



World Health
Organization

#Ready4Response

Tier 2: Ready4Response

Module 1: Response systems and structures

The Incident Management System (IMS)

Unit 1C

Photo: WHO / C. Black

#Ready4Response



Hi. I'm your facilitator –
Andrew Black

INTRODUCTION

The Incident Management System (IMS) is a way of organizing response functions to improve decision-making, coordination between responders and risk management. The functions of the IMS are reflected in most response arrangements.

Understanding these functions and the role they play will help you organize your response more effectively.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- define the IMS;
- describe the IMS structure; and
- describe the role of the key functions in the IMS.

THE INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (IMS)



WHO / M. Nieuwenhof

“ is a structure and set of protocols used to guide and coordinate the response and mitigate the effects of all emergency types. ”

The IMS will guide the response of all responders, including:

- government agencies
- private sector
- nongovernmental organizations
- other actors.

It will also help them work together.

History of the IMS



The IMS has been used since the 1960s when it was developed for use by civil protection.



It has been adapted from a military command and control model to fit civilian use by emphasizing cooperation between emergency management teams.



Multisectoral coordination is at the heart of the all-hazards approach.

The IMS helps responders apply the emergency management principles and provides a structure to help teams from different organizations and specialisms work together to share knowledge, skills, information and resources.



IMS functions

The IMS comprises 5 core functions – each headed by a Function Team Lead:

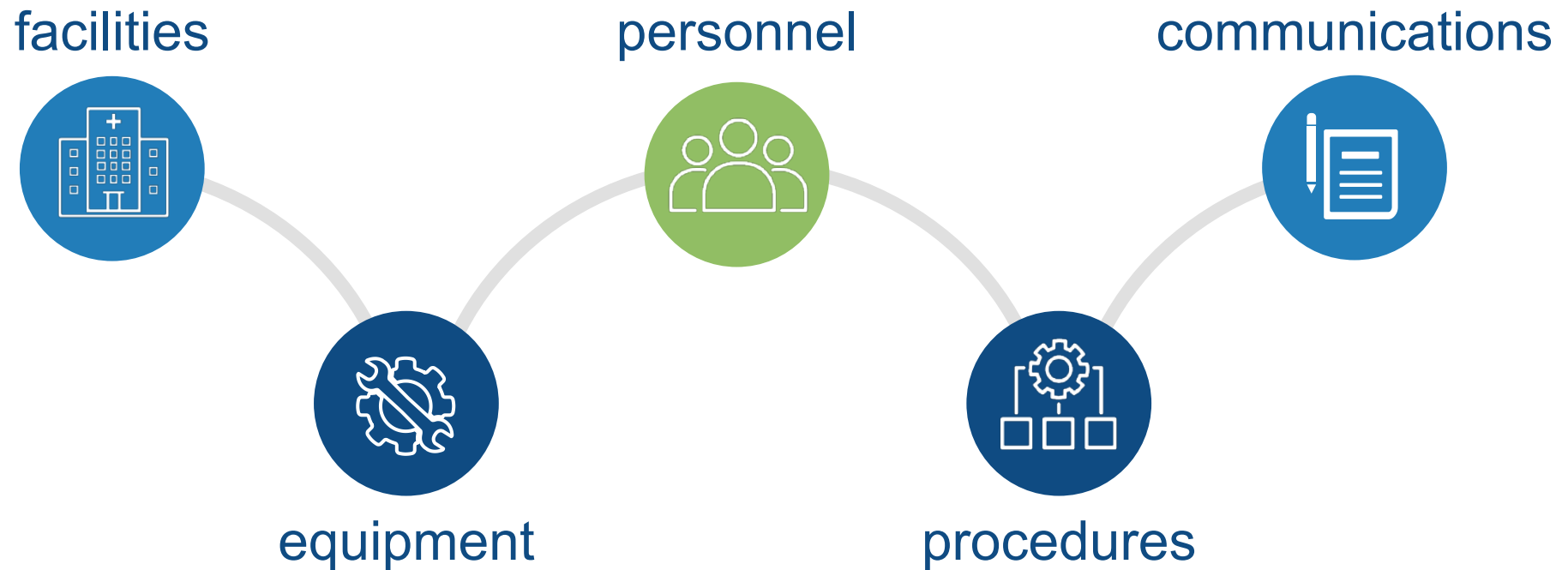
- Management
- Operations
- Planning
- Logistics
- Finance and Administration.

The functions must work together as a team to implement a successful response.



THE IMS IS MORE THAN JUST A TEAM

IMS brings together:



and helps them work together and support each other.

THE IMS IS FLEXIBLE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE RESPONSE

The IMS structure can expand and contract to the size, scope and complexity needed to support an emergency response.

The flexibility is supported with the staff mobilization process which brings in the necessary number of people with the right skills and experience to work in a timely manner.

During a response, surge capacity is the ability to draw on additional resources to sustain operations and increase capacity.





The **MANAGEMENT** function is performed by an **Incident Management Team (IMT)**, responsible for:

- the overall operation of the response;
- determining the coordination of response activities and partners;
- liaising with other agencies;
- public communication;
- staff safety, health and welfare;
- situation reporting; and
- resource mobilization.

