COMISSÂO DA CEDEAO

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**ECOWAS COMMISSION**

**COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO**

**E**COWAS **S**tandardised **E**mergency **M**anagement **S**ystem  
**(ESEMS)**

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**Executive Statement**

The ECOWAS Standardised Emergency Management System (ESEMS) is built on elements that ensure harmonized and aligned continuity with the work done by Member States and other stakeholders under ECOWAS Humanitarian Policy Framework and Action Plan. It introduces a number of terms and definitions, as well as Standard Operating Procedures, with a focus on Disaster Risk Management (DRM). Reducing Disaster Risk (RDR), Preventing New Risks (PNR) and Strengthening Resilience (SR) are the expected main outcomes of the implementation of the ESEMS.

Member States, National Emergency Management Agencies, ECOWAS Partners and other Humanitarian Stakeholders involved in preparing for and responding to any emergency in West Africa Region are expected to use ECOWAS Standardised Emergency Management System (ESEMS), without exception, in order to be eligible for financial support under the ECOWAS Humanitarian Relief Fund (EHRF).

**(Signed)**

**President, ECOWAS Commission**

**List of Acronyms**

ANPC National Agency for Civil Protection

AU African Union

CSO Civil Society Organisation

DHSA Department of Humanitarian and Social Affairs

DM Disaster Management

DRM Disaster Risk Management

DRR Disaster Risk Reduction

ECOWARN ECOWAS Early Warning System

ECOWAS Economic Community of West African States

EDRRP-PA ECOWAS Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Plan of Action

EERT ECOWAS Emergency Response Team

EHD ECOWAS Humanitarian Depot

EHP-PA ECOWAS Humanitarian Policy and Plan of Action

EHRF ECOWAS Humanitarian Relief Fund

EHRM ECOWAS Humanitarian Response Mechanism

EHTF ECOWAS Humanitarian Task Force

EMTP Emergency Management Training Programme

EOC Emergency Operation Centre

ESEMS ECOWAS Emergency Management System

ESEMT ECOWAS Standard Emergency Management Training

ESF ECOWAS Standby Force

FEMA-USA Federal Emergency Management Agency-USA

HRF Humanitarian Relief Fund

IASC Inter-Agency Standing Committee

IDP Internally Displaced Person

LRRR Local (Integration), Repatriation, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration

M & E Monitoring and Evaluation

MOU Memorandum of Understanding

MS Member States

NADMO National Disaster Management Organisation

NEMA National Emergency Management Agency

NGO Non-Governmental Organisation

OCHA UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

PAPS Political Affairs, Peace and Security

PNR Preventing New Risk

PRPC Permanent Representative of the President of the Commission

RDR Reducing Disaster Risk

REC Regional Economic Community

R2P Responsibility to Protect

RCPP&P Regional Contingency Planning Process and Plan

RHAP Regional Humanitarian Action Plan

SEMS Strategic Emergency Management Seminar

SET Situational Emergency Training

SOP Standard Operating Procedures

SRPC Special Representative of the President of the Commission

SR Strengthening Resilience

SWOT Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

UN United Nations

UNHCR United Nations High Commission for Refugees

UNHCR EXCOM Executive Committee of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees

UNISDR United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

WACOCAS West African Code of Conduct for Armed and Security Forces

WEM Workshop for Emergency Managers

WEMS Workshop for Emergency Managers and Specialists

WSEM Workshop for Senior Emergency Managers

**Glossary of Terms**

*The ESSEMS document mostly, but not exclusively, adopts internationally accepted definition of terms as provided by the UNISDR Expert Working Group on Indicators and Terminology*

**Capacity**

The combination of all the strengths, attributes and resources available within an organization, community or society to manage and reduce disaster risks and strengthen resilience. [**Annotation:** Capacity may include infrastructure, institutions, human knowledge and skills, and collective attributes such as social relationships, leadership and management.]

**Capacity Assessment** is the process by which the capacity of a group, organization or society is reviewed against desired goals, where existing capacities are identified for maintenance or strengthening and capacity gaps are identified for further action.

**Contingency Planning**

A management process that analyses disaster risks and establishes arrangements in advance to enable timely, effective and appropriate responses. [**Annotation:** Contingency planning results in organized and coordinated courses of action with clearly identified institutional roles and resources, information processes and operational arrangements for specific actors at times of need. Based on scenarios of possible emergency conditions or hazardous events, it allows key actors to envision, anticipate and solve problems that can arise during disasters. Contingency planning is an important part of overall preparedness. Contingency plans need to be regularly updated and exercised.]

**Disaster**

A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic and environmental losses and impacts. [**Annotation:** The effect of the disaster can be immediate and localized, but is often widespread and could last for a long period of time. The effect may test or exceed the capacity of a community or society to cope using its own resources, and therefore may require assistance from external sources, which could include neighbouring jurisdictions, or those at the national or international levels.]

**Disaster Management** The organization, planning and application of measures preparing for, responding to and recovering from disasters. [**Annotation:** Disaster management may not completely avert or eliminate the threats; it focuses on creating and implementing preparedness and other plans to decrease the impact of disasters and “build back better”. Failure to create and apply a plan could lead to damage to life, assets and lost revenue.]

**Disaster Risk**

The potential loss of life, injury, or destroyed or damaged assets which could occur to a system, society or a community in a specific period of time, determined probabilistically as a function of hazard, exposure, vulnerability and capacity. [**Annotation:** The definition of disaster risk reflects the concept of hazardous events and disasters as the outcome of continuously present conditions of risk. Disaster risk comprises different types of potential losses which are often difficult to quantify. Nevertheless, with knowledge of the prevailing hazards and the patterns of population and socioeconomic development, disaster risks can be assessed and mapped, in broad terms at least. It is important to consider the social and economic contexts in which disaster risks occur and that people do not necessarily share the same perceptions of risk and their underlying risk factors.]

**Disaster Risk Assessment**

A qualitative or quantitative approach to determine the nature and extent of disaster risk by analysing potential hazards and evaluating existing conditions of exposure and vulnerability that together could harm people, property, services, livelihoods and the environment on which they depend. [**Annotation:** Disaster Risk Assessments include: the identification of hazards; a review of the technical characteristics of hazards such as their location, intensity, frequency and probability; the analysis of exposure and vulnerability, including the physical, social, health, environmental and economic dimensions; and the evaluation of the effectiveness of prevailing and alternative coping capacities with respect to likely risk scenarios.]

**Disaster Risk Governance**

The system of institutions, mechanisms, policy and legal frameworks and other arrangements to guide, coordinate and oversee disaster risk reduction and related areas of policy. [**Annotation:** Good governance needs to be transparent, inclusive, collective and efficient to reduce existing disaster risks and avoid creating new ones.]

**Disaster Risk Information**

Comprehensive information on all dimensions of disaster risk, including hazards, exposure, vulnerability and capacity, related to persons, communities, organizations and countries and their assets. [**Annotation:** Disaster risk information includes all studies, information and mapping required to understand the disaster risk drivers and underlying risk factors.]

**Disaster Risk Management**

Disaster risk management is the application of disaster risk reduction policies and strategies to prevent new disaster risk, reduce existing disaster risk and manage residual risk, contributing to the strengthening of resilience and reduction of disaster losses. [**Annotation:** Disaster risk management actions can be distinguished between prospective disaster risk management, corrective disaster risk management and compensatory disaster risk management, also called residual risk management.]

**Disaster Risk Management Plans**

Plans that set out the goals and specific objectives for reducing disaster risks together with related actions to accomplish these objectives. [**Annotation:** They should be guided by the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and considered and coordinated within relevant development plans, resource allocations and programme activities. National-level plans need to be specific to each level of administrative responsibility and adapted to the different social and geographical circumstances that are present.]

**Disaster Risk Reduction**

Disaster risk reduction is aimed at preventing new and reducing existing disaster risk and managing residual risk, all of which contribute to strengthening resilience and therefore to the achievement of sustainable development. [**Annotation:** Disaster risk reduction is the policy objective of disaster risk management, and its goals and objectives are defined in disaster risk reduction strategies and plans.]

**EERT Companion**

The *Companion for ECOWAS Emergency Response Team* is a practical guide for ECOWAS emergency managers written as companion to the workshops for ECOWAS Senior and Middle Managers who would be requested to lead an ECOWAS Emergency Response Team to any emergency situation in West Africa region, or in other emergency operations outside the region. The Companion provides practical tips and advice for each phase and for each area of emergency management,

**EERT Compendium**

This is the Training Compendium of the ECOWAS Emergency Response Team (EERT), the civilian capability for emergency and humanitarian response and peace support operations in West Africa. [**Annotation**: Civilian support complements ECOWAS Standby Military Forces for peace support operations through the training of civilians in the requisite skills and the maintenance of a roster of West African civilians qualified and available for emergency, humanitarian and peace building missions. The general profile of EERT members include: Human Rights Monitors and experts; Civil-Military coordinators; Relief/Emergency specialists; Peace building/keeping operations; Child protection specialists; Refugee Camp Managers, Water and Sanitation experts; Refugee/IDP Protection specialists; Psycho-Social Specialists ; Food Distribution Manager/Supervisors; Water and Sanitation Experts; Specialists on vulnerable groups- women, children HIV/AIDS, Elderly, etc.; Program Managers & Administrators; Legal Specialists with experience of governmental legal systems, drafting of legal legislation, legal reform processes; Programme Managers; Disaster Managers; Monitoring and Evaluation experts; Public Health specialists; Logisticians; Civilian peace keepers; Experts in Governance, democracy, human rights and rule of law; Experts in Post conflict rehabilitation, reintegration and reconstruction; Etc.]

**Emergency**

Incidents or events that threaten life, property and environment, that is, hazardous events that do not result in the serious disruption of the functioning of a community or society. [**Annotation:** Emergency is sometimes used interchangeably with the term disaster, as, for example, in the context of biological and technological hazards or health emergencies.]

**Emergency Management**

Emergency Management is the managerial function charged with creating the framework for organising, coordinating and directing of available resources in order to prevent, mitigate, prepare for and respond to an emergency, bring emergency under control, sustain community resilience and bridge humanitarian action with durable development. [**Annotation:** The term is also used, sometimes interchangeably, with the term disaster management, particularly in the context of biological and technological hazards and or health emergencies.]

**Emergency Response Innovation**

Harnessing innovation to transform emergency response assistance through the development of new emergency management tools/products and creative identification of ways in which technology can enhance entitlements and opportunities within emergency settings and protracted refugee situations.

**Early Warning System**

An integrated system of hazard monitoring, forecasting and prediction, disaster risk assessment, communication and preparedness activities systems and processes that enables individuals, communities, governments, businesses and others to take timely action to reduce disaster risks in advance of hazardous events. [**Annotations:** Effective “end-to-end” and “people-centred” early warning systems may include four interrelated key elements: (1) disaster risk knowledge based on the systematic collection of data and disaster risk assessments; (2) detection, monitoring, analysis and forecasting of the hazards and possible consequences; (3) dissemination and communication, by an official source, of authoritative, timely, accurate and actionable warnings and associated information on likelihood and impact; and (4) preparedness at all levels to respond to the warnings received.]

**Economic Loss**

Total economic impact that consists of direct economic loss (the monetary value of total or partial destruction of physical assets existing in the affected area) and indirect economic loss (a decline in economic value added as a consequence of direct economic loss and/or human and environmental impacts). [**Annotation:** Examples of physical assets that are the basis for calculating direct economic loss include homes, schools, hospitals, commercial and governmental buildings, transport, energy, telecommunications infrastructures and other infrastructure; business assets and industrial plants; and production such as crops, livestock and production infrastructure. They may also encompass environmental assets and cultural heritage.]

