

Humanitarian Simulation Exercise Same, Manufahi Municipality, Timor-Leste 9 - 12 December 2024

Technical Report



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES CHANGING LIVES





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Acronyms

| 5W | Who, What, Where, When and Why |
|--------|--|
| CNOP | Centre of Operations |
| CONOPS | Concept of Operations |
| СРА | Civil Protection Authority |
| CVTL | Cruz Vermelha Timor-Leste (National Red Cross Society) |
| EPR | Emergency Preparedness and Response |
| EW | Early Warning |
| ICP | Incident Command Post |
| IFRC | International Federation of the Red Cross |
| IM | Information Management |
| JRP | Joint Response Plan |
| L2 | Level Two or "Contingency" level response |
| L3 | Level Three or "Calamity" level response |
| LRT | Logistics Response Training |
| MDMC | Municipal Disaster Management Committee |
| MRP | Municipal Response Plan |
| NCPEP | National Civil Protection Emergency Plan |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| PoC | Proof of Concept |
| RNA | Rapid Needs Assessment |
| SC&L | Supply Chain and Logistics |
| SimEx | Simulation Exercise |
| WFP | World Food Programme |

I. Executive Summary

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I. Executive Summary

The Humanitarian Simulation Exercise (SimEx) conducted in Same, Manufahi Municipality from 9 to 12 December 2024, aimed to evaluate and strengthen the emergency preparedness and response capacities of key stakeholders at national and sub-national levels. The exercise was co-hosted by Timor-Leste's Civil Protection Authority (CPA) and the World Food Programme (WFP), bringing together 49 participants and 32 facilitators from five municipalities as well as national entities. The overarching goal was to test the National Civil Protection Emergency Plan (NCPEP) through experiential learning activities that simulated a real-time disaster scenario involving localized flooding and a tropical cyclone.

The exercise was the first of its kind planned and conducted in Timor-Leste. While drawing substantively from WFP's experience in conducting corporate Logistics Response Training (LRT) simulation exercises, the practical aspects of the exercise immersed the participants in the learning experience which increased focus and learning outcomes. This particular model and approach was unique in many ways and acted as a Proof of Concept (PoC) for similar events in the future.

The primary objectives of the SimEx included assessing the preparedness and operational readiness of stakeholders at various levels, testing their ability to respond to early warning (EW) alerts and mobilize resources effectively, evaluating communication, coordination, and information-sharing mechanisms during an evolving crisis, identifying gaps and areas for improvement in logistics, supply chain management, and decision-making processes, and strengthening stakeholder collaboration.

The following learning outcomes guided the design of the exercise:

- I. **Planning:** participants were expected to practice executing planning activities in a timely manner, based on preparedness activities and early warning information;
- II. Coordinating: participants were expected to recognize the value of coordination between key actors at both national and sub-national levels, focusing on strengthening multi-level engagement and collaboration to streamline responses;
- III. Information sharing: participants were expected to demonstrate strong information management practices within supply chain and logistics operations during emergencies, emphasizing the vital role of data visibility and effective resource management;
- IV. Decision-making: participants were expected to utilize decision-making skills to oversee humanitarian supply chain and logistics operations in pressured, emergency situations.

Participants were divided into two teams representing Municipal Disaster Management Committees (MDMCs) and the Supply Chain and Logistics (SC&L) units that are typically found within these MDMCs. These teams were tasked with responding to escalating disaster events, which culminated in the declaration of a Level 3 (L3) national response. The exercise emphasized practical learning, with participants required to establish operational centers, manage information flows, draft response plans, and coordinate with multiple stakeholders under high-pressure conditions.



Participants demonstrated a solid understanding of planning fundamentals, including defining team structures and prioritizing resources. However, challenges were observed in managing Rapid Needs Assessments (RNA) and logistics planning during the L3 escalation, indicating a need for further capacity-building in these areas. The exercise highlighted progress in stakeholder coordination, particularly during the development of joint response plans and general coordination meetings.

Effective information-sharing practices were evident, with participants successfully developing and updating key information management products. However, inconsistencies in adhering to procedural communication channels and internal quality assurance processes were noted. Teams exhibited strong decision-making skills, particularly in logistics and resource mobilization. However, the exercise underscored the need to enhance participants' ability to make timely decisions under pressure.

Recommendations include enhancing pre-SimEx briefings with more detailed guidance on statutory protocols and stakeholder roles, strengthening logistics and supply chain management training with a focus on warehouse management, route planning, improving coordination mechanisms through regular joint training sessions to foster stronger multi-stakeholder collaboration, refining information management practices by developing standardized tools and providing training on data accuracy and procedural communication, conducting scenario-based decision-making drills to build participants' confidence and competence in high-pressure environments, and leveraging technology by increasing the use of communication tools such as VHF radios for real-time feedback.

The SimEx provided a valuable platform for testing emergency response mechanisms and building stakeholder capacity in disaster management. While significant progress was noted in the targeted learning outcomes, the exercise also highlighted critical areas requiring further improvement. The initial findings and lessons learned from this first PoC provide a solid basis for future SimExs in Timor-Leste.

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II. Introduction

The Government of Timor-Leste has prioritized investing in its own Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) capacity, specifically that of its authorized body, the CPA. This includes the production of legal frameworks, internal policies and procedures, most recently the NCPEP in 2024. Equally important, the CPA has made a sustained commitment to strengthen its human resource capacities within the disaster management sector, at both sub-national and national levels. WFP has actively supported the Government's ambitions for zero hunger through capacity building and strengthening the delivery of national programmes related to food security, nutrition and disaster risk reduction.

