

Note on Risk Ranking for Emergency Risks

Preamble

In line with the [Policy for Enterprise Risk Management in UNHCR](#) and [UNHCR Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response](#), all country operations undertake emergency risk analysis for new or escalated emergencies as they emerge and at least once a year within the Annual Risk Review. Country operations determine a ranking of high, medium or low for each agreed emergency scenario based on its likelihood and potential impact.

While the ERM policy provides broad definitions of likelihood and impact ratings applicable to all types of risks, this note provides more specific guidance on the definitions of likelihood and impact when assessing emergency risks. It also shows the risk ranking matrix for determining the overall risk level based on the assessed likelihood and impact. The risk ranking matrix is consistent with the ERM risk rating. Due to the nature of emergencies, there is no “positive” impact category. The definitions of likelihood and impact are adjusted, in line with the IASC Emergency Preparedness and Response (ERP) guidance. This note also provides clarification on the two categories in the [Global Emergency Risk and Preparedness Overview](#): “High risk of emergency” and “On the watch”, including key questions to consider.

RISK RANKING		IMPACT				
		Existing emergency response capacities (UNHCR, Government, other UN agencies, NGOs and host communities) to respond to the predicted scenario and the projected additional people in need of humanitarian assistance.				
LIKELIHOOD	Estimated probability that the scenario will occur in the next 12 months	Emergency response capacity of the government is sufficient to cover the needs.	The inter-agency response capacity in the country is sufficient to cover the needs that the government cannot meet.	New resources (up to 30% of current operations) are needed to cover needs. Support from the Regional Bureau may not be required.	New resources (Between 31% and 79% of current operations) are needed to cover needs. Support from the Regional Bureau is required.	New resources (Over 80% of current operations) are needed to cover needs. Support from Regional Bureau and Headquarters is required.
		Score	1. Insignificant	2. Minor	3. Moderate	4. Major
51-100%	5. Very high	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
31-50%	4. High	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH
16- 30%	3. Medium	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM*	HIGH
6-15%	2. Low	LOW	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM*	MEDIUM*
0- 5%	1. Very low	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM*

*On the watch: currently medium risk of emergency but has the potential to become high risk. Impact score is 4 (major) and 5(disastrous) regardless of likelihood

High risk of emergency: Risks that are likely to trigger an emergency response by UNHCR. The risks are expected to result in new or escalated displacement and/or significantly increased humanitarian needs, exceeding current response capacity.

Key questions to consider:

- Is the situation likely to deteriorate significantly in the upcoming three to six months?
- Will the situation require a response that exceeds, or threatens to exceed the capacity of the operation, and would require additional support or resources?
- Does the situation warrant a potential UNHCR emergency declaration?
- Does UNHCR have presence and/or access in the area? Is UNHCR likely to be engaged in the response?

On the Watch: Medium risk of emergency currently but has the potential to become high risk. It is selected from medium risks based on its level of priority and urgency.

Key questions to consider:

- Is this situation likely to deteriorate significantly and potentially become a high risk in the upcoming three to six months?
- Will the situation create displacement/significant increase in humanitarian needs that would require UNHCR response that exceeds, or threatens to exceed the capacity of the operation?
- Does UNHCR have presence and/or access in the area? Is UNHCR likely to be engaged in the response and declare an emergency?