**Evacuation**

Moving people and assets temporarily to safer places before, during or after the occurrence of a hazardous event in order to protect them. [**Annotations:** Evacuation plans refer to the arrangements established in advance to enable the moving of people and assets temporarily to safer places before, during or after the occurrence of a hazardous event. Evacuation plans may include plans for return of evacuees and options to shelter in place.]

**Hazard**

A process, phenomenon or human activity that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation. [**Annotations:** Hazards may be natural, anthropogenic or socionatural in origin. Natural hazards are predominantly associated with natural processes and phenomena. Anthropogenic hazards, or human-induced hazards, are induced entirely or predominantly by human activities and choices. This term does not include the occurrence or risk of armed conflicts and other situations of social instability or tension which are subject to international humanitarian law and national legislation. Several hazards are socionatural, in that they are associated with a combination of natural and anthropogenic factors, including environmental degradation and climate change.]

**Humanitarian Innovation**

Harnessing innovation to transform humanitarian assistance through the development of new humanitarian tools/products and creative identification of ways in which technology can enhance entitlements and opportunities within emergency settings and protracted refugee situations.

**Innovation**

Innovation can be viewed as the application of better solutions that meet new requirements, in articulated needs, or existing market needs, which can be accomplished through more effective products, processes, services, technologies or ideas that are readily available to markets, governments and society. [**Annotation:** The technology may be produced, at first, only in organisations but eventually becomes available to any humanitarian operation/stakeholder.]

**Ladder**

Ladder refers to the hierarchy or levels of occurrences of events, situations and/or responses to such events or situations, from low level to critical level.

**Mitigation**

The lessening or minimizing of the adverse impacts of a hazardous event. [**Annotation:** The adverse impacts of hazards, in particular natural hazards, often cannot be prevented fully, but their scale or severity can be substantially lessened by various strategies and actions. Mitigation measures include engineering techniques and hazard-resistant construction as well as improved environmental and social policies and public awareness.]

**Preparedness**

The knowledge and capacities developed by governments, response and recovery organizations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to and recover from the impacts of likely, imminent or current disasters. [**Annotation:** Preparedness action is carried out within the context of disaster risk management and aims to build the capacities needed to efficiently manage all types of emergencies and achieve orderly transitions from response to sustained recovery. Preparedness is based on a sound analysis of disaster risks and good linkages with early warning systems, and includes such activities as contingency planning, the stockpiling of equipment and supplies, the development of arrangements for coordination, evacuation and public information, and associated training and field exercises. A preparedness plan establishes arrangements in advance to enable timely, effective and appropriate responses to specific potential hazardous events or emerging disaster situations that might threaten society or the environment.]

**Prevention**

Activities and measures to avoid existing and new disaster risks. [**Annotations:** Disaster prevention expresses the concept and intention to completely avoid potential adverse impacts of hazardous events. While certain disaster risks cannot be eliminated, prevention aims at reducing vulnerability and exposure in such contexts where, as a result, the risk of disaster is removed. Examples include dams or embankments that eliminate flood risks, landuse regulations that do not permit any settlement in high-risk zones and immunization against vaccine-preventable diseases. Prevention measures can also be taken during or after a hazardous event or disaster to prevent secondary hazards or their consequences, such as measures to prevent the contamination of water.]

**Reconstruction**

The medium- and long-term rebuilding and sustainable restoration of resilient critical infrastructures, services, housing, facilities and livelihoods required for the full functioning of a community or a society affected by a disaster, aligning with the principles of sustainable development and “build back better”, to avoid or reduce future disaster risk.

**Recovery**

The restoring or improving of livelihoods and health, as well as economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets, systems and activities, of a disasteraffected community or society, aligning with the principles of sustainable development and “build back better”, to avoid or reduce future disaster risk.

**Rehabilitation**

The restoration of basic services and facilities for the functioning of a community or a society affected by a disaster.

**Residual Risk**

The disaster risk that remains in unmanaged form, even when effective disaster risk reduction measures are in place, and for which emergency response and recovery capacities must be maintained. [**Annotation:** The presence of residual risk implies a continuing need to develop and support effective capacities for emergency services, preparedness, response and recovery, together with socioeconomic policies such as safety nets and risk transfer mechanisms, as part of a holistic approach.]

**Resilience**

The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions through risk management.

**Response**

Actions taken directly before, during or immediately after a disaster in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety and meet the basic subsistence needs of the people affected. [**Annotation:** Disaster response is predominantly focused on immediate and short-term needs and is sometimes called disaster relief. Effective, efficient and timely response relies on disaster risk-informed preparedness measures, including the development of the response capacities of individuals, communities, organizations, countries and the international community.]

**Risk**

The likelihood of being targeted by a given attack, of an attack being successful, and general exposure to a given threat.

**Risk Assessment**

Risk assessment is the determination of the most important potential hazards to address now, rather than later. It involves the enumeration of the most critical and most likely dangers and evaluation of their levels relative to each other.

**Risk Management**

The identification, assessment and prioritization of risks followed by coordinated and economical application of resources to minimize, monitor and control the probability and/or impact of unfortunate events or to maximise the realization of opportunities.

**Threat**

The source and means of a particular type of attack.

**Threat Assessment**

Assessment performed to determine the best approaches to securing a system against a particular threat, or class of threat. [**Annotation**: Assessing threat profiles help develop effective countermeasures against the types of attacks represented by a given threat. Unlike risk assessments which focus more on analyzing the potential and tendency of one’s resources to fall prey to various attacks, threat assessments focus more on analyzing the attacker’s resources.]

**Vulnerability**

The conditions determined by physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes which increase the susceptibility of an individual, a community, assets or systems to the impacts of hazards. [**Annotation:** Vulnerability is the degree of exposure and helplessness, of a person or a group, a community or an area towards defined hazards. Vulnerability is, hence, regarded as a set of conditions and processes resulting from physical, social, economic and environmental factors that increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards. There are three vulnerability dimensions: economic, social and ecological. Vulnerability indicators cover damage potential and coping capacity, as well as the range of all three vulnerability dimensions.]

**OVERVIEW OF THE ESEMS**

**Background**

1. The ECOWAS Emergency Response Team (EERT) was set up by Regulation MSC/REG.2/01/08 Relating to the Establishment of the ECOWAS Emergency Response Team (EERT) Mechanism Within the ECOWAS Commission adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2008, in response to the provisions of Articles 40 and 41 of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management Peacekeeping and Security.
2. The EERT constitutes a civilian core of experts located, in situ, in Member States and drawn from national NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) and staff of relevant government Ministries of ECOWAS member States, and who are able to respond to complex emergencies and peace support operations in West Africa. The EERT seeks to improve emergency preparedness and response in West Africa through training services for capacity building, providing knowledge resources, deployment and networking in the specialized field of emergency management.
3. In line with the concept and mandate of EERT as articulated by the EERT Regulation, the ECOWAS Commission has been developing EERT as the regional tool for Emergency Management (EM) and Disaster Management (DM). Since 2005, the ECOWAS Commission has been putting up efforts to make the EERT fully operational. A lot of technical work has been done in the area of capacity building. The members of the EERT, a multi-sectoral team, have been trained up to international standards and have been deployed alone on ECOWAS missions or alongside UN or other international agencies to act as part of the civilian arrowhead of peace support operations to complement the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) and also to work in complex emergencies.
4. The operationalization of the EERT through deployment over the years has been mainly on ad hoc basis, among other challenges. In addition, the region’s new (2014) experience of the Ebola epidemic alerted the Commission to another challenge, namely, the increased risk faced by the personnel being deployed for humanitarian operations. This is in addition to the governance, coordination and communication challenges that emerged. Evidently, in spite of the progress made, there is need for an improvement of EERT operations in many areas for efficient humanitarian delivery. Among these is the need to reform EERT operations to international standards with a view to strengthening Emergency Response through crisis observation, monitoring and mapping; emergency response mission planning, and deployment in the ECOWAS space. The response to this situation is the establishment of the ECOWAS Standardised Emergency Management System (ESEMS).

**The ESEMS Concept**

1. The ECOWAS Standardised Emergency Management System (ESEMS) is a hierarchy of connected and inter-dependent information sharing, decision making, action taking and responsibility sharing system within the management of ECOWAS Commission, between ECOWAS Commission and Member States, and between Member States and local communities, Before, During and After an emergency situation. The ESEMS is built on elements that ensure harmonized and aligned continuity with the work done by Member States and other stakeholders under ECOWAS Humanitarian Policy Framework and Action Plan and introduces a number of terms and definitions, as well as Standard Operating Procedures, with a focus on Disaster Risk Management (DRM. Reducing Disaster Risk (RDR), Preventing New Risk (PNR) and Strengthening Resilience (SR) are the expected main outcomes of the implementation of the ESEMS.
2. The main objective of the ESEMS is to improve on various facets of emergency preparedness and response, in other terms, in Disaster Risk Management, as opposed to Disaster Management, in the ECOWAS region to ensure rapid decision making and flow of information and resources, effective coordination between responding actors within ECOWAS Commission and with Humanitarian Partners in West Africa Region, in support of Member States, rapid resources tracking, and mobilisation and deployment of resources to ensure effective action at all periods and phases of the Disaster Risk Management.
3. The ESEMS provides standardised hands-on political, strategic and operational guidelines for emergency management for West Africa, integrating existing EERT concepts of operation and additional standards based on lessons of experience and contemporary best practices. It consists of structures and processes, actions and interactions that span the three main periods and the six main phases of Emergency Management: Pre-Emergency Period (Preparedness Phase and Standby Phase), Emergency Period (Pre-Impact Phase, Impact Phase and Post-Impact Phase), and Post-Emergency Period (Recovery Phase).
4. The ESEMS has three main components: Policy Making; Strategic Decision Making and Action Taking; and Operations. Parallel to the components, there are three main levels of organization of the ESEMS, namely, Policy level, Strategic level and Operational level. The major pillars on which the ESEMS stands include actors and operations. The scope of the ESEMS covers institutional administration and field operations. The legal framework for the ESEMS is constituted by the range of treaty, protocols, regulations and other legal instruments and statutes that govern the humanitarian system in general and emergency management in particular within the ECOWAS region.

**Structures, Processes and Procedures**

1. Two broad considerations are prerequisite to emergency management. These are: Emergency Preparedness and Emergency Response. Activities undertaken within these two respects are grouped into three areas of operation, namely,

* Institutional Preparedness;
* Situational Preparedness and
* Situational Response.

1. The range of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) identified in the ESEMS is as follows:

* Establishment of the Context;
* Identify risks;
* Prioritise Risks;
* Evaluate the risks;
* Analyse the risks and respond;
* Treat the risks; and
* Risks monitoring and control.

**EERT Deployment Process, Roles and Responsibilities**

11. The ESEMS specifies some prerequisite for EERT deployment based on experience, including gender, cultural awareness, suitable staging area, etc. The Deployment process is a multi-step process as follows: Before (Departure)**;** During (Operation delivery)**;** and After (Return). Operation delivery entails: Managing the team; Managing operation; Managing office; Self-management; Managing internal relations and Managing external relations. The stakeholders in the deployment process include the following: ECOWAS; EERT; Country of origin; Receiving country; Local Community; UN Agencies; NGOs; Donors; and Media and other relevant stakeholders. Field of work and specific roles and responsibilities are specified for each of these stakeholders.