To stress-test these new structures and procedures, the CPA and the Supply Chain and Logistics Unit of WFP hosted a 4-day Humanitarian Simulation Exercise from 9 to 12 of December 2024. The SimEx tested the CPA and their partners' ability to respond to an increasingly severe calamity. Day 1 saw the scenario start off with an early warning of heavy rains that later developed into local flooding across Manufahi and Viqueque municipalities. Day 2 saw further intensification by the arrival of a tropical storm, prompting a L3 declaration and a national response.

The SimEx was designed for CPA national and sub-national colleagues as well as selected external humanitarian stakeholders who routinely support and engage with the Authority. SimExs – or "serious games" – are a well-known and proven participatory approach for humanitarian profes-

¹ Gralla, E. et al (2015), Case Study of a Humanitarian Logistics Simulation Exercise and Insights for Training Design. Journal of Humanitarian Logistics and Supply Chain Management, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 113-138 sionals to collaborate and learn together, while also testing what would otherwise be theoretical and conceptual processes and procedures¹. 49 participants and 32 facilitators from across five municipalities (Baucau, Lautem, Manufahi, Oecusse, Viqueque), government bodies, UN agencies, Red Cross Movement national societies, donors and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) attended. Annex I reflects a detailed breakdown of participating organizations.

The exercise was the first of its kind to be planned and executed in Timor-Leste. Although it drew heavily on WFP's expertise in conducting corporate LRT simulations, this model and approach were distinct and contextually appropriate in several aspects, serving as a PoC for future events envisioned as part of WFP's broader collaboration with the CPA.

The main objective of the SimEx was to test and evaluate the emergency operational capacity of the CPA's internal procedures and processes at national and municipal levels in a simulated real-time environment. This covered key internal emergency preparedness and support functions, including chain of command, information management, data preparedness, communication, coordination as well as supply chain and logistics tasks between the national and municipal level. The exercise also provided an opportunity to test structures, management arrangements and processes articulated in the NCPEP as well as supply chain and logistics-related measures and practices shared by WFP with CPA through a series of earlier workshops and events.



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Consultation Process

III. Multi-Stakeholder Consultation Process

As a critical, early part of the consultative process, WFP Timor-Leste facilitated structured engagements with a wide variety of stakeholders in both Dili as well as across four municipalities to ensure that the exercise would address current learning needs.

Consultations were held between 8 and 31 October 2024, commencing with the CPA President and his senior management team as well as other key disaster management stakeholders including UN agencies, Red Cross Movement national societies, donors and civil-military coordination colleagues in Dili. To ensure sub-national perspectives were also systematically captured and represented, missions to the municipalities of Baucau, Covalima, Manatuto and Manufahi were undertaken where municipal authorities, technical officials, Red Cross Movement staff and NGO staff were interviewed.

The consultative approach was adopted for a number of reasons. Firstly, the consultations aimed to engage relevant humanitarian stakeholders and gather insights into their organizational capacities and learning priorities related to EPR. Secondly, the process sought to establish and build consensus among stakeholders on the importance of conducting a supply chain and logistics-oriented SimEx. Lastly, the consultative approach ensured a full and comprehensive understanding of the communication and management arrangements for response between national and sub-national humanitarian stakeholders, specifically at the municipal level, to ensure the exercise would be as relevant and reflective of reality based on historical experience.

Throughout the consultations a number of recurring themes emerged were captured and subsequently shared among the participating organizations. Repeatedly, the consulted organizations communicated that in their opinion there was a need for:

• Testing coordination and management arrangements between CPA (national and sub-national) levels and among stakeholders: A requirement was identified to assess and clarify collaboration during both preparedness and response phases, ensuring effective cooperation within CPA, and across the various organizations involved; • Streamlining strategic and activity planning: Opportunities to improve planning and preparedness processes were identified, with a focus on creating more efficient and streamlined strategies;

• Reinforcing information management: Strengthening data sharing between national and municipal levels as well as among stakeholders was identified as critical for ensuring visibility of resources—such as personnel, assets, and commodities—and facilitating informed decision-making during emergencies;

Promoting the use of statutory documents and

common tools: Emphasis was placed on the testing and application of key national disaster management plans (e.g. the NCPEP) and the application of supply chain and logistics tools and templates endorsed by CPA and WFP;

• **Testing and building municipal capacities:** Strengthening the skills of MDMCs and other relevant sub-national emergency response stakeholders in emergency assessments, coordination, planning, and information sharing was highlighted as a key priority.

As a result of the consultations and subsequent discussions, municipalities and organizations committed to participating in the SimEx and began selecting suitable participants from their institutions. The discussions concluded with a strong recommendation to proceed with the exercise before the end of the year, with 9 to 12 December 2024 in Manufahi District considered to be the most appropriate date and location respectively.

These consultations served as a critical step in ensuring that the SimEx was comprehensively and consistently aligned with both national and sub-national stakeholder needs and that its subsequent design would actively address recognized gaps within the EPR capacity of both levels. The conclusion of this phase of the process provided the basis for further refinement of the SimEx learning methodology.

