



5/15/2023

Sphere in Urban Context Training

May 03 to 05 2023 Albania- Tirana



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SPHERE TRAINER



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1. Background

The Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative- South-eastern Europe (DPPI-SEE) (<http://www.dppi.info/>), through its regional Sphere capacity building programme, aims to assist member countries to improve the preparedness and capacity of their response to crises and conflicts while working with affected population through the enhanced capacity of Sphere standards.

To facilitate this objective, and following the ToT programme that took place in June 2022 targeting the same participants, the DPPI SEE Secretariat invited members states to join the Sphere in Urban Settings Training in Tirana, Albania from 03-05 May 2023.

The targeted audience consisted primarily of the trainers who participated in previous Sphere events in 2021 with additional participants from other national agencies. This training programme serves as an excellent preparation for the DPPI FLEX 2023 field simulation exercise, which is scheduled for the end of October 2023 in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

2. Introduction

This report has been developed by the lead facilitator to document the training process and results of the 3- day workshop from May 03 to 05, 2023. The Sphere in Urban Context Training was held at Chateau Linza Resort in Tirana, Albania. The lead facilitator ensured that the necessary arrangements in the training venue, such as audio-visual aids, flip charts, and other materials, were in place to allow the training team to carry out various activities using various techniques conveniently.

This report includes background, specific objectives, session inputs/output, and participants' actions during the sessions, feedback, and evaluation. It also highlighted the recommendations for future training programs. The programme agenda is attached as an annex.

This training course was designed in 2022 by Sphere and the German Red Cross in collaboration with a group of consultants. The course was piloted through two online workshops that involved humanitarian practitioners worldwide. The course content was then modified depending on the results of both exercises to create the final training package used for this training event.

The training was meant for those who have prior experience of at least 2-3 years in the humanitarian field, basic understanding of the contents of the Sphere handbook with discrete role in their current job responsibilities. Overall, seventeen (17) participants (4 female, 13 male) attended and successfully completed the course¹. Participants came from nine (9) countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, North

¹ Only one participant was unable to join the full course.

Macedonia, and Slovenia). And they represented civil society organizations, government agencies, red cross and red crescent organizations.

The training was led by three facilitators: Aya Yagan, a Sphere trainer, Wolfgang Friedrich, the Head of Humanitarian Aid in an Urban Context at GRC, and Cecilia Schmoelzer, a Senior Officer for Urban Preparedness and Response at IFRC. Aya, serving as the lead trainer, was physically present at the training venue, providing hands-on guidance and support. Wolfgang and Cecilia, on the other hand, joined the training remotely through the Zoom application. The collaboration among Aya, Wolfgang and Cecilia ensured a comprehensive and well-rounded delivery of the training content, combining the advantages of both in-person and online facilitation. Their collective efforts created a dynamic and engaging learning environment for all participants involved.

3. Course objectives

At the end of this training, learners were able to:

- **Apply Sphere Standards** to urban contexts to plan and deliver humanitarian response.
- **Identify differences and similarities between humanitarian response** in urban contexts and rural/camp contexts, specifically identifying attributes of cities that present opportunities and challenges for humanitarian response and for the application of Sphere Standards.
- **Conduct needs analysis using a people-centered, rights-based approach** and context analysis using a systems approach, including stakeholder mappings and mappings of existing capacities, resources, and risks in urban contexts.

4. Training methods and techniques

The course was designed to provide a strong background about concepts of urban context, and how humanitarians can use and adapt Sphere indicators in their response design. It also provides a solid Sphere-knowledge base, while allowing participants to practice and contextualize the content through the exercises. The programme was arranged into three main pillars:

Module one focuses on urban context definition and the importance of urban contexts in humanitarian response. It also explores the key characteristics of humanitarian response in urban contexts and compare them to rural/camp contexts. The module explains how to conduct a needs analysis in urban contexts using a people-centred approach and how to conceptualize urban contexts using a systems approach. Additionally, it emphasizes the identification of key complexities to consider when responding in urban contexts.