12. The ESEMS develops a detailed frame for the formulation of EERT Deployment Evaluation Guidelines including feedback on performance as a matter of quality control and accountability to affected populations (The Director of Humanitarian and Social Affairs will continuously monitor performance against agreed objectives and provide timely feedback through dialogue with EERT members); mid-term deployment review (Assess progress on performance, improvement and development objectives); performance appraisal (The Directorate of Humanitarian and Social Affairs consolidates feedback and own assessment in preparation for Performance Appraisal at a Post-EERT Deployment Debriefing and Performance Appraisal Dialogue takes place); and tracking for quality control (Tracking key statistical indicators for compliance and quality).

**Capacity Building Strategy**

13. The overall objective is to ensure the availability of adequate ECOWAS capacity to support the primary responsibility of Member States, all-of-Member States Institutions engagement and all-of-society to prevent and reduce disaster risk and respond effectively to any natural and man-made hazards and related environmental, technological, and biological hazards and risks that would involve Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Returnees, Refugees and Other Persons of concern, damages to environment, infrastructures and human life, globally without delay, in situations where existing Member State capacity is unable to cope. In this respect, and without prejudice to the need for a complete capacity building suite for ECOWAS global humanitarian action architecture, ECOWAS Capacity Building Strategy under the ESSEMS shall be three pronged: Institutional Preparedness Capacity Building; Situational Preparedness Capacity Building; and Situational Response Capacity Building.

**Coordination of Emergency Management Mission**

14. There are several levels of coordination of ECOWAS emergency management and humanitarian missions. These include: Inter-Departmental/Inter-Directorate Coordination; Coordination with Partners; Coordination with Member States Structures; Regional/Continental Coordination; Civil Society Organisations (CSOs); Regional Strategic Planning; and Coordination with Offices of Special Representatives of the President of the ECOWAS Commission (SRPC) (for political matters), and National Permanent Representative of the President of the Commission (for ECOWAS) and ECOWAS National Units (for Member States).

**Mobilisation Cycle of ECOWAS Humanitarian Relief Fund**

15. The ECOWAS Humanitarian Policy establishes the ECOWAS Humanitarian Relief Fund (EHRF) while the ECOWAS Humanitarian Mechanism defines the principles, objectives, scope, location and sources of the Fund. From lessons of experience in the deployment of the EERT in humanitarian emergencies in the region, there have been deep concerns about EHRF management functions and responsibilities. The EHRF should be mobilised and released at each stage of the area of operation. Funds should be released at the following stages: Observatory and crises mapping; Pre-emergency period; Emergency period; Post-emergency phase; and Recovery period.

16. The following parameters shall be adopted to enhance EHRF management functions and responsibilities.

* Fast tracking the mobilisation of the EHRF shall be of top priority for ECOWAS.
* For the management of the EHRF to be more effective with a view to shortening administrative procedures, there is need for the EHRF to be linked up with the Peace Fund as a window dedicated to humanitarian relief. This way, Partners that wish to make contributions to the Peace Fund could decide to put it directly in the Humanitarian Fund.
* The consolidated Peace Fund-EHRF framework will also enhance programmatic fund release in times of emergency – from planning to post-deployment, rather than episodic releases.

**Conclusion**

17. The ESEMS is designed to improve the various facets of emergency preparedness and response in the ECOWAS region in support of Member States. It provides standardised hands-on operational guidelines for emergency management for West Africa, integrating existing EERT concepts of operation and additional standards based on lessons of experience and contemporary best practices. As a tool designed to guide deployment for emergency response, the scope of the ESEMS covers institutional administration and field operations.

18. This document, sets the context, elaborates the SOPs and clarifies the coordination and funding imperatives for emergency management in West Africa. It is expected that if adopted by all stakeholders, the ESEMS should achieve the following values: (i) Humanitarian leadership; (ii) Humanitarian good governance; (iii) Humanitarian dialogue; (iv) Humanitarian culture; (v) Humanitarian collaboration/cooperation; and (vi) Humanitarian innovation.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Background**

The ECOWAS Emergency Response Team (EERT) was set up by Regulation MSC/REG.2/01/08 Relating to the Establishment of the ECOWAS Emergency Response Team (EERT) Mechanism Within the ECOWAS Commission adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2008, in response to the provisions of Articles 40 and 41 of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management Peacekeeping and Security.

The Regulation mandated ECOWAS Commission to achieve the following main benchmarks:

* Operationalization of an EERT Unit within the Humanitarian and Social Affairs Department
* Establishment of a Mission Planning, Management and Deployment Cell within the EERT Unit
* Crises Assessment (Crises observation, monitoring and mapping)
* Coordination and Management of Humanitarian Mission

The EERT forms a civilian core of experts able to respond to complex emergencies and peace support operations in West Africa. The members of the EERT located, in situ, in Member States are drawn from national Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and staff of relevant government Ministries of ECOWAS Member States. The EERT seeks to improve emergency preparedness and response in West Africa through training services for capacity building, providing knowledge resources, deployment and networking in the specialized field of emergency management.

In line with the concept and mandate of EERT as articulated by the EERT Regulation, the ECOWAS Commission has developed EERT as the regional tool for emergency management and response mechanism thereby responding to the provisions of Articles 41 and 42. Since 2005, the ECOWAS Commission has been making efforts to ensure the EERT is fully operational. A lot of technical work has been done in the area of capacity building of EERT members through organizing training workshops and simulation exercises for them as well as developing the EERT operational capabilities at the ECOWAS Commission.

About 100 EERT members have been trained in Member States (MS) out of which about 60 are quite active. The members of the EERT, a multi-sectoral team, have been trained up to international standards and have been deployed alone on ECOWAS missions or alongside United Nations (UN) or other international agencies to act as part of the civilian arrowhead of peace support operations to complement the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) and also to work in complex emergencies. The EERT adds humanitarian value to the arsenal of ECOWAS in peace and security interventions.

The 2013/2014 crisis in Mali presented a good opportunity for the operationalisation of the EERT which led to its deployment in that country. About twenty EERT members were deployed for three months to assist Mali absorb various humanitarian assistance offered it by humanitarian organizations. The deployment exercise was successful and ended in February, 2014 with a post-deployment workshop the intent of which was to holistically take stock of the challenges associated with the deployment processes and procedures. Important lessons were learnt in the process. Like previous cases, the deployment was ad hoc. In addition, the region’s new (2014) experience of the Ebola epidemic alerted the Commission to another challenging dimension beyond the ‘usual response’, namely, the increased risk faced by the personnel being deployed for emergency and humanitarian operations. Resource mapping would have pointed to specialized equipment to use during the response. This is in addition to the governance, coordination and communication challenges that emerged.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Evidently, therefore, in spite of the progress made, there is need for an improvement of EERT operations in many areas for efficient humanitarian delivery. Among these is the need to reform EERT operations to international standards with a view to strengthening Emergency Response through crisis observation, monitoring and mapping; emergency response mission planning; and deployment in the ECOWAS space. The response to this situation is the establishment of the ECOWAS Standardised Emergency Management System (ESEMS).[[2]](#footnote-2)

**1.2 Disaster Risk Context in West Africa**

*Typology of Disaster*

The West Africa region suffers from the consequences of recurrent natural and human-induced disasters. Arising from these two broad typologies of disaster, the region is among the zones of the highest global risk of mortality.

*Recurrent Natural Disasters*

West Africa is particularly vulnerable to the effects of recurrent natural disasters. Disasters in the region include flooding, desertification, the risk of earthquakes in some countries, landslides and possible mudslides. Across the region, there are such significant ecological and environmental hazards as drought and desertification, deforestation, sea level rise and coastal wetlands degradation, flooding, erosion, and soil degradation. Climate change impact has led to widespread food insecurity, with many of the region’s children suffering from acute malnutrition. More than one million people live in flood-, drought- and epidemic-prone areas. Others include diseases, pest (particularly locust invasions), invasive alien species, and wild-land fire. There is the risk of pandemics: a meningitis epidemic and a measles outbreak was followed by devastating Ebola virus disease epidemic during the last decade. Large-scale seismic activity is rare but active fault areas experience earthquake swarms involving minor tremors.

*Recurrent Human-Induced Disasters*

West Africa’s disaster risk profile includes recurrent human-induced disaster arising from the global economic crisis, conflicts and socio-political instability, mass road traffic accidents, air crashes, collapsed buildings, and fire disasters in markets, etc. The effect of the global economic crisis means that up to 50 per cent of the over 290 million citizens of the West Africa region live on less than $1 per day. Conflicts in West Africa are mainly intra-state and are the product of competition for resources, weak state institutions (inability to maintain the rule of law), etc. Such conflicts include the outbreak of civil war in Liberia in 1989 and subsequently in Sierra Leone, political crisis in Côte d’Ivoire from the beginning of 2011, the Tuareg insurgency in Mali (2012), and religious fundamentalist insurgency such as *Boko Haram* in Nigeria since about 2009. Conflicts result in loss of life and refugee and internally displaced persons (IDP) situations which require relief assistance. Apart from natural disasters, internal wars remain the largest causes of refugee and IDP flows in West Africa region. Many residents in the region require one form of protection or the other. Emerging threats which must be taken into consideration include threats of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear accidents, asymmetric conflicts, terrorism, including cyber terrorism, and oil spillage, amongst others. These hazards are incident on a population that is already vulnerable due to mass poverty.

*Effects of Disaster*

The effects and humanitarian consequences of natural and human-induced disasters in West Africa are diverse and include population movements, destruction to property and key socio-economic infrastructures, flood-induced epidemics, food insecurity and malnutrition, and weakening of already fragile coping capacities. Before the adoption of the ECOWAS Humanitarian Policy and Plan of Action (EHP-PA) in 2012, ECOWAS humanitarian responses had been disparate and episodic. The situation was one of very little first line capacity in dealing with the disaster impacts by Member States. For instance, the 2010 floods in Togo, which affected over 82,000 people and caused extensive damage to property and livelihoods, exposed the coordination lapses in the humanitarian response architecture in Togo, from which concerns emerged **a public administrative institution called the National Agency for Civil Protection (ANPC) in 2017**. Also, networks for mutual support by Member States hardly existed and linkages with the private sector were weak or non-existent. The contemporary disaster risk profile in West African means that there is need for concerted emergency response and humanitarian action by ECOWAS and its Member States. The EERT is the key component of the emergency response infrastructure.

*Underlying Disaster Risk Drivers*

Disasters triggered by natural and human-made events have increased in occurrence and severity in the West Africa region, over the last few decades. Climate change factors have worsened drought conditions and coastal erosion, changed vegetation patterns, and increased tidal waves and storm surges, while lower and more variable rainfall levels have actually contributed to worsening desertification, natural resource degradation, coastal vulnerability and food insecurity. Other disaster risk drivers include inadequate physical infrastructures (transport, energy, and communication), industrial and chemical accidents and technological systems failure and inadequacies of service and poor governance, which undermine delivery in such areas as education, health and nutrition, water and sanitation, and security. Increase in population not matched by corresponding economic growth has also led to increased poverty and, therefore, vulnerability to disasters.

**1.3 ECOWAS Emergency Management Doctrine**

ECOWAS Emergency Management Doctrine aims at preventing risks of any kind, providing early warning analysis and mapping, disseminating information, protecting people, property and environment against emergency of any kind, and mobilising resources for emergency response at regional, Member State and local community levels. The design of a global ECOWAS Humanitarian Action Architecture will mainstream ECOWAS Emergency Management Doctrine.