IV. SimEx Learning Methodology

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IV. SimEx Learning Methodology

As mentioned before, "serious games" or SimEx exercises are a proven learning method based on a specialized educational approach. For an extended period of time, WFP, as well as other international disaster management organizations, have effectively used various simulation methodologies to train both internal teams and external partners. These exercises aim to strengthen coordination among stakeholders during humanitarian crises. Leveraging its extensive experience in simulation-based training WFP played a pivotal role in co-facilitating and co-managing the SimEx in Timor-Leste alongside co-host CPA.

Simulation exercises are designed around the core principles of adult learning, emphasizing that adults are self-directed learners who have valuable experience and are motivated by training relevant to their professional roles. This didactic approach is intended to deepen participants' understanding of disaster preparedness and response coordination and communication mechanisms and enable knowledge application through hands-on, practical scenarios.

The exercise followed the 70/20/10 learning framework:
70% learning through practical application;
20% through peer collaboration;
10% from formal instruction.

Participants engaged in simulated emergency scenarios, allowing them to test strategies, and if necessary, received immediate feedback and guidance from facilitators in order to refine their approaches. This hybrid approach encouraged the integration of their prior experience with new insights, fostering collaboration and professional networking.

Key methodologies integrated into the SimEx included:

• Immersive simulated processes: Participants responded to a sequential series of simulated pre-disaster, preparedness as well as emergency response events, practicing both operational and strategic responses. This hands-on approach reinforced roles, responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms, particularly valuable for municipal-level participants who are pivotal in operational emergency responses. • Learning by doing: Real-time practice opportunities were a cornerstone of the exercise. Where and when appropriate, participants received immediate feedback from (a) dedicated facilitator(s), enabling them to refine their skills accordingly. This approach, aligned with the 70% learning component, proved to be highly effective for knowledge-retention and real-world response environments within which participants regularly find themselves.

Special attention was given to the diverse professional backgrounds, roles and experience levels of participants in emergency preparedness and response. Drawing from adult learning theories, including Bloom's Taxonomy and the Pyramid of Learning², the exercise was tailored to balance theoretical knowledge and practical application.

The exercise furthermore emphasized flexibility, encouraging participants to experiment with various problem-solving approaches in a low-risk environment. This adaptability allowed them to build confidence and prepare for real-life response situations.

By combining theoretical insights, hands-on practice, and peer collaboration, the SimEx aimed to provide a plausible, realistic and impactful learning experience. It not only assessed participants' current knowledge but also equipped them with tools to enhance their performance in future emergency situations.



²Bloom, B. S.; Engelhart, M. D.; Furst, E. J.; Hill, W. H.; Krathwohl, D. R. (1956). Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals. Vol. Handbook I: Cognitive domain. New York: David McKay Company.

V. Training Objectives & Learning Outcomes

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V. Training Objectives & Learning Outcomes

As set out in Section III, the extensive consultations with senior CPA national and municipal colleagues resulted in the identification of a number of common themes. These – and by using WFP's prior experience – provided the basis to propose training objectives and learning outcomes.

Through a process of iterative refinement the following **training objectives** were ultimately agreed with key stakeholders. The subsequent sequencing and design of the SimEx aimed to ensure that by the end of the exercise, participants would be able to:

• Apply emergency logistics and supply chain best practices in an evolving humanitarian situation at national and sub-national levels;

• Participate in all activities using a multi-stakeholder approach to collaboration and coordination during a rapidly evolving emergency response;

• Differentiate between the roles and responsibilities of all key humanitarian stakeholders at national and sub-national levels in an emergency response;

• Appreciate and identify the value of planning, coordination, information-sharing and effective decision-making during an emergency response;

• Engage technical and project management tools to effectively manage supply chain processes during an emergency. Carefully reflecting on the training objectives resulted in the identification of **learning outcomes** that were to be prioritized.

These learning outcomes provided the foundation for the exercise, with adjustments made to better address prevailing stakeholder needs. The objectives, therefore, were that as a result of the exercise, participants would master the following skills:

• **Planning:** participants practice executing planning activities in a timely manner, based on preparedness activities and early warning information; • **Coordination:** participants recognize the value of coordination between key actors at both national and sub-national levels, focusing on strengthening multi-level engagement and collaboration to streamline responses;

 Information sharing: participants demonstrate strong information management practices within supply chain and logistics operations during emergencies, emphasizing the vital role of data visibility and effective resource management;

• **Decision-making:** participants utilize decision-making skills to oversee humanitarian supply chain and logistics operations in high-pressure emergency situations.

With training objectives and learning outcomes determined, a detailed design phase to formulate the SimEx scenario was to commence. The details of the scenario are known to the leadership, the facilitators and this year's participants, however are excluded from this external report to safeguard the confidentiality of the exercise and ensure its repeatability.





VI. Evaluation

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Methodology

VI. Evaluation Methodology

The effectiveness of the SimEx in achieving the stated training objectives and learning outcomes was evaluated using a multi-faceted approach:

1. Performance Observation: Teams' actions were observed throughout Days 1 and 2 of the exercise, with their performance measured against predefined practices aligned with the scenario's deliverables, training objectives and learning outcomes;

2. Debrief and Lessons Learned Session: Participants as well as facilitators engaged in a reflective groupwork session on Day 3 of the exercise, responding to guided questions to share their insights and experiences;

3. Individual Online Satisfaction Survey: Participants as well as facilitators were invited to respond to an online survey on Day 3 of the exercise. The MentiMeter application was used to gather feedback on respondents' satisfaction with various aspects of the exercise.

