-the-toolkit-for-emergency-response-115413>
* **Read** ‘Sphere community increasingly active around the world’:   
  [www.sphereproject.org/news/sphere-community-increasingly-active-around-the-world](http://www.sphereproject.org/news/sphere-community-increasingly-active-around-the-world)
* **Read** ‘Towards Good Humanitarian Government’ by Paul Harvey:   
  [www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/5092.pdf](http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/5092.pdf)
* **Read** ‘Working for quality humanitarian response in India’:   
  [www.sphereproject.org/news/working-for-quality-humanitarian-response-in-india](http://www.sphereproject.org/news/working-for-quality-humanitarian-response-in-india)
* **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 | Using Sphere when humanitarian organisations and national authorities interact with one another, for both preparedness and response, offers opportunities and challenges. | 5' |
| Video case study  ‘Introducing the Sphere Handbook 2011 edition’ | Distribute the questions from the Handout to the participants, let them read, and then show the video from 17’02 to 23’54 (the end of the video).  Let participants fill in their questions at the end of the video, and then ask for answers in plenary.  Ask participants to share their point of view on the video case study, and the institutionalisation of Sphere by the Bolivian Government.  Ask participants if they know of any other authorities who have used Sphere as their disaster management guidelines. You can quote examples from the recommended reading (especially the recommended articles on the Sphere website).  Wrap up on this inspiring case study by explaining that this is one way that Sphere can be used when humanitarian actors and governments engage with each other, but that we will now explore other ways. | 25' |
| Group work  ‘Exploring how Sphere envisages the role of the state and our interactions with the state’ | Split participants into a maximum of 7 groups (depending on the number of participants you can have less groups, to maintain an interesting level of discussion in each group).  Distribute to each group one excerpt from the Handout ‘Opportunities and challenges to use Sphere when humanitarian actors and national authorities interact’  The group can then discuss:   * What type of interaction is mentioned or derived from your paragraph? Do you have experience with this type of interaction and have you used Sphere to support it? * What are the challenges linked to this type of interaction? How can the use of the Sphere Handbook support you? * What are the opportunities offered by this type of interaction? How can the use of the Sphere Handbook support you?   Participants have yellow, green and red colour cards:   * On the yellow cards, have them write key words specifying the types of interaction between humanitarian stakeholders and the government (i.e. advocacy, capacity building) * On the green cards, have them write key words for opportunities (i.e. no national guidelines for disaster management) * On the red cards, have them write key words to summarise the challenges (i.e. incompatibility with national guidelines) | 25' |
| Debrief |  | 5' |

### Tips for facilitators

* The discussions may need to be adapted if national authorities are participating in the training, but the module can also provide a good platform for discussion even if there are sensitive topics.
* Ensure that you prepare yourself to moderate discussion based on the context where the training is happening. Get support in advance from appropriate participants.