**1.4 The ESEMS Concept**

The ECOWAS Standardised Emergency Management System (ESEMS) is a hierarchy of connected and inter-dependent information sharing, decision making, action taking and responsibility sharing system which constitute a management tool for field operations within the management of humanitarian action in ECOWAS Commission, between ECOWAS Commission and Member States, and between Member States and local communities, before, during and after an emergency situation.

The ESEMS is built on elements that ensure harmonized and aligned continuity with the work done by Member States and other stakeholders under ECOWAS Humanitarian Policy Framework and Action Plan and introduces a number of terms and definitions, as well as Standard Operating Procedures, with a focus on Disaster Risk Management (DRM) as opposed to Disaster Management (DM).

Reducing Disaster Risk (RDR), Preventing New Risk (PNR) and Strengthening Resilience (SR) are the expected main outcomes of the implementation of the ESEMS.

The ESEMS consists of structures and processes, and actions and interactions that span the three main periods and the six main phases of Emergency Management: Pre-Emergency Period (Preparedness Phase and Standby Phase), Emergency Period (Pre-Impact Phase, Impact Phase and Post-Impact Phase), and Post-Emergency Period (Recovery Phase).

The ESEMS provides standardised hands-on political, strategic and operational guidelines for emergency management for West Africa, integrating existing EERT concepts of operation and additional standards based on lessons of experience and contemporary best practices.

The concern is to provide a standard language of operation, common understanding of the main concepts in the Emergency Management System, and a set of standard operating procedures (SOPs), in any emergency situation in the ECOWAS Region or indeed any situation of emergency affecting ECOWAS citizens anywhere. This should better position the Commission for timely response to alleviate the suffering of victims of emergencies.

**1.5 Objectives**

The main objective of the ESEMS is to improve on various facets of emergency preparedness and response, in other terms, in Disaster Risk Management, as opposed to Disaster Management, in the ECOWAS region to ensure rapid decision making and flow of information and resources, effective coordination between responding actors within ECOWAS Commission and with Humanitarian Partners in West Africa Region, in support of Member States, rapid resource tracking, and mobilisation and deployment of resources to ensure effective action at all periods and phases of the Disaster Risk Management.

The specific objectives are to improve on:

1. Rapid and timely decision making
2. Flow of information and resources
3. Coordination between responding actors within ECOWAS Commission and with Humanitarian Partners in West Africa Region, in support of Member States
4. Rapid mobilization of the Humanitarian Relief Fund
5. Rapid deployment of humanitarian relief items and other resources including EERT members, both managers and specialists
6. Rapid resource tracking, that is, tracking of humanitarian relief items and other resources, including the Humanitarian Relief Fund
7. Mainstreaming Gender and Child Protection issues in all facets of the process.
8. Consideration of the special needs of physically challenged persons and other vulnerable groups.
9. Effective decision and action at political, strategic and operational levels.

**1.6 Legal Framework**

The legal framework for the ESEMS is constituted by the range of treaty, protocols, regulations and other legal instruments and statutes and decisions that govern the humanitarian system in general and emergency management in particular within the ECOWAS region. The relevant instruments include the following.

1. The ECOWAS Revised Treaty
2. ECOWAS Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-Keeping and Security (The Mechanism)
3. The Additional Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance
4. ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and Goods, Right of Residence and Establishment
5. ECOWAS Humanitarian Policy and Plan of Action (EHP-PA)
6. ECOWAS Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Plan of Action (EDRRP-PA)
7. ECOWAS Humanitarian Response Mechanism (EHRM)
8. ECOWAS Emergency Response Team Regulation
9. ECOWAS Humanitarian Depot (EHD) Decision

Other related legal instruments backing the ESEMS are:

1. The Conflict Prevention Framework
2. The ECOWAS Plan of Action on Implementation of International Humanitarian Law
3. The Child Protection Policy and its Plan of Action
4. ECOWAS Memorandum on Common Approach on Migration
5. The ECOWAS Gender Policy
6. The ECOWAS Gender and Migration Framework and Plan of Action
7. Supplementary Act Relating to Equality of Rights between Women and Men for Sustainable Development in the ECOWAS Region

These legal instruments, constituted as a framework, provide the legal backdrop to the ESEMS. This framework legitimizes the operations of the EERT in Member States.

The ECOWAS Revised Treaty (Basic Text), at Article 58 provides guidance for enduring security, protection, peace and security. Chapter VIII on Humanitarian Assistance of the ECOWAS Protocol Relating to Conflict Prevention, Resolution and Management, Peace and Security, known as ECOWAS Mechanism, provides that ECOWAS shall take active part in coordinating and conducting humanitarian assistance. Article 40 of Chapter VIII provides that:

* + ECOWAS shall intervene to alleviate the suffering of the populations and restore life to normalcy in the event of crises, conflict and disaster.
  + In this regard, ECOWAS shall develop own capacity to efficiently undertake humanitarian actions for the purposes of conflict prevention and management.
  + Where the environment of a Member State is gravely devastated, appropriate steps shall be taken to rehabilitate it.
  + ECOWAS shall organize, encourage and support the role of women in its initiatives for conflict prevention, management, resolution, peace-keeping and security.

Paragraph 7 of the Executive Summary of the Humanitarian Policy provides that:

* The ECOWAS Humanitarian Policy seeks to standardise the practice of humanitarian action in ECOWAS Member States by fostering a balanced linkage between Humanitarian Action, Humanitarian Security and Humanitarian Development, throughout the ECOWAS Space, based on the principle of regional solidarity.

Strategy 5 of ECOWAS Policy for Disaster Risk Reduction (Section 5: Policy Focus Areas, Strategies and Priorities, and Focus Area 5: Improving Effectiveness of Response) provides that:

The ability of Member States to respond effectively to disasters depends on their internal response capabilities, both civil and non-civilian, and the ability to rapidly deploy such response mechanisms in emergencies before external assistance arrives. A crucial component of this internal response capacity is the complement of trained civilian experts, including volunteers, in relevant multi-disciplinary fields of humanitarian assistance management who are located in situ in member States and are available for rapid deployment, either alone or together with security agencies, in times of emergencies. Thus a key strategy will be to nurture the spirit of volunteerism, particularly from civil society at community levels, and to support development of effective civilian-military cooperation in emergency management. The existence of such capability in member States will facilitate sub-regional coordination of emergency response interventions. A key tool for achieving these objectives is the planned ECOWAS Emergency Response Team (EERT) which will constitute civil deployment along emergency and peacekeeping missions. The EERT will be used to develop capabilities of first responders to emergencies (such as the fire, police, military and medical services) at the national level. The EERT will also provide the basis for national emergency planning and for coordinating sub-regional response, particularly to managing cross-border emergencies. Consequently, the Policy will promote development of the EERT and its integration in both disaster emergency and peace support operations of ECOWAS

ECOWAS Regulation MSC/REG.2/01/08 establishes the Emergency Response Team (EERT) Mechanism within the ECOWAS Commission. The Regulation provides that:

* + The Commission shall ensure the full development and operationalisation of an EERT Unit within the Humanitarian and Social Affairs Directorate
  + EERT Unit initiates and undertakes humanitarian missions within the region in response to humanitarian crises arising out of man-made or natural disasters.
  + A Mission Planning, Management and Deployment Cell (MPMDC) shall be established within the EERT Unit
  + The MPMDC shall perform crises assessments and also plan, coordinate and manage all humanitarian missions in accordance with the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security.
  + The Commission shall assess the Capacity Framework of the EERT Mechanism in order to determine the financial implications of the project
  + The Commission shall submit the outcome of its assessment to the Council of Ministers for approval, prior to the establishment of the operational structures for the EERT Unit
  + Member States shall undertake to collaborate with the Commission and put in place the necessary measures to facilitate the implementation of the humanitarian delivery capacity of the ECOWAS Commission.

**1.7 Components**

The ESEMS has three main components. The components are:

1. Policy Making;
2. Strategic Decision Making and Action Taking; and
3. Operations.

**1.8 Pillars**

The major pillars on which the ESEMS stands include the following actors and operations.

*Actors*

* The President of the Commission
* The Department of Social Affairs and Gender
* Directorate of Humanitarian and Social Affairs

*Operations*

* The Humanitarian Fund
* The EERT Division
* ECOWAS ERT Roster
* The Emergency Operation Centre (EOC)
* Humanitarian Depot

**1.9 Scope**

The ESEMS is a tool designed to guide implementation, that is, deployment for emergency response. The scope of the ESEMS, therefore, covers institutional administration related to field operations and field operations proper. The ESEMS is to guide both ECOWAS Commission and Member States. The administrative and institutional retooling represented by the ESEMS should be complemented by a global humanitarian action architecture and agenda, with a view to achieving the following values embodied in the Humanitarian Policy: (i) Humanitarian Leadership; (ii) Humanitarian Good Governance; (iii) Humanitarian Dialogue; (iv) Humanitarian Culture; and (v) Humanitarian collaboration/cooperation.

This document, sets the context, elaborates the SOPs and clarifies the coordination and funding imperatives for emergency management in West Africa.

**2. STRUCTURES, PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES**

**2.1 Levels of Organisation**

Parallel to the components specified in Section 1.7 above, the ESEMS has three main levels of organisation, namely: Policy level, Strategic level and Operational level.

**Policy level**

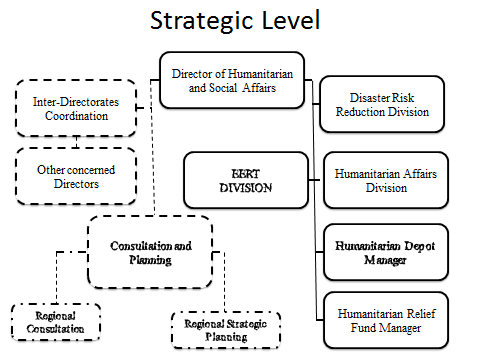
The Policy level, as the name implies, is the policy *making* level of ECOWAS Commission. It is constituted by the following statutory bodies: Head of State, Ministers, and President of ECOWAS Commission. It is responsible for overall coordination, communication and provision of support between the Departments of the ECOWAS Commission and Member States as required. It also provides overall direction and sets priorities in the event of an emergency.

The tools for policy/decision making and the distribution of relevant instruments at this level are well known and need not be elaborated here.[[3]](#footnote-3)

**Strategic Level**

Next to the policymaking level is the strategic level of the organisation of the ESEMS. At this level, strategic planning, partnership and coordination functions are organised around the level of the Commissioner for Social Affairs and Gender, and Director, Social and Humanitarian Affairs as follows:

* **Commissioner for Social Affairs and Gender** supervises theHumanitarian Response Mechanism; Inter-Departments Coordination (Steering Committee) Other concerned Commissioners directly or indirectly involved in emergency management.
* Directly Involved (involvement in impact phase): Social Affairs and Gender (Lead); Political Affairs, Peace and Security; Trade, Customs and Free Movement
* Indirectly Involved (involvement in pre- and or post-impact): Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources; Finance; Macroeconomic Policy and Economic Research; Industry and Private Sector Promotion
* Hardly Involved: Infrastructure; General Administration and Conference; Human Resources Management; Education, Science and Culture; Energy and Mines; Telecommunication and Information Technology; Financial Controller of ECOWAS Institutions
* **Director of Humanitarian and Social Affairs** supervises theDisaster Risk Reduction Division; Humanitarian Affairs Division; Humanitarian Depot Manager; Humanitarian Relief Fund Manager; Inter-Directorates Coordination; Other concerned Directors; Consultation and Planning; Regional Consultation; Regional Strategic Planning; EERT Division; and Emergency Operation Centre (See Figure 2.1)



**Figure 2.1 Strategic Level of Organisation of the ESEMS**

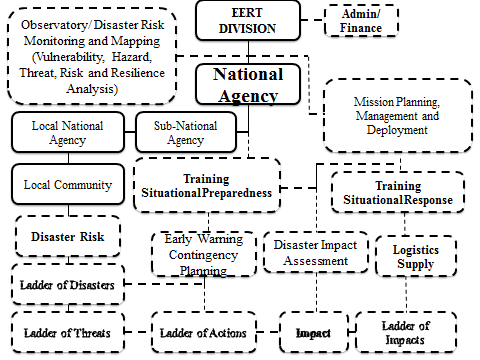
The responsibilities and required actions at the strategic level include implementing priorities established at the Policy Level, obtaining the resources to support the emergency operations, and fast-tracking all resources related to operations. The relevant tools (functions and structures) at this level include: Inter-department/Inter-directorates coordination ; Consultation and planning (Regional consultation; Regional strategic planning), Related Commissioners/Directors, EERT Division, Disaster Risk Reduction Division, Humanitarian Affairs Division, Emergency Operations Centre Manager, Humanitarian Depot, and Humanitarian Relief Fund Manager. Detailed actions required are described by period and phase of emergency management under the section on The Ladder of Actions.