Performance Observation

A comprehensive evaluation methodology was employed throughout the exercise to assess the overall attainment of the four agreed learning outcomes. This approach focused on observing the behaviors and practices of participants functioning as teams and not in their individual capacity. The observed practices were identified as essential to emergency response and aligned with the exercise's training objectives, which centered around the four core competencies of planning, coordination, information sharing, and decision-making.

The practices that were to be observed were pre-mapped according to the main events and pre-defined deliverables of the scenario, and an observation grid was created for data collection. This grid was designed to capture both quantitative data (using a five-point Likert scoring scale) and qualitative data. Grids were printed for ease of use by a dedicated observation team who were responsible for collecting and consolidating the data over the course of Days 1 and 2 of the event. The observers were selected based on their experience and knowledge of the national disaster management system in Timor-Leste. An example observation grid can be found in Annex II.

Prior to the start of the simulation, the observers were briefed how to use the observation grid and collect quality data specific to the various phases of the exercise. Facilitators overseeing specific events were also given the opportunity to observe team performance and provide feedback to the observers as necessary.

To assess the progression of competencies, each practice was observed at least twice during the SimEx for both teams. More frequent observations were encouraged to ensure the quality of the evaluation. The qualitative and quantitative results of this assessment are presented in the subsequent chapter.

Debrief and Lessons Learned Session

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Over the course of the morning of Day 3, participants and facilitators worked in mixed groups to respond to two guiding questions (provided in Tetum).

| How did the exercise give you (better) clarity on the national early warning alert and emergency coordination system in Timor-Leste? |
|---|
| Did you feel the SimEx scenario and approach provided sufficient purpose of a real emergency? |

The first question was designed to capture people's assessment of improvement in overall familiarity of the country's EW and coordination arrangements. The second question aimed at ascertaining to what extent participants and facilitators felt the scenario was realistic and whether the supporting methodology and approach created a believable operational response environment. The results of this activity are presented in the following chapter.

Individual Online Satisfaction Survey

Participants were provided with the MentiMeter QR code and used their individual handheld devices to log on and respond to the survey questions which were provided in Tetum.

- The survey addressed the following areas:
- · Satisfaction with the profiles of participants;
- Satisfaction with the exercise control and evaluation methodology;
- Satisfaction with various aspects of the administrative process, training delivery, and scenario;
- Perceptions of the achievement of learning objectives, including the extent to which technical skills in supply chain and emergency strategies were enhanced;
- Follow-up questions on the applicability of the training to professional contexts and the likelihood of recommending the exercise to others.

Of those present, 48 individuals completed the survey – thus resulting in a nearly 60% response rate – although some respondents did not answer all of the questions. Detailed feedback from the survey is provided in the subsequent chapter.

VII. Assessment Of Learning Outcome Achievement (Days 1 and 2)

VII. Assessment Of Learning Outcome Achievement (Days 1 and 2)

As described previously, core competencies tested during the SimEx were captured in four learning outcomes – these being Planning, Coordination, Information Sharing and Decision-Making. Throughout the exercise these were closely observed and assessed and are individually addressed below.

Learning Outcome 1

Planning

Application of Learning Outcome in the SimEx:

The planning learning outcome refers to the ability of participants to systematically assess emergency situations, define objectives, allocate resources, and develop operational strategies in a timely manner to enhance preparedness and response efforts during humanitarian crises. Throughout the course of the two days, teams were tasked with responding to EW alerts and preparedness actions outlined in the NCPEP for both Level 2 (L2) and Level 3 (L3) responses. Both MDMC and SC&L teams were required to showcase their skills by organizing activities, monitoring implementation progress, planning logistics arrangements and supply chain management with other critical response functions, presenting the situation using relevant quality indicators, and effectively communicating decisions to stakeholders.

Achievements: Both MDMC teams successfully established clear team structures with defined roles and responsibilities, effectively representing these in organigrams. They prioritized activities and resources in response to localized flooding, managed task delegation and time efficiently, and adhered to Municipal Response Plan (MRP) guidelines for analyzing and presenting data. In response to the L3 declaration, they promptly upgraded the Centre of Operations (CNOP) structure, revised the Concept of Operations (CONOPS) document, and initiated an action plan for managing international assistance. They also defined a simplified humanitarian coordination cluster, scheduled interagency meetings, and synthesized information into a Joint Response Plan (JRP) document for planning and resource mobilization. Meanwhile, the SC&L teams established their structures, conducted a supply chain assessment, developed a delivery plan, generated waybill documentation, and ensured timely dispatch of humanitarian supplies.

Observed Learning Gaps: Both MDMC teams faced difficulties in generating a well-reasoned recommendation for L3 escalation, including international assistance management. The teams were moderately successful in subdividing teams to develop an RNA plan and needed improvement in real-time identification of gaps and needs. SC&L teams struggled to clearly define roles within their structures, responded inconsistently to the L3 cyclone alert, and did not fully engage with the kitting location assessment. Logistics management plans, site layout, and structured distribution process were insufficiently developed, which led to initial disorder. While the teams eventually established order through negotiation, future exercises should emphasize structured planning and execution.



Coordination

Application of Learning Outcome in the SimEx: The

coordination learning outcome aimed to enable participants to engage and collaborate effectively with key actors at national and municipal levels, ensuring aligned roles, responsibilities, and actions to improve the overall efficiency and coherence of humanitarian response efforts. Over both days of the SimEx, teams were expected to incorporate coordination into their emergency response efforts while aligning with national procedural guidelines as described in the NCPEP. This involved ensuring collaboration both within their own teams, and with other stakeholders. Key responsibilities included clearly defining and implementing roles, responsibilities, and aligning stakeholders' needs and responses.