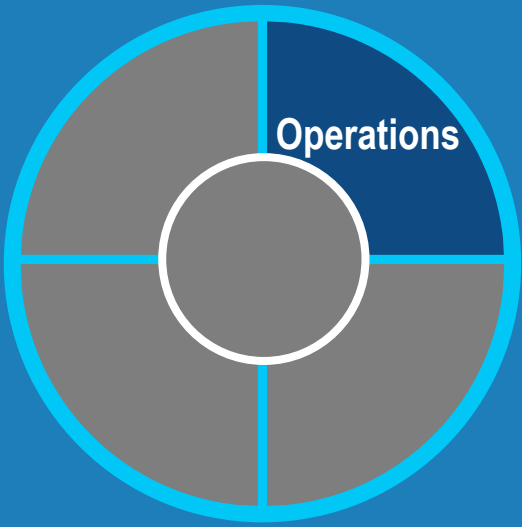
To do this effectively, the management function will need to understand the roles of all the other responding organizations and the wider context of the response.



The key roles in the management team are:

- **Incident Manager:** in charge of the response; they are normally appointed from the responsible or lead agency.
- **Health, welfare and security:** ensures that the physical and mental health of personnel is safeguarded.
- **Liaison:** coordinates with the other response agencies to improve coordination, use of resources and the links with stakeholders.
- **Public communications:** develops and delivers communications products and advocates for the response.
- **EOC facility manager:** ensures the operation and maintenance of the EOC facility.

The OPERATIONS function is responsible for using resources to respond directly to the event. For example:



Health services delivery and health interventions

- Vaccination
- Use of personal protective equipment
- Triage.

Training of health staff

- Acquiring response-specific knowledge and skills.

Prevention and control measures

- Treatment and transport of sick
- Decontamination
- Emergency clinics.

Risk communications and community engagement

- Scaling up community outreach.

Technical expertise, science and research

- Disease surveillance
- Contact tracing
- Data collection.



The **PLANNING** function is responsible for:

- gathering and analyzing information;
- identifying the actions needed to carry out the response; and
- monitoring and evaluating the response.

At strategic and operational levels, planning activities will concentrate on:

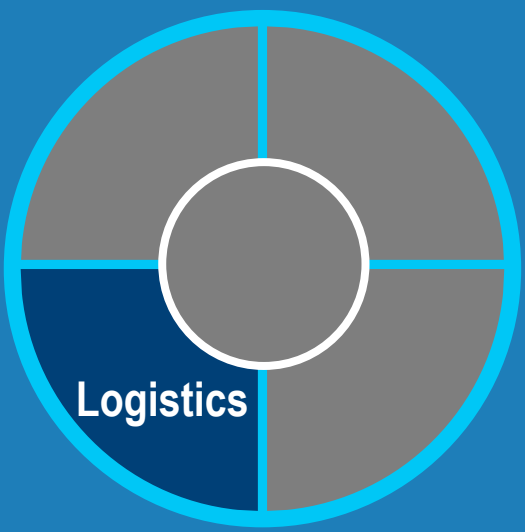
- mapping capacity and functionality of resources; and
- planning for addressing the event.

At the tactical level, the planning function will primarily be concerned with allocating available staff and material resources to deal with the event.



The activities undertaken by the planning function include:

- developing plans to guide response activity;
- aggregating and processing data;
- developing and communicating operational information;
- predicting the probable evolution of events;
- identifying the technical expertise that is needed; and
- monitoring and evaluating the response.



The LOGISTICS function is responsible for:

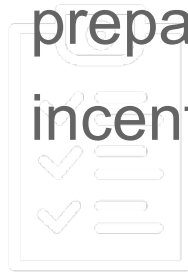
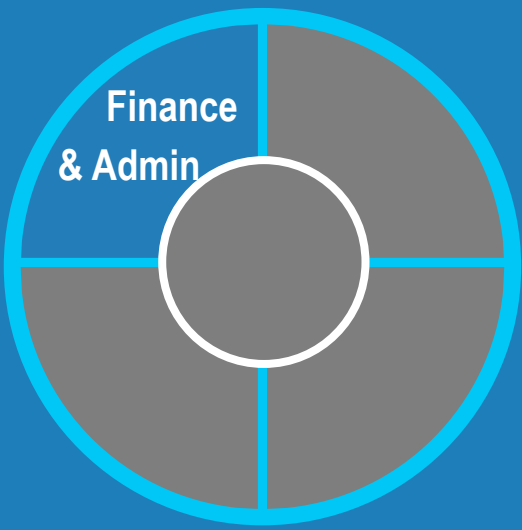
the acquisition, tracking, storage, staging, maintenance and deployment of resources that sustain the response efforts. Resources include personnel and equipment, supplies and facilities. Essential activities include:

- supporting response delivery by establishing treatment centres and other health facilities;
- supporting response personnel by establishing functional offices, housing and storage facilities and providing telecommunications;
- managing delivery of services by ensuring the transport, customs clearance, delivery, storage and management of material assets; and
- anticipating ongoing sustainment needs and providing advice about logistics.

The FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION function is responsible for:

expenditure tracking, payments and administrative services, including:

- cash flow management;
- tracking of material and human resource costs;
- budget preparation and monitoring;
- production and maintenance of administrative records;
- preparation and procurement of contracts; and
- incentive and insurance payments.





SUMMARY

- The IMS provides a structure for teams to work together.
- The core IMS functions are:
 - Management
 - Planning
 - Operations
 - Logistics
 - Finance and Administration.
- Teamwork is essential to a successful response.

“
The IMS described in this unit provides a description of the essential functions. The IMS is designed to be flexible and scalable so functions can be adapted, added and removed as needed.
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FOLLOW-UP TASK

1. Find out how each of the IMS functions is used in the response system in your organization or country. Which functions do you feel need to be added or amended?
2. Record your findings in your journal.