**Operational Level**

This level captures the main functions of the EERT Division: Observation and Crises Mapping; Mission Planning, Management and Development; Logistics/Supply; Training; and Administration and Finance – all under the Director. These are elaborated as follows.

* Observation/Risk Monitoring and Mapping in interface with ECOWARN (Vulnerability, Hazard, Threat, Risk and Resilience Analysis)
* Mission Planning, Management and Deployment, in interface with PAPS and ESF
* Administration and Finance/Management of Humanitarian Fund
* Emergency Operations center
* Mission Planning, Management and Deployment
* Training (Situational Preparedness and Situational Response)
* Logistics Supply
* Humanitarian Depot
* Risks : Ladder of Risks 🡪Ladder of Threats🡪Ladder of Actions
* Impacts : Ladder of Impacts

The primary responsibility and actions at this level relate to gathering and assessing information and early warning, and identifying and prioritising impact triggers. The combination of structures and functions reflect the interaction of the EERT with national agencies, sub-national agencies, local agencies, and are focused on the main functions of the EERT plus the associated risks and impacts as listed above (Figure 2.2).



**Figure 2.2 Operational Level: Interaction of the EERT with National Level Agencies**

In the structure of interactions in Figure 2.2, emergency management per se is ideally performed in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) although this is not yet fully functional. The EOC is meant to monitor daily, overall emergency response and provide support as required, in interface with the Humanitarian Depot.[[4]](#footnote-4)

**2.2 Areas of Operation**

Two broad considerations are prerequisite to emergency management. These are: Emergency Preparedness and Emergency Response. Activities undertaken within these two categories are grouped into three areas of operation, namely, Institutional Preparedness; Situational Preparedness and Situational Response.

**Institutional Preparedness**

* Develop and Maintain Standby Emergency Resources (Catalogue of Emergency Response Resources)
* Develop Management Tools (develop and maintain range of management tools for both training and field application purposes)
* Build capacity through Emergency Management Training (training programmes)
* Liaise with Outside Agencies (relating to emergency preparedness and capacity building).
* Internal Coordination (for instance, with ECOWARN).

**Situational Preparedness**

Initiate Contingency Planning Process, early warning assessment and analysis, and define triggering events based on: Ladder of Emergency; Ladder of Threats; and Ladder of Actions (see below). The activities related to situational preparedness stages of operation are shown in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1 Activities Related to Situational Preparedness**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **STAGE OF OPERATION** | **RELATED ACTIVITIES** |
| **Situational Preparedness** | * Prevention * Mitigation * Early Warning * Vulnerability, Hazard, Threat and Risk Analysis and Assessment * Contingency Planning * Development of emergency response systems * Generation of support among potential affected Member States * Provision of stand-by resources * Pre-positioning of supplies * Situational Emergency Training (Situational Incident Training) * Media as partners involved in development of communication strategy |

**Situational Response**

The first concern in situational response is Emergency Assessment. This entails two components, namely, Ladder of Impacts and Deployment. The emergency assessment will reveal the impact potential and vulnerability to threat. The impact potential could range from minor to devastating. Correspondingly, vulnerability to threat could range from low to very high risk.

Based on the Ladder of Impacts, the situational (deployment) response anticipates the following actions.

* Activate stand by arrangements and services packages
* Activate and fast-track mobilization and management of the Humanitarian Relief Funds (HRF)
* Deploy EERT members – both managers and specialists, relief items and other humanitarian resources as required.

The activities related to the situational response stage of operation are depicted in Table 2.2.

**Table 2.2 Activities Related to Situational Response**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **STAGE OF OPERATION** | **RELATED ACTIVITIES** |
| **Situational Response** | * Problems, needs and resources assessments * Resource mobilization * Handling donor relations and media interest * Operations planning * Implementation and coordination; * Monitoring and evaluation; * Transition to the post-emergency operation |

The essential linkage between the three main areas of operation is in Situational Preparedness; contingency planning is considered the most critical bridge which links institutional preparedness and situational response.

**2.3 Standard Operating Procedures**

The objective of the ESEMS is to improve on various facets of emergency preparedness and response in the ECOWAS region to ensure effective action. This demands standardisation of operation procedures and technical language. The ESEMS sets a common language that ECOWAS shall speak and understand under changing circumstance and new challenges and which member States shall adopt. The concepts (see Glossary of Terms) provide the framework for describing the SOP. The definitions are important because they constitute a standardised emergency management language. The SOPs cover the Risk Management Cycle as depicted in Figure 2.3.



**Figure 2.3 Risk Management Cycle**

**Stages of the SOP**

The stages of the SOP are specified as follows.

* Establish the context
  + Objectives
  + Stakeholders
  + Criteria
* Identify risks/Mapping
  + What can happen?
  + How can it happen?
  + When can it happen?
  + Where can it happen?
  + Scope defined
  + Define SWOT
* Prioritise Risks
  + Impact
  + Probability
* Evaluate the risks
  + Prioritised risks
  + Rank risks
  + Risks grouped by categories
  + Quality
  + Scope
* Analyse the risks and respond
  + Qualitative
  + Quantitative
  + Decisions tree
  + Contingency time and costs
* Treat the risks
  + Identify options
  + Select the best responses
  + Develop risk treatment plans
  + Implement plans
  + Mitigate, Enhance opportunities and Decrease threats
  + Implement Log/Plan of action and alternatives
* Risks monitoring and control
  + Know risk triggers
  + Determine if assumptions are still valid
  + Take corrective actions
  + Communicate the risks on time

**Risks Assessment Process and Risk Management**

Risk assessment is performed to determine the most important potential hazard to address now, rather than later. The most critical and most likely dangers are enumerated and their levels relative to each other are evaluated as a function of the interaction between the cost of a breach and the probability of that breach. The Risk Assessment Process entails: (i) Identify hazard potential; (ii) Determine impact potential; (iii) Evaluate existing coping capacity; (iv) Determine vulnerability; and (v) Determine risk levels.

The Risk Assessment Process entails the following considerations (Figure 2.4) while Figure 2.5 shows the FEMA-USA assessment process model.

IMPACT POTENTIAL

HAZARD POTENTIAL

COPING CAPACITY

RISK LEVELS

VULNERABILITY

5

4

3

2

1

5 Certain/Imminent. Countermeasures implementation should be immediate.

4 Very likely. These risks are very high. Countermeasures recommended to

mitigate these risks should be implemented as soon as possible.

3 Likely. These risks are modest. Countermeasures implementation should be

planned in the near future.

2 Moderately likely. These risks are low. Countermeasures implementation is of

less urgency than the above risks.

1 Unlikely. Countermeasures implementation not imperative.

**Figure 2.4 Considerations in Risk Assessment**

****

**Figure 2.5 FEMA-USA Risk Assessment Process Model**

Because Emergency Management does not avert or eliminate the threats, emergency management encompasses risk management. Risk Management is an important part of the function of ECOWAS through the Directorate of Humanitarian and Social Affairs, under the responsibility of the Department of Social Affairs and Gender.

**Types of Emergency and Emergency Management Ladders**

***Types of Emergency***

The following is the standard inventory of the potential nature- or human-induced emergencies in ECOWAS region.

* Conflict
* Terrorism and Insurgency
* Food Insecurity
* Epidemics and Pandemics, and zoonotics
* Mixed Migration and Refugee Protection
* Hydrometrological
* Fire outbreaks
* Pest infestation
* Geological
* Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear

***Ladder of Risks***

The ESEMS sets the following five levels of risks.

* Unlikely
* Moderately Likely
* Likely
* Very Likely
* Certain/Imminent

***Ladder of Threats***

Threats are grouped into the following three main magnitudes, each comprising three categories: Potential Threat; Imminent Threat; and Impact (Figure 2.6).

* *Potential Threat* Threat is probable or impending and may affect life, property and environment: Potential Threat to Life; Potential Threat to Property; and Potential threat to Environment.
* *Imminent Threat* Threat is looming and may affect life, property and environment: Imminent threat to Life; Imminent threat to Property; and Imminent threat to Environment;
* *Impact* Threat is real/actual and affects life, property and environment: Impact on Life; Impact on Property; and Impact on Environment.

Ladder of

Threats

Potential Threat to Life

Imminent Threat to Life

Impact on Life

Potential Threat to Property

Potential Threat

Impact

Imminent Threat to Property

Imminent Threat

Impact on Property

Potential Threat to Environment

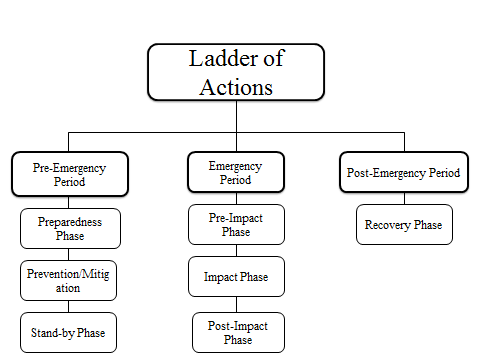
Impact on Environment

Imminent Threat to Environment

**Figure 2.6 Ladder of Threats**

***Ladder of Actions***

The Ladder of Actions entails actions to be undertaken during the various emergency periods and phases depicted in Figure 2.7.



**Figure 2.7 Ladder of Actions**

Pre-Emergency Period

* Preparedness Phase
* Stand-by Phase

*Preparedness Phase*

* Update the details in the Contingency Plan
* Update Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
* Monitor hazards and potential hazards and emerging Risks against vulnerabilities

*Standby Phase*

* Issue advisories to all stakeholders as necessary
* Seek to ascertain the operational readiness/capacity to respond of the threatened state
* Identify and pre-position response personnel if necessary/as required
* Place the EERT on standby/or activated mode
* Initiate Information management activities
* Activate Regional Communications Plan
* Monitor the progress of the hazard, risks and vulnerabilities
* Consult with Member States

Emergency Period

The emergency period has three phases, namely: Pre-Impact Phase; Impact Phase; and Post-Impact Phase.

*Pre-Impact Phase*

Activate all regional response mechanisms, plans and procedures in this phase.

*Impact Phase*

* Concentrate on the safety and security of the threatened population and the mobilization of relevant agencies.
* Issue ECOWAS Flash Appeal, if necessary.

The severity of impact determines the extent and level of ECOWAS response.

