### Summary

An overview of Sphere and its four companions: Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS); INEE Minimum Standards for Education; Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS); Minimum Economic Recovery Standards (MERS), complementing each other to improve humanitarian response.



### Aim

This module aims to provide a brief overview of Sphere and the approach, themes and tools of its four companions, and to demonstrate how they can be implemented together in a complementary way to improve quality and accountability.

### Learning objectives

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

* Briefly describe Sphere and its four companions
* List some resources and tools made available by the five initiatives (Sphere and its four companions)
* Explain the complementarities between them and the possible joint implementation.

### Key messages

* Sphere and its four companions should be viewed as complementary.
* The five initiatives have a set of common standards and cross-cutting issues.
* All together, Sphere and its companions offer entry points to the following technical sectors: Water, Food, Shelter, Health, Education, Child Protection, Livestock and Livelihoods, Markets and Financial Systems.

#### Preparation & resources

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| For the facilitator | For each participant | For each group of 3-5 participants |
| * Sphere handbook & Companion(s) handbooks (for the chosen companions) * Print the slides with notes * The answers to the scenario questions (See “Information for the debriefing” sheet at the end of each scenario handout) | * Sphere Handbook, highlighter * Companion(s) handbooks (for the chosen companions). If too difficult to acquire, distribute one companion book per group. * Print any handout you want participants to receive as a take-away (optional) | * Flipchart stand, paper and marker pens (various colours) * Print the chosen scenario including the table with the references to Sphere and the related companion standards and the ‘information for the debriefing. Do not staple as they will be distributed separately. * Instructions for group work on a flip chart |

### You may also want to look at:

* **Modules A1-A2-A3** – What is Sphere?
* **Module A11** – The Code of Conduct, a foundation for the Sphere Humanitarian Charter
* **Module C6** – Sphere and other Quality and Accountability (Q&A) initiatives

### To know more:

* **Browse** the Sphere Project website: [www.sphereproject.org](http://www.sphereproject.org)
* **Browse** the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS): [www.cpwg.net](http://www.cpwg.net)
* **Browse** the Minimum Standards for Education: [www.ineesite.org](http://www.ineesite.org)
* **Browse** the Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS): [www.livestock-emergency.net](http://www.livestock-emergency.net)
* **Browse** the Minimum Economic Recovery Standards (MERS): [www.seepnetwork.org](http://www.seepnetwork.org)
* **Read** ‘Companionships’: [www.sphereproject.org/about/companionships](http://www.sphereproject.org/about/companionships)
* **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 | Sphere and its four companions are complementing each other to improve humanitarian response.  Show the egg (on slide 1 or drawn on a flip chart) depicting Sphere and its four companions. Ask participants to raise their hands if they know one of the five initiatives, and then ask if anyone has experience using one of them. Emphasize that those who have raised their hands should share it with the rest. | 5' |
| Information sharing | Explain the companionship process (Handout ‘Companionships’) and introduce the initiatives: their main theme, the key handbook or tool, the approach and nature (Handout ‘Sphere and its four companions’). Prompt participants who know some of these initiatives to contribute and share examples of tools. | 10' |
| Group work  ‘Introduction to Sphere and the chosen companions’  ‘Reflection on complementarity’ | Explain that the following exercise will focus on complementarities between Sphere and 2 chosen companions.  Make 4 balanced groups of 3-5 people. If possible, place at least one person who raised his/her hand earlier in each group. This person should be the group’s animator.  Participants should have the companion handbook corresponding to their scenario.   1. Distribute the scenarios. Have groups read the case studies (groups A and B will read the scenario 1 (Floods in Pakistan – use of Sphere and LEGS), and groups C and D will read the scenario 2 (Protracted conflict - use of Sphere and INEE). 2. Distribute the table with the references to Sphere and their allocated companion handbook that you will find in the handout of each scenario. Let participants take 10’ to review them and browse through Sphere and their companion handbook 3. In groups, participants will brainstorm on the following question: In the context of the scenario you just read, how can Sphere and its companion be used in a complementary manner? Be specific! Share concrete examples of strategies and activities. Your group will have 5’ max. to share results in plenary. | 30' |
| Plenary feedback | Present the scenario 1 (Floods in Pakistan – use of Sphere and LEGS). Let group A present for 5’, then have group B complement the findings. Present the scenario 2 (Protracted conflict - use of Sphere and INEE).  Let group C present for 5’, then have group D complement the findings.  Complement participant findings with answers from the Handout ‘Information for the debriefing’ of each scenario. You can distribute it to each group at the end of the exercise. | 20' |
| Brainstorming in plenary  ‘Joint implementation’ | Write ‘Complementarity’ in big letters on a flip chart and draw two columns below it for ‘Opportunities’ and ‘Challenges’. Ask the groups to share ideas and explain why those companions can be used in a complementary manner. Cluster their comments with keywords in their corresponding column while they come up.  Take this moment as an opportunity to highlight common tools among the five initiatives:   * Common standards (Handout ‘Links between Sphere and its four companions’ common standards) * Common cross-cutting issues (Handout ‘Specific references to the cross-cutting issues for Sphere and its four companions’) | 20' |
| Wrap-up | Complement participant findings with answers from the Handout ‘Opportunities and challenges of joint implementation’  Handouts ‘Companionships’ and ‘Selected resources’ can be distributed as a take-away to support further reading on the companions. | 5' |

### Tips for facilitators

* You may be able to pre-identify participants with specific experience when they register for the course. This can help you prepare the groups in advance and identify who can support what and where.
* Feasibility: if time and budget do not allow you to order the handbooks in advance for the case studies, we suggest you download electronic versions and print a few copies using the links provided on p.1 of this plan.
* Cost and timing: study the cost and timing to receive the handbooks for the chosen initiative(s) on time. Shipping may be expensive and you should estimate at least a month or two for delivery, or consider shipping via DHL.