Achievements: The MDMC teams improved their division of labor over time, successfully collaborating with key response actors to prepare Information Management (IM) products and assign tasks. They reacted effectively to L3 alerts, establishing a CNOP, revising their CONOPS, and integrating SC&L inputs into coordination processes. By Day 2, they consulted stakeholders to plan and coordinate a general coordination meeting with CPA senior management. They shared updated IM products, analyzed needs and gaps, and presented response priorities in a IRP format, successfully launching it for review by senior management, donors, and humanitarian representatives. Meanwhile, SC&L teams adapted well to the L3 declaration, consolidating logistics data into a management plan to prepare for largescale international assistance. They also effectively engaged with local organizations to capture emergency stock updates, consolidating this information through an emergency supply matrix.

Observed Learning Gaps: The MDMC teams initially struggled to establish a clear division of labor for responsereadiness checks and found it difficult to respond effectively to disaster updates and the escalation to L3. While the teams eventually coordinated stakeholder consultations, earlier clarity in responsibilities and decision-making would enhance future responses. The SC&L teams faced challenges in mobilizing quickly, particularly for the warehouse capacity assessment, and needed better coordination in mapping supply routes. They did not negotiate site permissions or establish a coordinated layout for the distribution site, which, along with difficulties in handling expired food mid-distribution, temporarily disrupted operations. Future exercises should focus on improving communication, coordination, and clarity of expected deliverables.

Learning Outcome 3

Information Sharing

Application of Learning Outcome in the SimEx: The information sharing learning outcome aimed to enable participants to demonstrate effective information management practices within operational processes during emergencies. This required identifying, collecting and utilizing reliable data sources, analyzing the findings, drawing relevant conclusions, and efficiently communicating the information to various stakeholders in a timely, coordinated manner. The teams were expected across both days to showcase effective information-sharing practices within humanitarian supply chain operations.

Achievements: The MDMC teams improved their ability to share critical information as the exercise progressed, successfully distributing situation updates and submitting an initial situation report to the President of the Municipality. They met expectations in generating and updating IM products, including stakeholder contact lists, 5W³ matrices, emergency supply matrices, and municipal maps. On Day 2, they convened a well-attended general coordination meeting, effectively sharing updates on the humanitarian coordination structure and supply chain situation. Meanwhile, the SC&L teams successfully collected and verified supply chain data, liaised with NGO partners to compile access route information, and developed a supply chain and logistics management plan for L3 response.

Observed Learning Gaps: The MDMC teams initially struggled to gather and verify stakeholder contact information and did not maintain procedural communication channels with SC&L teams or municipal stakeholders on Day 2. They initially failed to refer to the NCPEP for guidance on L3 response actions until prompted and did not share the RNA mission plan with all relevant team members. SC&L teams found it challenging to summarize and analyze findings from their supply chain assessments and equally did not sufficiently use the NCPEP for preparedness guidance. While they developed a supply chain management plan, key planning assumptions and parameters were not clearly defined, limiting its effectiveness.

³Structured, matrix-based, information management tool used in humanitarian contexts to document and visualise key operational details answering Who, What, Where, When and Why, to facilitate and coordinate response efforts.







Decision-Making

Application of Learning Outcome in the SimEx:

The decision-making learning outcome aimed to develop participants' ability to assess dynamic emergency situations, offer comprehensive and relevant recommendations based on available data, propose well-reasoned strategies, and make timely, informed decisions under pressure to manage humanitarian response operations effectively. The teams were expected to demonstrate these skills in managing supply chain operations throughout Day 1 and Day 2.

Achievements: The MDMC teams successfully identified gaps and bottlenecks in response processes, with decisionmaking improving as the exercise progressed. By the end of Day 1, they strengthened collaboration and developed clearer strategies for their MRP drafting. On Day 2, they were moderately successful in responding to the L3 emergency declaration, managing international assistance, and upgrading their CNOP structure and CONOPS document. Both teams effectively structured their final presentations for CPA senior management, donors, and humanitarian stakeholders, outlining logistical challenges and proposing comprehensive response strategies with estimated budgets. SC&L teams demonstrated effective decision-making in assessing supply chain capacity and responding promptly to a failed attempt to offload expired items.

Observed Learning Gaps: The MDMC teams initially struggled to develop strong decision-making strategies in both the preparedness phase and the early L2 response. Although they improved collaboration, further refinement in defining strategies and making timely decisions is needed, particularly in managing international assistance. SC&L teams faced challenges in generating clear strategies during their supply chain capacity assessment, and there were inconsistencies in preparedness and execution between teams. Additionally, while they successfully rejected the expired shipment, further reinforcement of proactive decision-making protocols could enhance overall response effectiveness in future exercises.



Debrief Session (Day 3)

VIII. Feedback From Debrief Session (Day 3)

Participants collaborated in mixed groups to address two guiding questions aimed at evaluating their improved understanding of the country's EW and coordination systems. The first question sought to assess participants' clarity regarding these arrangements, while the second explored their perception of the scenario's realism and whether the methodology effectively simulated an operational emergency environment.

The questions were:

How did the exercise give you (better) clarity on the national EW alert and emergency coordination system in Timor-Leste?