*Post Impact Phase*

* Immediate danger is over, but continued concern for safety and well-being
* Rebuilding (rearranging life and environment)
* Begin determination of short and mid-term priorities/assistance for recovery period

Post-Emergency Period

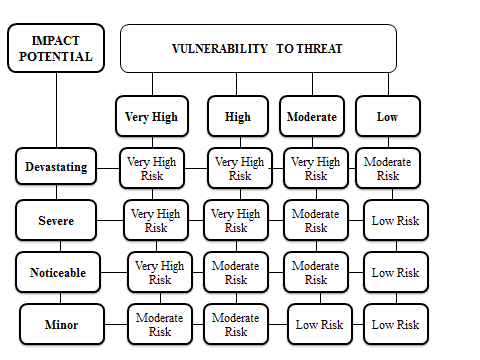
*Recovery Phase*

This phase begins immediately after the threat to human life has reduced. The goal is to bring the affected population and environment back to some degree of normalcy.

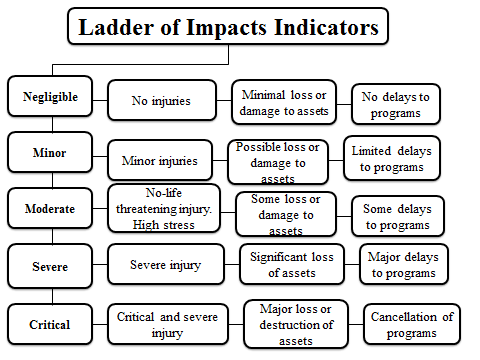
* Activities to restore critical community functions
* Begin to manage stabilization efforts
* Consider things to do that to lessen (mitigate) the effects of future disasters.

***Ladder of Impacts***

The impact potential could range from minor to devastating. Correspondingly, vulnerability to threat could range from low to very high risk (Figure 2.8). The Ladder of Impact indicators are shown in Figure 2.9. The impact could be: negligible, minor, moderate, severe, or critical.



**Figure 2.8 Impact Potential and Vulnerability to Threat**

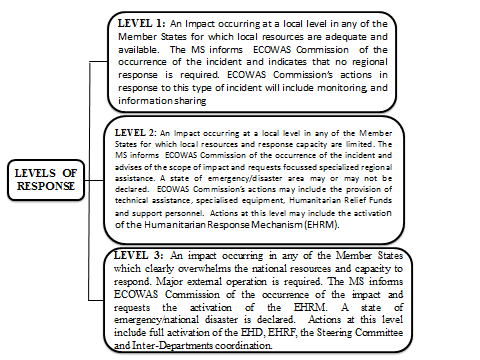


**Figure 2.9 Ladder of Impact Indicators**

Based on the Ladder of Impacts, the situational (deployment) response anticipates the following actions.

* Activate stand by arrangements and services packages
* Activate and fast-track mobilization and management of the Humanitarian Relief Funds (HRF)
* Deploy EERT members – both managers and specialists, relief items and other humanitarian resources as required.

Three levels of response are anticipated as shown in Figure 2.10.



**Figure 2.10 Levels of Response**

*Post-Impact Phase*

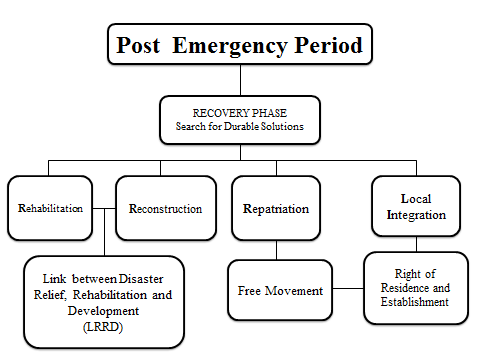
* Issue advisories to all stakeholders, Flash Appeal as necessary.
* Initiate meeting of Steering Committee, Inter-Departments and Global Coordination, and meeting of Donor Groups
* Determine types of initial support in consultation with impacted state
* Deploy through the EERT Unit if requested
* Deploy regional resources
* Provide support in conducting Damage Assessment and subsequently verify Needs Assessment
* Initiate separation of ex-soldiers/combatants in case of mixed population movement
* Disarmament and encampment of ex-soldiers/combatants
* Ensure Neutral and Civilian Character of refugee/IDPs settlements
* Protection of Civilians in conflict situation: The Responsibility to Protect (R2P)
* Provide assistance in determining short and mid-term priorities and assistance for recovery period
* Assisting in research and documentation of the event
* Update data and information management/ System

Post-Emergency Period

*Recovery Phase*

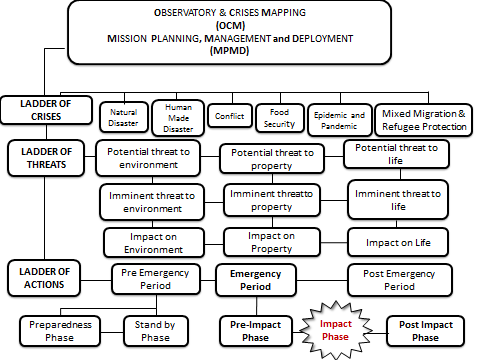
The Post-Emergency/Recovery phase is as depicted in Figure 2.11. This phase represents the search for and implementation of the following durable solutions when conditions are conducive to so doing. (Note: Durable solutions are not necessarily listed in order of hierarchy.)

* Repatriation on voluntary basis
* Rehabilitation
* Reconstruction
* Link between Disaster Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD)
* Free Movement
* Local Integration
* Right of Residence and Establishment
* Psychosocial support



**Figure 2.11 Post-Emergency Phase**

A summation of the linkages in the ladder of emergency and emergency response is presented in Figure 2.12.



**Figure 2.12 Linkages in Emergency Management**

**2.4 Integrated Peace Support Operation**

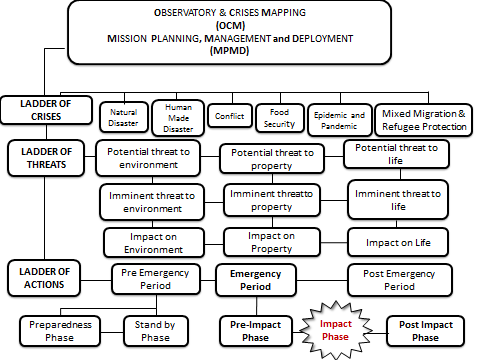
The EERT constitutes a systematic civil deployment alongside a military peacekeeping mission or peace support operation. In essence, it is the civilian component of the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF). Within an emergency context, these missions, organised systematically as ECOWAS Standby Force Peace Support Missions, are deployed and put under the responsibility of the Special Representative of the President of the Commission in a particular country.

Actors involved in integrated peace and security support operations are:

* Office of the President of ECOWAS Commission
* Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security
* Department of Social Affairs and Gender
* Office of the Permanent Representative of the President of the ECOWAS Commission
* Office of the Special Representative of the President of ECOWAS Commission (oversees the overall field operations).
* EERT Deployed (comprising Managers and Specialists)
* Mediators and Observers
* Force Commander for ESF (comprising Military, Police, Civilian and Logistics Depot Manager)

The above actors are in addition to the roles of UN system, African Union, Host country and Local Community.

The interrelationships amongst the actors are as shown in Figure 2.13.



**Figure 2.13 Integrated Peace Support Operation**

**2.5 Protection of ECOWAS Civilians in Conflict Situation and Complex Emergency: The Responsibility to Protect (R2P)**

What are the highlights of the functions in emergency management in a conflict situation? What agencies should be performing the relevant functions? A pragmatic response to these questions requires consideration at two levels: protection of civilians within ECOWAS space and protection of ECOWAS citizens outside ECOWAS space.

**Protection of Civilians within ECOWAS Space**

Within ECOWAS space, the following are the actors, tools and functions required in the protection of ECOWAS civilians in conflict situations.

* Conflict Impact Monitored
* Mixed Movement Identified
* National Armed and Security Forces involved in accordance with the West African Code of Conduct for Armed and Security Forces/WACOCAS in conflict situation)
* ECOWAS Standby Forces (ESF)/WACOCAS) deployed to stabilise the security situation in the country.
* UN Peace Keeping deployed to take over from ECOWAS Standby Forces.
* Separation of ex combatants implemented.
* Disarmament and encampment of ex-combatants implemented
* Neutral and civilian character of refugee and IDPs settlements
* Secondary movements identified and monitored with a view to ensuring the principle of mixed migration and refugee protection vis a vis regular or irregular migration.
* ECOWAS Common Approach on Migration applied
* Free Movement, Right of Residence and Establishment applied
* Mixed migration and refugee protection principle ensured
* Refugee protection through mobility granted as well as the Responsibility to Protect (R2P)
* Monitoring of Sexual and Gender-based Violence
* Child Protection and further Child Rights Monitoring
* Family Reunion
* Education During Emergency
* Special Nutrition and Dietary Needs
* Civil identification and registration/birth registration and certification
* Reproductive health concerns
* Psychosocial Counselling
* Identification of displaced persons
* Etc

**Protection of ECOWAS Citizens outside ECOWAS Space**

Outside the ECOWAS space, protection of ECOWAS civilians in conflict or emergency situations has to be based on agreement between ECOWAS and countries concerned. In the onset of an emergency, agreements have to be signed to define sharing of roles. In consultation with Member States concerned, ECOWAS shall undertake field assessment missions and response measures as appropriate, in coordination with Diplomatic Missions of Member States concerned. Relevant measures include:

* Emergency support to Diplomatic Missions in terms of capacity building, financial support
* Civil Identification and registration/ Child birth registration and certification
* Logistics/transportation arrangements
* Daily assistance, should need be
* Provision for interaction with Partners
* Development and activation of MOUs

**3. EERT DEPLOYMENT PROCESS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**3.1 Prerequisite for Deployment**

Three levels of emergency impact to which ECOWAS responds were identified in Figure 2.10 above. These are: (i) An impact occurring at a local level in any Member State for which local resources are adequate; (ii) An impact occurring at a local level in any of the Member States for which local resources and response capacity are limited; and (iii) An impact occurring in any of the Member States which clearly overwhelms the national resources and capacity to respond. EERT deployment is anticipated at the second and third levels of impact and corresponding interventions. Overall, preparing for emergency deployment usually requires psychological preparedness, practical readiness, and situational preparedness. Beyond these, the prerequisites for deployment include the following.

* Gender – There should be sensitive gender-balanced deployment, as much as possible.
* Language – There is need to mix (Francophone, Anglophone, Lusophone, etc., as the situation may permit).
* Deploy to country of origin – for confidence building
* Pre-deployment training: before departure
* Financial arrangement before departure. This is linked to pre-departure training and Departure point.
* Meeting/Departure point: Suitable Staging Area
* Differentiate pre-deployment Training and on-arrival briefing.
* Cultural Awareness
* Deployment at the Right Time
* Member states inform ECOWAS on time

**3.2 The Deployment Process**

The Deployment process is a multi-step process as follows:

* Before
* Departure
* During
* Arrival
* Delivery
* Hand over
* After
* Return

**3.3 Stakeholders**

Stakeholders in the deployment process include the following.

