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COORDINATING COMMUNICATIONS DRILLS AND EXERCISES - SETTING THE STAGE




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Summary



- What are drills and simulations?
 - Why do we do them?
 - Types of drills and simulations
 - Who are the participants?
 - Planning the exercise
 - Exercise debrief
 - Some keys for success
 - Examples
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What are drills and simulations?




“An event that replicates selected aspects of a real emergency to provide an opportunity for **testing procedures in place** and **raising awareness** of **preparedness** and response requirements and actions.”

-WFP EPRP Simulation Guide, 2013.



Why do we do drills and simulations?



1. Be proactive in preparing for an emergency
 2. Practical learning in a safe environment
 3. Determine if plans and systems really work in the safety of a "pretend" emergency
 4. Test preparedness of a country
 5. Develop competencies of emergency response professionals
 6. Develop and test cross-sectoral cooperation
 7. Develop teams and help to build strong working relationships
 8. Make improvements based on outcomes of the exercise debrief
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Types of drills and simulations




1. Table top exercise (TTX)
2. Drill
3. Functional exercise (or "SimEx")
4. Full-scale exercise

The type of exercise you select will be a function of the **resources** (ie. funds, equipment, people) available to conduct the activity, and the **realism** that you want participants to experience.

1. Table top exercise (TTX)




A basic **TTX** is a facilitated discussion of a hypothetical simulated emergency, generally conducted in a low-stress environment with participants seated around a table. A TTX can be made more complex by incorporating unexpected developments (“injects”) to the simulated emergency.



2. Drill



A **drill** is a facilitated and supervised activity, in which single specific operations, functions or systems are tested in a repeated fashion. A drill calls for the mobilisation and use of resources which makes it different to a TTX.




Example: weekly radio check, monthly fire drill.

3. Functional exercise



A **functional exercise** is a fully simulated interactive exercise that tests the capability of an agency to respond to a simulated event. A functional exercise aims to deliver a more “real” experience which means that participants will experience more pressure and time constraints.




A functional exercise aims to test multiple functions of an emergency plan.

4. Full-scale exercise




A **full-scale exercise** is designed to evaluate the operational capability of emergency management systems in a highly stressful environment, simulating actual response conditions. This type of exercise requires a large amount of resources and coordination.



A full-scale exercise typically involves multiple agencies and participants physically deployed in an exercise field location. It aims to test almost all functions of an emergency plan.

Who are the participants?




- Successful preparedness activities need to incorporate the efforts of all actors to ensure a comprehensive response to an emergency situation.
 - Participants from a telecommunications perspective:
 - Telecoms regulator
 - Ministry of telecommunications
 - National disaster management agency
 - Meteorological and geophysics departments
 - Communication service providers (including private sector, amateur radio groups)
 - Power utilities
 - Humanitarian organisations (local, international)
 - Communities
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The participants in the exercise will depend on the scenario.

Planning the exercise




- 1. Start with a concept note** that outlines the goal and expected outcomes of exercise, the required resources and the timeline. The concept note will introduce stakeholders to the exercise.
 - 2. Write the scenario** – all exercises from TTX and drills to full-scale need a scenario. The scenario is the script that sets the stage for the exercise. Ensure that the scenario links to the exercise goals!
 - 3. Create an evaluation plan** – it will be the main element that makes the exercise a valuable learning experience.
 - 4. Conduct the exercise** – check that all equipment and other resources are in place. Brief the participants, and then run the scenario.
 - 5. Monitor** – evaluate how participants respond to key events, have the objectives and outcomes been met?
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The exercise debrief – very important




The **debrief** with exercise participants and facilitators is where experiences and challenges are shared and feedback is provided. This is the most important part of an exercise.



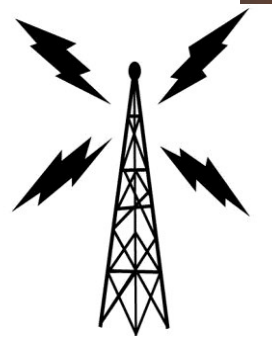
The debrief should **set the action plan** for areas that need improvement or adjustment, as well as identifying the areas of strength.

Keys for success



- Document plans and operating procedures (SOPs)
 - Define simulation scenarios that are applicable to your context
 - A TTX and/or drill can be very effective – no need to jump straight to a full scale exercise
 - Identify good facilitators
 - Ensure the right participants are in the simulation – real responders and decision-makers
 - Follow-up on the actions!
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Pacific Islands – MNO Resilience (ETC/GSMA)



World Food Programme

Preparedness exercise - NetHope

ETC partner, NetHope, conducted a preparedness training and field exercise in Panama in July 2018.

“not only designed to offer real-life experience configuring wireless networks in the field, but also the just-as-important work of collaboration: team building, developing leadership abilities, agility, and working together toward a shared purpose.”
-NetHope



OpEx Bravo – annual ETC exercise

An intensive 7-day field simulation held annually and led by the World Food Programme (WFP), as global lead of the ETC and Logistics Cluster.



The scenario tests **IT and telecoms skillsets**, including **satellite connectivity, networking** and **drone operations** as well as other skills such as **coordination** and **information mgt.**





Thank you!



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