2 Did you feel the SimEx scenario and approach provided sufficient purpose of a real emergency?

Feedback from the groupwork was diverse and presented to the plenary session as a combination of observations and recommendations. A number of groups mentioned that the SimEx was an excellent opportunity for them to practice and exercise together as well as to improve professional skills and increase experience, where necessary. Participants highlighted the exercise's value in practicing the various levels of response: in terms of emergency response phases *over time* – from EW and preparedness to L2, and through to L3 level. Meanwhile they also underscored the value of the broad range of response activities that were practiced *spatially*, at the suco (village) level (e.g. food distribution), the municipal level (e.g. consultations and information-sharing), and the national level (e.g. joint strategic planning and resource mobilization).

Other groups identified the value of interacting with external humanitarian stakeholders as well as experiencing and learning what the latter's mandates and contributions were in both preparedness and response phases. Related to this point, a number of groups reiterated how the exercise had highlighted for them the centrality of coordination in humanitarian action, and the importance of responding as teams, rather than as individuals.

Several groups stressed the importance of developing, and maintaining, common templates and documents, such as supply chain and logistics pro formas, assessment forms, communication products, IM tools, strategic planning and resource mobilization documents (e.g. MRPs, JRPs), especially those that were nationally approved. Participants also stressed the necessity to keep these documents updated and to practice use and completion of these templates on a regular and consistent basis.

Overall, a number of groups mentioned that they found the purpose of the exercise sufficiently clear and the objectives relevant, while one group mentioned that they did not always find the scenario realistic, and that unclear roles and responsibilities existed among some participants. "The exercise was very helpful in making us respond better to emergency situations." [Participant]

This is a reminder that we are stronger together to provide better assistance for our population in the future."

[Participant]

Another group reported that the EW phase was well-understood but that the corresponding response actions prompted for did not follow the national statutory documents in an accurate way. Participants also suggested that coordination arrangements could have been clearer and that the scenario could be strengthened in places. Additional consultation prior to the exercise was considered advisable.

The use of CPA's VHF radios was identified as a positive aspect and as a very valuable means of back-up communication throughout the exercise, including support provided by the CPA technicians present. It was recommended that these aspects be increased in future exercises.

Multiple groups identified that not everyone was familiar with terminology, processes and procedures specified in the NCPEP document (and used in the SimEx documentation). Feedback was given that clarification and additional detail could be provided, especially for L2 and L3 activation. For example, it was apparently unclear to some participants when and how to specifically establish and name the emergency operations centre-type facility at both L2 and L3 level response, what the full scope of the MDMC's role and responsibilities are in this context, or when to activate such an emergency operations centre-type facility as detailed in the NCPEP.

IX. Results From Individual Online Satisfaction Survey (Day 3)

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IX. Results From Individual Online Satisfaction Survey (Day 3)

The final feedback component – which was also gathered of Day 3 – included the individual satisfaction survey using the MentiMeter online application, as described earlier in the report. A total of 48 participants and facilitators took part in the survey. Respondents were asked if they felt that the right profiles (of participants and facilitators) were identified for the SimEx based on their professional expertise and roles in emergency management. Almost 75% responded that they did feel the correct profiles had been identified, while the remaining percentage did not agree with the statement.

Evaluation of Logistics and Administration In terms of level of **satisfaction with the administrative process**, respondents were asked to rate the following aspects from 1 (completely unsatisfied) to 5 (completely satisfied), with the results stated below:



The evaluation data highlights varying levels of satisfaction across logistics and administration aspects. Transport (4.0) and food (3.9) received the highest ratings, indicating that respondents found these elements well-organized.

Length of training (3.7) and accommodation (3.6) also performed reasonably well. However, communication before the exercise (3.4) and length of days (3.1) scored lower, suggesting notable areas for improvement. The lower rating for communication points to potential gaps in pre-event information dissemination, while the length of days might indicate fatigue or scheduling issues With an overall average of 3.6, enhancing communication and daily scheduling could improve future exercises. This medium level of satisfaction indicates there is room for improvement, as well as the need for further consultation and examination to better understand respondents' experiences and to obtain recommendations for strengthening the administrative aspects of the exercise.

Satisfaction levels with aspects of the training delivery

With reference to satisfaction levels with aspects of the training delivery, respondents rated the criteria below as

follows from 1 (not at all) to 5 (completely satisfied):



Reassuringly, a number of the most essential aspects of the educational dimension of the exercise met respondents' expectations as indicated by the upperrange scores above, particularly relevance of the learning objectives, exercises and activities. Having said this, while the range of results indicates overall satisfaction, further attention can be paid to some of the preparatory activities and engagement process in advance of future simulations, including strengthening of guidance, materials and briefing before starting the exercise.

The relatively lower score for briefing before the SimEx (3.2) suggests that respondents may have felt inadequately prepared, pointing to possible areas for improvement in future exercises. Similarly, the time allocated for each event (3.4) indicates possible issues with pacing, such as insufficient time for discussions or activities. On the positive side, high scores for encouragement of participation and learning (4.1) and relevance of exercises and activities (4.0) indicate that the training was interactive and practically oriented, keeping participants engaged. Strengthening pre-event preparations and time management would enhance future training effectiveness and satisfaction.

Looking at the degree of satisfaction with the following aspects of the scenario, respondents rated the criteria below from 1 (completely unsatisfied) to 5 (completely satisfied):



The data indicates a generally positive evaluation of the scenario. The highest-rated aspect is the relevance of topics targeted in the scenario (4.0), suggesting respondents found the material well-aligned with key learning objectives. The coverage of emergency response learning needs (3.9) and relevance of the content for participant roles (3.9) further support the scenario's utility in practical application. However, the appropriateness of facilitator roles (3.5) is notably lower, indicating room for improvement in guidance

or support during the exercise. Overall, while the scenario was effective, enhancing facilitation could boost engagement and learning outcomes.