* ECOWAS
* EERT
* Country of origin
* Receiving country
* Local Community
* UN Agencies
* NGOs
* Donors
* Media
* Other Relevant Stakeholders

**3.4 Field of Work**

* Managing operation
* Managing the team
* Managing office
* Self-management
* Managing internal relations
* Managing external relations

**3.5 Roles and Responsibilities**

**ECOWAS Responsibility**

* **Before departure**
  + Administrative/Financial measures
  + Insurance (Life, Health and Accident)
  + MOU/Administrative arrangements with UN and MS
  + Logistic Measures
  + Coordination
* **During deployment**
  + Operational support
  + Administrative support
  + Coaching
  + Monitoring
  + Mid-Term Evaluation
  + Dialogue
* **After deployment**
  + Follow up actions
  + Training

**Country of Origin Responsibility**

* **Before departure**
  + Decisions
  + Facilitation
  + Administrative/Financial arrangements
* **During deployment**
  + Lien with work (Obligation to meet the rights and duties of the deployed personnel’s work situation)
  + Lien with family (Obligation to satisfy the information and other family needs of the deployed personnel)
  + Dialogue
  + Others
* **After deployment**
  + Lien with work (Obligation to meet the rights and duties of the deployed personnel’s work situation)
  + Lien with family (Obligation to satisfy the information and other family needs of the deployed personnel)
  + Dialogue
  + Others

**Receiving Country Responsibility**

* **Before**
  + Arrangements
  + Decisions
  + Coordination within the (Inter-agency standing Committee ( IASC)
  + Coordination with ECOWAS
  + Logistics
  + Administration
  + Security
* **During**
  + Administration/Assignment
  + Operations
  + Logistics
  + Internal relations
  + External relations
  + Security
  + Coordination
  + Communication
* **After**
  + Post deployment workshop (Debriefing Workshop)
  + Follow up

**EERT Responsibility**

* **Before departure**
  + Self-preparation
  + Administrative arrangements
  + Medical clearance
* **During deployment**
  + Managing Operation
  + Managing Team
  + Managing Office
  + Self-Management
  + Managing internal relations
  + Managing external relations
* **After deployment**
  + Hand over
  + Mission report
  + Follow up

**3.6 EERT Deployment Evaluation Guidelines**

**Objectives setting and performances identification**

Performance objectives of EERT Deployment are set based upon EERT Unit Objectives and ECOWAS Organizational Goals.

* Performance improvement and development areas from Deployment Cycle (Pre-Departure; Arrival; Delivery; hand-over, Return) are discussed and agreed upon, based on Emergency Management Issues (Managing Operation; Managing the Office; Managing the Team; Managing Self; Managing Internal Relations; Managing External Relations).
* Competencies are set and agreed between EERT members and ECOWAS Commission, upon consultations and coordination between the Directorate of Humanitarian and Social Affairs, on the one hand and other relevant Directorates on the other.

**Strategy for objectives setting**

* What to achieve
* Where to achieve it
* When to achieve it
* How to achieve it

***What to achieve (Facts/Results)***

* Work Objectives
* Development Objectives
* Improvement Objectives

Work Objectives

* Managing Operation
* Managing the Office
* Managing the Team
* Managing Self
* Managing Internal Relations
* Managing External Relations

Development Objectives

* What does each EERT plan to do for his/her development as EERT member to improve and strengthen EERT Mechanism

Improvement Objectives

* What capacity building is required to achieve Organisational Goals (in terms of training, coaching, dialogue, learning programmes, etc.)

***How to achieve it (Performances/Behaviours)***

1. Core Values
2. Core Competencies
3. Managerial Competencies
4. Cross Functional Competencies
5. Functional Competencies

Core Values

* Integrity
* Professionalism
* Respect of Diversity

Core Competencies

* Organisational commitment
* Flexibility/adaptability
* Team working
* Performance orientation
* Communication
* Professional and personal behaviour

Managerial Competencies

* Strategic planning
* Leadership
* Managing performances
* Coaching and developing EERT Mechanism
* Political and organisational awareness
* Developing a programme framework at country level
* Providing programming support and advice

Functional Competencies

* Contingency planning
* Planning an emergency response
* Managing an emergency response
* Managing senior external relations
* Managing NGO, media relations and other stakeholders
* Developing emergency tools and guidelines
* Providing emergency support and advice

**Feedback on Performance**

The Director of Humanitarian and Social Affairs will continuously monitor performance against agreed objectives and provide timely feedback through dialogue with EERT members.

**Mid-term Deployment Review**

* Assess progress on performance, improvement and development objectives

**Performances Appraisal**

* The Directorate of Humanitarian and Social Affairs consolidates feedback and own assessment in preparation for Performance Appraisal at a Post-EERT Deployment Debriefing
* Performance appraisal dialogue takes place
* The Directorate of Humanitarian and Social Affairs and EERT members enter their comments in the Evaluation Form and complete the Form.
* The Director of Humanitarian and Social Affairs signs-off the Evaluation Form

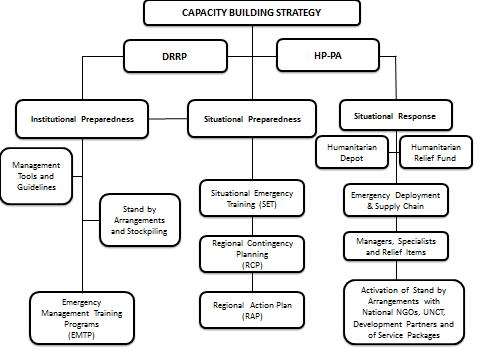
**Tracking for Quality Control**

The Department of Social Affairs and Gender achieves quality control of the performance appraisal process by tracking key statistical indicators for compliance and quality, and recording these into the EERT Data Base. This is a Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) function.

**4. CAPACITY BUILDING STRATEGY**

The overall objective of capacity building under ESEMS is to ensure the availability of adequate ECOWAS capacity to support the primary responsibility of Member States, Member States Institutions’ engagement and all-of-society to prevent and reduce disaster risk and respond effectively to any natural and human-induced emergencies and related environmental, technological, and biological hazards and risks that would involve Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Returnees, Refugees and Other Persons of concern, damages to the environment, infrastructures and human life, globally without delay, in situations where a Member State’s capacity is unable to cope. Adequate ECOWAS capacity, in both human and material terms, is thus anticipated at the levels of ECOWAS institutions, Member States, and sub-national structure within Member States.

The idea is to ultimately build capacity of Member States. In this respect, and without prejudice to the need for a complete capacity building suite for Humanitarian Affairs, ECOWAS Capacity Building Strategy under the ESEMS shall be three pronged: i) Institutional Preparedness Capacity Building; ii) Situational Preparedness Capacity Building; and iii) Situational Response Capacity Building. Figure 4.1 summarizes ECOWAS Capacity Building Strategy as anticipated under the ESEMS.



**Figure 4.1 ECOWAS Capacity Building Strategy**

**4.1 Institutional Preparedness Capacity**

Institutional Preparedness Capacity Building, that is, building capacity on preparedness at the institutional level, entails the following.

1. Member States are encouraged to engage in *Academic Training on Emergency Management* in partnership with the UN Country Team/ IASC, e.g., ECOWAS Standard Emergency Management Training (ESEMT).
2. *Professional training and the tools for building capacity on institutional preparedness* based on the two policies ECOWAS has: DRR Policy and EHP-PA.
3. *Training in Humanitarian Innovation* i.e., harnessing the application of better technology-based solutions, including disaster medical training, disaster investigation techniques, and crisis communication techniques, to transform humanitarian assistance through the development of new humanitarian tools/products to enhance entitlements and opportunities within emergency settings and protracted refugee situations.

The core activities are:

* Develop and Maintain Stand-by Emergency Resources
* Develop and update Catalogue of Emergency Response Resources (In coordination with concerned institutions maintain range of available emergency response items)
* Maintain Emergency Response Team Roster
* Coordinate Stand-by Arrangements with UN, Development Partners and NGOs
* Maintain Emergency Stockpiles / Humanitarian Depot
* Agree on Services Packages with donor countries
* Develop and update Management Tools such as EERT Companion, EERT Compendium etc.
* Conduct Assessment of Emergency Situations
* Integrate technology solutions into emergency management
* Organise Emergency Management Training Programme (EMTP) Workshops
* Organise Workshop for Emergency Managers and Specialists (WEMS), Workshop for Senior Emergency Managers (WSEM), Strategic Emergency Management Seminar (SEMS)
* Maintain contact with MS, International Agencies and Development Partners on matters relating to emergency preparedness and capacity building
* Promote sharing of Knowledge and best practices among member states

Member States should be part of the institutional arrangement for capacity building at country level (e.g., they should have regional contingency arrangements at country level). The responsibility of host countries should be defined as part of coordination.

**4.2 Situational Preparedness Capacity**

Situational Preparedness Capacity Building entails:

* Situational Emergency Training (SET)
* Regional Contingency Planning Process and Plan (RCPP&P)
* Regional Humanitarian Action Plan (RHAP)
* National Humanitarian Response Tools

Situational preparedness entails emphasis on specific preparedness at national, sub-national and local community levels. This emphasis should include initiating and/or facilitating contingency planning exercise for priority national, sub-national and local entities identified to be emergency prone.

**4.3 Situational Response Capacity**

The Situational Response Capacity Building entails the activation, deployment and fast tracking of the following:

* Humanitarian Relief Funds
* Emergency Supply Chain
* EERT Managers, Specialists and Relief Items
* Humanitarian Depot
* Stand by Arrangements and Services Packages

It is, therefore, anticipated that capacity building under ESEMS should ensure the availability of adequate ECOWAS capacity to support the primary responsibility of Member States, both in terms of human resources (as emphasized in institutional preparedness capacity building and situational response capacity building) and material resources needed especially in situational response capacity building. Human and material capacity building must go hand-in-hand.

**5. COORDINATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT MISSIONS**

**5.1 Levels of Coordination**

There are several levels of coordination of ECOWAS emergency management and humanitarian missions. These include: Inter-Departmental/Inter-Directorate Coordination; Coordination with Partners; Coordination with Member States Structure; Regional/Continental Coordination; CSOs; Regional Strategic Planning; and Coordination with Offices of Special Representatives of the President of the ECOWAS Commission (SRPC) (for political matters), National Permanent Representative of the President of the Commission (for ECOWAS) and ECOWAS National Units (for Member States).

The institutions and departments involved at ECOWAS Commission are:

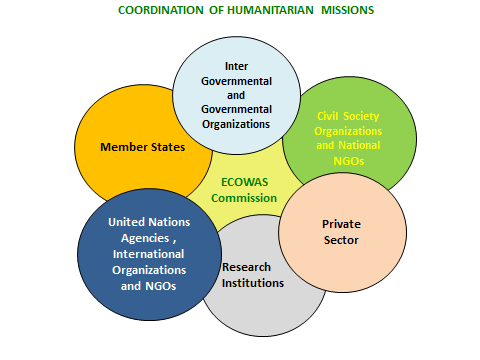
President of ECOWAS Commission

Department of Social Affairs and Gender

All Other Relevant Departments

Directorate for Social and Humanitarian Affairs

All Other Relevant Directorates



**Figure 5.1 Coordination of Emergency Response/Humanitarian Mission**

**5.2 Inter-Departmental and Inter-Directorate Coordination**

There is lack of synergy resulting from lack of information sharing or cooperation in inter-departmental and inter-directorate activities. Experience with past deployments indicates a coordination problem at all levels. In view of this, the ECOWAS President set up special Inter departmental Task Force inclusive of all relevant directorates. The Task Force also serves as a planning and advisory organ for the President. This kind of coordination arrangement needs to be institutionalized for everyday planning.

**5.3 Coordination with Partners and International NGOs**

ECOWAS coordinates with Development Partners through the instrumentality of an annual coordination meeting at ECOWAS Commission. There is also a coordination meeting between and among all the Development Partners targeted at addressing peace and security issues, in which ECOWAS is co-organizer. Internal coordination amongst ECOWAS ambassadors provides a platform for informed discussions. There is also the established mechanism known as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which provides a forum for information sharing and exchange between ECOWAS and humanitarian partners at the regional level.

