**Remote Field Crisis Management**

Session Title: 1.2 What is a crisis?

Duration: 45 minutes

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| **Aim of the session**  | To familiarise participants with each other, the trainer(s), the course requirements, key expectations and ground rules for activities. |
| **Objectives:**By the end of this session participants will be able to:* Differentiate a ‘critical incident’ from a ‘crisis’
* Explain how remote field management of a crisis differs from a CMT-based crisis management response.

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| **Key Learning points:*** A critical incident is an event (or series of events) that seriously threatens the welfare of personnel, potentially resulting in death, life-threatening injury or illness, but does NOT have wider implications for the organisation as a whole and can be managed by regular management structures, with additional support from headquarters if required.
* A crisis is an event that significantly disrupts normal operations, has caused or is likely to cause severe distress or have severe consequences for individual staff or organisations, and requires out of ordinary measures to restore order and normality, thus demanding immediate action from senior management.
* A Field Crisis Management Team (FCMT) often operates remotely, gathering all of the information, handling local relationships, liaising with the CMT and IMT to make sure they have the info they need to make decisions and carrying out the instructions that they give.
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| **Timing** | **What to do and say *(methodology)*** | **What you need *(resources)*** |
| 20’ | **The difference between critical incident and crisis**Ask participants, “What is a critical incident?” Take a few responses and then use **Slide 2** to flesh out the characteristics of a critical incident.Ask participants to brainstorm the types critical incidents that are likely (or possible) to happen to staff in their project/programme environments. Flipchart their responses.Explain that incidents are not necessarily crises. Many incident are only incidents, while some incident are crises. Choose one of the possible incidents from the flipchart, particularly one that is likely. Ask participants to discuss the following questions in small groups with their neighbours: “If this incident were to happen to your staff, how would you know whether or not it is a crisis, or only an incident?” Give them a few minutes to discuss this with one another.Take some responses, highlighting the aspects of a crisis. Use **Slide 3** to define a crisis and differentiate it from a critical incident, being sure to highlight that:* A critical incident or series of such incidents becomes a crisis when its nature, severity or broader consequences for an organisation warrant a response beyond the capacity of routine programme management mechanisms, i.e. requiring leadership and coordination from senior management level.
* Crises can come in various forms, and include events threatening an organisation’s reputation, image, programmes, assets, financial stability or the safety and security of its staff.

Take some time to specify some of the abstract terms in the definition and discussion:* What are some of the ‘severe consequences’ that define a crisis?
* What are the ‘out of ordinary measures’ that define a crisis?

It may be worth discussing the fact than in some of their organisations, these terms may be very strictly defined and not abstract at all. Ask if any of them know their organisations’ definitions of the difference between incidents and crises. They may not, which is okay. But encourage them to find out if they don’t |  |
| 5’ | **Why do we do crisis management?**Reiterate the fact that a crisis is something that overwhelms normal operating management processes and requires a special ‘crisis’ management response. Discuss this management response by asking them why a crisis requires special management measures? What are the trying to accomplish during a crisis management response?Take a few responses and them use **Slide 4** to explain that we do it in order to:* reduce the impact of the incident
* reduce external interest in the incident
* ensure the operational continuity of our programmes.
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| 15’ | **Organisational Crisis Management Structures**Use the next 15 minutes to work through the various levels of organisational crisis management structures using **Slides 5 & 6**. Highlight:* In most organisations, the Crisis Management Team (CMT) will form at the HQ level to take high-level strategic decisions about the crisis response
* The Incident Management Team (IMT) is often based at the country level and will managing the day-to-day response
* The Field Crisis Management Team (FCMT) is YOU (the participants)! This is the team that is gathering all of the information, handling local relationships, liaising with the CMT and IMT to make sure they have the info they need to make decisions and carrying out the instructions that they give. If the CMT and the IMT can’t come into the country for whatever reason (again, Syria in 2014 is a good example), then the FCMT will be managing their response remotely.

Take a few questions. Reinforce the ‘remote management’ aspect of the course and close the session. | Flipchart, markers and sticky notes |

**Supporting information for facilitators:**

*(Include notes, models, background information, etc. to support facilitators in delivering this module.)*

**IMPORTANT:**