Learning objectives

With attention to rating the degree to which the learning objectives were met, respondents rated from 1 (not at all) to 5 (completely satisfied):



The data suggests varying levels of performance across key competencies, with an overall average of approximately 3.6. Decision-making in managing supply chain operations (3.8) received the highest score, indicating respondents feel more confident in applying critical decisions during emergencies following this training. Coordination at national and sub-national levels (3.6) and effective information sharing (3.6) both scored similarly, highlighting a moderate understanding of collaborative processes and communication. However, timely planning based on preparedness and needs assessment (3.3) received the lowest rating, suggesting a need for greater focus on proactive planning and preparedness. Improving planning capabilities could strengthen overall supply chain response during emergencies.

Addressing the degree to which participants felt that their technical skills in supply chain and emergency strategies had been strengthened through the training, respondents awarded 4 out of a maximum possible of 5. The rating indicates an overall high level of participant satisfaction regarding the strengthening of their technical skills and suggests that the exercise effectively enhanced core competencies, equipping them with practical knowledge applicable in real-world scenarios. While the result reflects overall success, there is still room for improvement to fully meet participants' expectations. Future events could focus on more advanced technical skills, more time allocated to "play", develop and achieve the deliverables and outcomes for each session, or greater hands-on practice. The positive outcome highlights that respondents found the content relevant and beneficial to their roles in emergency response operations.

An overwhelming 94.7% of respondents (n=38) confirmed positively that they felt the **training adequately prepared them to intervene in an emergency in Timor-Leste**. The high positive response rate indicates that the exercise was effective in preparing participants for emergency

interventions and suggests that the content, methodology, and exercises were well-aligned with the practical requirements of real-life emergency scenarios. The high level of preparedness reported by participants reflects the relevance of the learning outcomes as well as the success of hands-on, scenario-based training objectives. However, while the overall result is excellent, a small minority may still require additional support or targeted training. Future sessions could focus on further enhancing specific skills in responding to EW, preparedness and response-readiness ability levels among participants.

Respondents scored 4.2 out of 5 the extent to which they felt the **knowledge and skills practiced during the SimEx could be applied back in their professional context**. The score reflects a strong consensus among respondents regarding the practical applicability of the knowledge and skills gained during the simulation. This high rating reflects the relevance of the training content to real-world, locally-informed, professional scenarios, suggesting that participants found the activities realistic and directly transferable to their roles.

Finally, respondents said that there was a 76% likelihood (3.8 out of 5) that they would **recommend the exercise to others**, suggesting that while the SimEx was well-received, there are some areas where improvements could enhance their overall satisfaction and willingness to advocate for the training. Factors such as the clarity on engagement levels, or logistical elements might influence this rating. Strengthening these aspects could increase the likelihood of recommendation in future iterations. Despite room for improvement, the score nevertheless demonstrates that participants recognized the exercise's overall benefit.



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X. Recommendations

In summary, having reflected on the end-to-end process that culminated in the SimEx, the following 11 high-level recommendations may be extracted:

1. Strengthen Pre-Exercise Preparation

• Continue extensive collaborative effort: Ensure the early collaborative involvement of key stakeholders from national and sub-national levels is repeated and retain the complementary roles of co-hosts CPA and WFP.

• Enhance pre-exercise briefing: Provide participants with comprehensive pre-exercise briefings on the NCPEP and other statutory documents, including detailed guidance on specific procedures for L2 and 3 responses.

• Provide clearer definitions of roles and responsibilities: Ensure all participants and facilitators understand their roles and responsibilities in advance.

• Offer pre-SimEx preparatory training: Organize focused pre-SimEx training sessions to build foundational knowledge, particularly in supply chain and logistics management, as well as coordination mechanisms.

2. Improve Scenario Design and Realism

• Improve scenario content: Strengthen the content of future scenarios to reflect national challenges even more closely, including multi-sectoral coordination and unexpected logistical issues.

• Refine role-specific injects: Design scenario injects that target specific roles to test participants' ability to respond to their unique responsibilities.

• Review exercise length: Consider increasing the number of days for the SimEx itself to allow for a more concerted engagement.

3. Focus on Logistics and Supply Chain Management

• Build logistics capacity more widely: Continue targeted capacity-building workshops on logistics, including warehouse management, inventory control, and route mapping as part of a wider capacity strengthening portfolio.

• Create opportunities for deep dives on targeted activities: Emphasize the importance of targeted activities such as kitting, pre-distribution planning and site layout planning to ensure smoother operations.

4. Strengthen Planning Skills and Practices

• Concentrate on developing planning skills: Enhance presimulation training on emergency planning procedures by providing detailed guidance on preparedness activities, EW responses, and resource allocation to improve participants' ability to develop timely and actionable response strategies.

5. Enhance Coordination Mechanisms

• Conduct regular joint training sessions: Notably training sessions involving both national and municipal stakeholders to strengthen coordination and collaboration are considered advisable.

6. Improve Information Management Practices

• Standardize IM tools: Develop and promote the use of standardized IM tools and templates.

• Offer IM training: Provide regular training on IM practices, emphasizing data accuracy, timeliness, and the importance of information sharing.