There is an emerging necessity for coordination with the private sector as normal channels have been unable to cope with the challenges as has been the case with the management of flood disasters in the ECOWAS region since 2010 and the Ebola epidemic from 2014.

* Humanitarian Affairs needs to be included in issues relating to peace and security because the ultimate outcome of every political and security crisis is humanitarian.
* Need for ECOWAS to forge collaboration with the private sector as they appear to be the next hope for humanitarian action – from the perspective of resources (while considering issues of humanitarian principles – neutrality, impartiality, etc. of ECOWAS and without compromising the values of ECOWAS).
* Regional Strategic Planning should be a concern in coordination with partners.

**5.4 Coordination with Member State Structures**

Some MS have some capacity for emergency operations. There is National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) in Nigeria, National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) in Ghana, and National Agency for Civil Protection (ANPC) in Togo. The objectives of these agencies are in line with those of ECOWAS. The recently adopted Model of National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) aims at standardizing capacity building of MS and effectively linking up and coordinating with such agencies during an emergency.

Under the Humanitarian Policy, coordination matters are under the purview of the host nation, but ECOWAS has a role to play in terms of coordination to improve the performance of Member States. Coordination meetings within the framework of the existing structures in Member States need to take place on a more frequent basis, at the minimum, to create awareness for ECOWAS on what Member States are doing. Bottlenecks to effective coordination at this level should be addressed.

* There should be three levels of coordination: Political – at Commission level; Strategic - decision making and action at the directorate level; and Operational – at EERT level.
* There should be regular annual meeting of experts for information sharing and coordination, not only to look at finished draft policies for submission to ministers. Such a meeting can take place in the margin of UNHCR EXCOM meeting. This is one way to have coordination with MS.
* Annual consultation with humanitarian focal institutions, anticipated under the budget of Humanitarian Affairs, should be regularised. What is being done already should be improved upon.

**5.5 Regional/Continental Coordination**

ECOWAS is one of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) which constitute the essential building blocks of the African Union (AU). The associated relationship has not, however, achieved the desired robustness. Oftentimes collaboration between the AU and ECOWAS appears to be restricted, especially during deployments. There also appears to be insufficient unity of purpose. The apparent dissonance hampers the realization of ECOWAS humanitarian objectives. These coordination problems need to be tackled to stave off future occurrence during humanitarian interventions.

On the other hand, AU has mobilized resources and regional organs could benefit from this. There is need to tap into such resource baskets towards effective operationalization of the ECOWAS Humanitarian Policy.

* There is need to have more but refined collaboration and coordination based on unity of purpose and relative independence.
* There should be joint training and capacity building exercises.
* Collaboration and coordination should be subject to the subsidiarity principle: the response should be led by the region of incidence of the emergency, and not the Continental body.

**5.6 Civil Society Organisations**

ECOWAS has been collaborating with civil society for information exchange and new directions on humanitarian affairs.

* EERT has to be proactive and creative in collaborating with civil society.
* Coordinating meetings should be at the instance of ECOWAS/EERT-instituted initiatives and should respond to situations rather than statutory prescripts.

**5.7 Coordination with the Office of the SRPC**

Coordination with the office of the SRPC is designed to enhance synergy among the military, police and civilians in integrated PSOs during peace missions while guaranteeing the humanitarian imperative.

Experience from ECOWAS intervention in some Member States reveals the importance of the Office of the SRPC in pre-, during and post-crisis phases as regards coordination with stakeholders. The SRPC has been a vital link between the Commission, host nation, other MS as well as the AU and other international and local humanitarian organizations. The EERT operates from the Office of the SRPC during such deployment. The SRPC’s Office coordinates all administrative cum political functions relating to all ECOWAS interventions, including humanitarian activities (Figure 5.2). There are still a lot of potentials that could be tapped in the SRPC’s Office to enhance coordination given ECOWAS mandate from the 1999 Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security. ECOWAS has to exploit the potentials within the Office of the SRPC to enhance its field operation and coordination.

ECOWAS COMMISSION

SRPC

FORCES COMMANDER

PAPS

HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

STANDBY FORCE

EERT

MEDIATORS/OBSERVERS

LOGISTICS DEPOT

MILITARY

POLICE

CIVILIAN

SPECIALISTS

MANAGERS

HUMANITARIAN DEPOT

**Figure 5.2: Coordination with the Office of the SRPC**

**5.8 Coordination with the Office of the Permanent Representative of the President of the Commission (PRPC)**

ECOWAS adopted the Resolution to set up Permanent Representatives of the President of the Commission in Member States. Coordination with Office of Special Representatives of the President of the ECOWAS Commission (SRPC) is for political matters and in emergency situations. The National Permanent Representative of the President of the Commission represents a relatively permanent ECOWAS National Unit in Member States for coordination at all times.

**6. MOBILISATION CYCLE OF ECOWAS HUMANITARIAN RELIEF FUND**

**6.1 Humanitarian Relief Fund Mobilisation Cycle**

The principles, objectives, scope, location and sources of the ECOWAS Humanitarian Relief Funds (EHRF) are defined in the ECOWAS Humanitarian Response Mechanism (EHRM). The core objectives of the EHRF are:

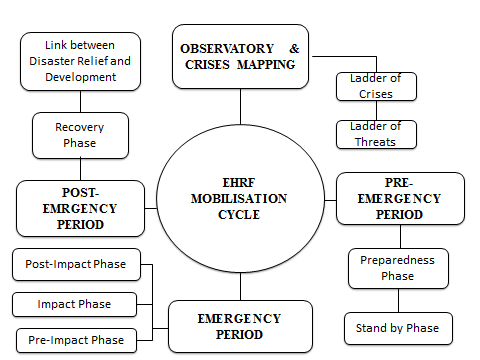
* To contribute to more timely and predictable emergency financing;
* To enable prompt response to disaster impact caused by new or rapidly deteriorating crises; and
* To strengthen the leadership role of ECOWAS in responding to emergency situations.

The EHRF is located within the Department of Finance of the ECOWAS Commission.

The EHRF should be mobilised at each stage of the area of operation. The Fund needs to be mobilized and released at each stage of the cycle. Beginning, for instance, at the Observation and crises mapping stages, funds should be released at the following stages.

* Observatory and crises mapping
* Ladder of crises
* Ladder of threats
* Pre-emergency period
* Preparedness phase
* Standby phase
* Emergency period
* Pre-impact phase
* Impact phase
* Post-impact phase
* Post-emergency period
* Recovery phase

There is a link between emergency response and development by way of the Local (integration), repatriation, rehabilitation, and reintegration) (LRRR) Strategy. This is where we have linkage with local communities and Peace Fund can also be mobilised (Figure 6.1).



**Figure 6.1 EHRF Mobilisation Cycle**

**6.2 Humanitarian Relief Fund Management and Decision Making**

From lessons of experience in the deployment of the EERT in humanitarian emergencies in the ECOWAS region, there have been deep concerns about EHRF mobilisation functions and responsibilities in the following areas.

* Delays in decision making and disbursement of funds go hand in hand with interdepartmental and inter-directorate structures and activities in ECOWAS. There are several administrative layers of top decision making starting from the level of the Director to the President of the Commission. This results in lethargy as administrative decisions and funds release have to navigate these multiple layers of authority and decision making.
* Challenge of ensuring effective operationalization of the Fund because of certain process that are not clearly spelt out in the ECOWAS Humanitarian Response Mechanism (EHRM).
* The linkage of the EHRF with the Solidarity Fund as a source, considering the sustainability challenges to the latter Fund.

In view of the above observations, the following parameters need to be adopted to enhance EHRF management functions and responsibilities.

* Fast tracking the mobilisation of the EHRF shall be of top priority for ECOWAS. The phases of support provided in the EHRF Mobilisation Cycle above shall be understood and complied with, as a matter of effectiveness and efficiency throughout emergency management periods and phases.
* The role of the EHRF is key to the operationalisation of the EERT Mechanism
* For the management of the EHRF to be more effective, with a view to shortening administrative procedures, there is need for the EHRF to be linked up with the Peace Fund as a window dedicated to humanitarian relief. To this end 20% of the Peace Fund should be allocated to the EHRF. This does not preclude Member States or Partners from donating directly to the Humanitarian Fund.
* The consolidated Peace Fund-EHRF framework will also enhance programmatic fund release in times of emergency – from planning to post-deployment, rather than episodic releases.
* The quality control and managerial accountability, in relation to the decision making within the Department of Social Affairs and Gender should be clearly defined.

Given the above, the ESEMS sets the following course of actions with a view to fast tracking the management of the EHRF.

* DHSA shall be distinct in respect of its mandate, function and role that require speed and timely action in emergency and humanitarian response situations.
* Fast-track procedures to enable Humanitarian Affairs work faster to deliver on time.
* Humanitarian issues and response shall bypass bureaucracy.
* ECOWAS partners shall release resources directly to DHSA or programmes.
* DHSA shall trigger financial release.
* Management of the EHRF shall not be limited to response but shall cover all emergency periods/phases outlined under the Ladder of Actions in the SOPs section.
* DHSA shall be authorised to carry out independent fund raising from external and private sources.

**7. Conclusion**

The ESEMS is designed to improve the various facets of emergency preparedness and response in the ECOWAS region to ensure rapid decision making and flow of information and resources, effective coordination between responding actors within ECOWAS Commission and with Humanitarian Partners in West Africa Region, in support of Member States.

The ESEMS provides standardised hands-on operational guidelines for emergency management for West Africa, integrating existing EERT concepts of operation and additional standards based on lessons of experience and contemporary best practices. It consists of structures and processes, actions and interactions that span the three main periods and the six main phases of Emergency Management: Pre-Emergency Period (Preparedness Phase and Standby Phase), Emergency Period (Pre-Impact Phase, Impact Phase and Post-Impact Phase), and Post-Emergency Period (Recovery Phase).

As a tool designed to guide implementation, that is, deployment for emergency response, the scope of the ESEMS covers institutional administration and field operations. This document, sets the context, elaborates the SOPs and clarifies the coordination and funding imperatives for emergency management in West Africa. It is expected that if adopted by all stakeholders, the ESEMS should achieve the following values: (i) Humanitarian leadership; (ii) Humanitarian good governance; (iii) Humanitarian dialogue; (iv) Humanitarian culture; (v) Humanitarian collaboration/cooperation; and (vi) Humanitarian innovation.

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1. Many successful ECOWAS initiatives and programmes are not often acknowledged by the people due to what is perceived to be deficits in the Commission’s disaster risk information and communication strategy. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. However, there is still a need to develop a global ECOWAS humanitarian action architecture and agenda, as well as ECOWAS global humanitarian capacity building strategy, in order to complement the ESEMS with a view to strengthening humanitarian leadership, humanitarian good governance, humanitarian dialogue and humanitarian culture in West Africa. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. These include the ECOWAS Revised Treaty; Humanitarian Policy and Plan of Action; DRR Policy and Plan of Action; ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Mediation, Peace Keeping and Security; Humanitarian Response Mechanism; EERT Regulation; and The Additional Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, among others listed in Section 1.6 above. Others include: Ministerial Committees (ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-Keeping and Security), and President of ECOWAS Commission (Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Plan of Action; Humanitarian Policy and Plan of Action; Heads of other ECOWAS Institutions; Integrated Operation Support Mission). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The EOC is modeled after the Early Warning System in Jakarta to the extent that the latter is exclusively focused on Disaster. The Humanitarian Affairs EOC is projected as standardized observatory for emergency management requiring requisite expertise in multiple fields. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)