7. Develop Decision-Making Under Pressure

• Offer scenario-based decision-making exercises more extensively: Include decision-making sessions that require participants to practice making critical decisions under time constraints and evolving conditions.

• Embed understanding and use of NCPEP and other statutory documents more deeply: Emphasize adherence to NCPEP and other relevant guidelines during exercises to ensure that participants understand and apply national procedures.

8. Improve Post-Exercise Debriefing and Feedback

• Encourage structured debrief sessions: Strengthen structured debrief sessions with guiding questions, on the final day of the exercise, to capture participants' insights and lessons learned.

• Promote the use of structured feedback mechanisms: Establish clear feedback mechanisms to gather participants' views on the exercise design, facilitation, and overall experience.

• Stimulate action plan development: Encourage participants to develop individual and organizational action plans based on the debrief findings, focusing on areas for individual and organizational improvement.

9. Enhance Administrative and Logistical Support

• Develop administrative and logistical planning: Improve planning and support for future exercises, including transportation, accommodation, and scheduling.

• Improve communication prior to the exercise: Strengthen communication with participants and facilitators before the exercise to ensure they are well-informed about logistics and expectations.

10. Leverage Technology and Tools

• Ensure further use of communication equipment: Increase the use of VHF radios and other back-up communication equipment to simulate real-world operational environments.

• Encourage digital platforms for feedback: Increase the use of digital platforms for collecting real-time feedback during and after the exercise.

11. Monitor and Evaluate Progress

• Develop and introduce appropriate performance metrics: Establish clearer performance metrics to evaluate participants' progress in key areas such as planning, coordination, information sharing and decision-making.

By implementing these recommendations, future Humanitarian Simulation Exercises can further enhance the preparedness and response capacities of stakeholders at both national and municipal levels in Timor-Leste. This will contribute to a more coordinated, efficient, and effective response to real-world emergencies, ultimately improving outcomes for affected communities.

XI. Conclusion

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XI. Conclusion

Overall, the first Humanitarian Simulation Exercise, cohosted by CPA and WFP, proved to be a highly valuable learning experience for participants. The exercise successfully met its core objectives, including enhancing participants' understanding of national emergency preparedness protocols, improving coordination mechanisms, and providing a practical platform to apply supply chain and logistics management skills, whilst of course many lessons were learned.

The feedback gathered from participants during the debriefing session reflects a generally positive response to the exercise. Specifically, participants appreciated the realism of the scenario, relevance of the exercises, and opportunities to collaborate with various stakeholders. Participants noted the exercise's value in practicing emergency response phases over time – from EW and preparedness to L2 and L3 level responses – as well as the broad range of response activities practiced at the national and sub-national levels.

The exercise strengthened teamwork and multi-stakeholder collaboration, with standardized tools improving response efficiency. Participants showed progress in applying NCPEP guidelines, particularly in drafting plans and updating operational documents. However, gaps in procedural familiarity, communication, and logistics planning highlight areas for further training. Coordination improved, with better stakeholder integration, though clearer roles are needed. Decision-making showed moderate success, with room to enhance rapid-response frameworks. Pre-exercise briefings and proactive planning require improvement, while logistical challenges suggest extending the duration of the SimEx to three days. Despite some challenges, the exercise achieved key outcomes, providing a solid foundation for future improvements and capacity-building efforts. The collaborative and hands-on approach fostered practical learning and strengthened professional networks, positioning participants to respond more effectively to real-world emergencies.

Overall, the first Humanitarian Simulation Exercise – acting as a true Proof of Concept – was a significant step forward in contributing to strengthening overall emergency preparedness and response capacities. By providing a safe environment for participants to practice critical skills, the exercise contributed to a stronger, more coordinated, and more effective disaster management system in Timor-Leste. The lessons learned and recommendations provided in this report offer a potential roadmap for the CPA's and WFP's continuous partnership, ensuring that future exercises build upon this strong foundation.

Annex I: Organizations Consulted or Present

(In alphabetical order)

| AHA Centre | FAO |
|--|---|
| ВНА | Fraterna |
| Bifano | КНС |
| Bombeiros | LBF - Luta ba Futuro |
| Cabinet President Authority | MDMC |
| Caritas Diocesana de Baucau (CDB) National NGO | Ministry of Health |
| Civil Protection Authority | Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion |
| Civil Protection Authority - CFPC | Municipality of Baucau |
| Civil Protection Authority - CNOPC | Municipality of Lautem |
| Civil Protection Authority - DNER | Municipality of Manufahi |
| Civil Protection Authority - DNGRD | Municipality of Oecusse |
| Civil Protection Authority - DNR | Municipality of Viqueque |
| Civil Protection Authority - Presidents Office | PNTL |
| CVTL | World Food Programme |
| DHS | |

Annex II: Example Observation Grid

Activity SCL.2: Collate physical access route information and route plan.

| Competency | Practices to observe | Score (1 - not at all and 5 - Absolutely/ Completely) |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Planning | Road and transport route information is collated and presented | |
| | Information from NGOs is verified (e.g.by asking for confirmation of stakeholders, assess the route themselves) | |
| | Activities are prioritized | |
| Coordination | Overview of operational supply routes is generated | |
| | Individual routes are drawn or mapped geographically | |
| Information Sharing | Critical route and access information is clearly | |
| | NGO responses on whether or not access is | |
| | possible/restricted/doable is collated and shared | |
| | Produced analytical reporting of the situation | |
| Other | Include any other comment related to various triggers, team dynamics, ke daily outputs/deliverables | y moments and |

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