Module two start with an introduction to Sphere philosophy by explaining the purpose of Sphere, which is to provide a comprehensive framework for humanitarian response. The module then defines the Sphere Standards and discusses their structure, highlighting their role in guiding humanitarian actors. It further explores the distinction between standards and indicators, emphasizing how indicators help assess compliance with the standards and provides guidance on how to meet them. The module also delves into the challenges associated with applying Sphere Standards in urban contexts, contrasting them with traditional response contexts. Finally, it addresses the conceptualization of applying Sphere Standards in the urban context through systems thinking, recognizing the complexity of urban systems and the need for a holistic approach.

Module Three is a table top exercise that gives participants the opportunity to implement some of their learnings on systems mapping, urban contexts, and adapting sphere indicators in a simulated environment, while managing complex webs of competing interests (associated with assigned roles).

The training employed a combination of lectures and exercises to facilitate the application of knowledge gained throughout the sessions. These exercises were centered around a Ukrainian case study, featuring multiple situation updates that presented various challenges and complexities. The participants were divided into four groups and worked collaboratively as teams to analyse and tackle the case studies. This team collaboration proved to be immensely beneficial as it allowed for a rich exchange of ideas and perspectives. Participants hailed from different countries with diverse backgrounds and experiences, which contributed to a vibrant learning environment. The collective expertise brought forth by the teams fostered a deeper understanding of the subject matter, as participants were able to draw upon their unique field experience and collectively develop innovative solutions. Through this collaborative approach, the training enabled participants to not only apply the acquired knowledge but also learn from one another's diverse perspectives and experiences.

The training was conducted using a hybrid approach, with the first day incorporating both in-person and online components. During this day, participants experienced a combination of in-person lectures and virtual participation. Two facilitators from the German Red Cross and ICRC joined the session via Zoom, while the lead facilitator was physically present in the room, managing the exercises and group activities. This setup allowed for a diverse range of perspectives and expertise to be shared. However, despite efforts to deliver the training online, there were significant challenges due to continuous breakdowns and interruptions in the internet connection. As a result, the online delivery portion was not as effective as intended. Nevertheless, days two and three of the training were fully delivered in person, providing a more reliable and immersive learning environment for all participants.

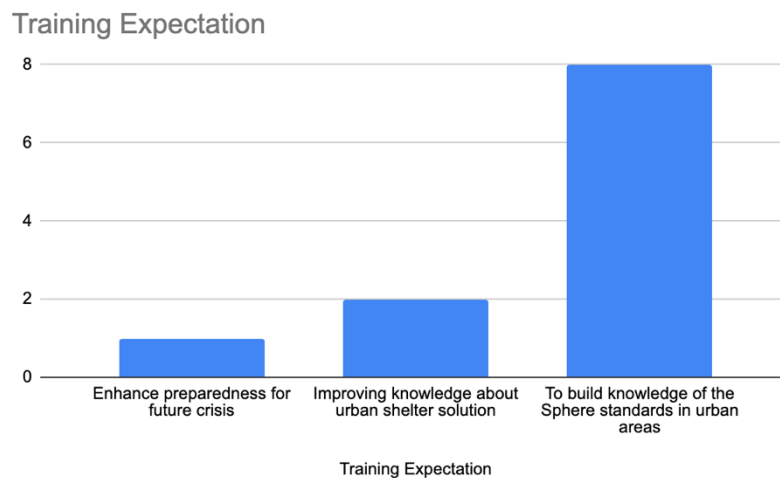
5. Training quality control measures

The below measures were in place to ensure the training programme is relevant to the context and participants needs:

- Prior to the course, participants were asked to provide information on their knowledge and experience on the topic, as well as their learning objectives. This was used by the lead facilitator to tailor the course.
- Daily feedback was sought in various forms from participants to evaluate daily impact and to allow the lead trainer to make adjustments for subsequent days.
- A training evaluation form was used to collect quantitative and qualitative comments from participants immediately after the training in order to evaluate the training from various angles.
- A final training report was created, which included a full breakdown of feedback and suggestions for improving future events.

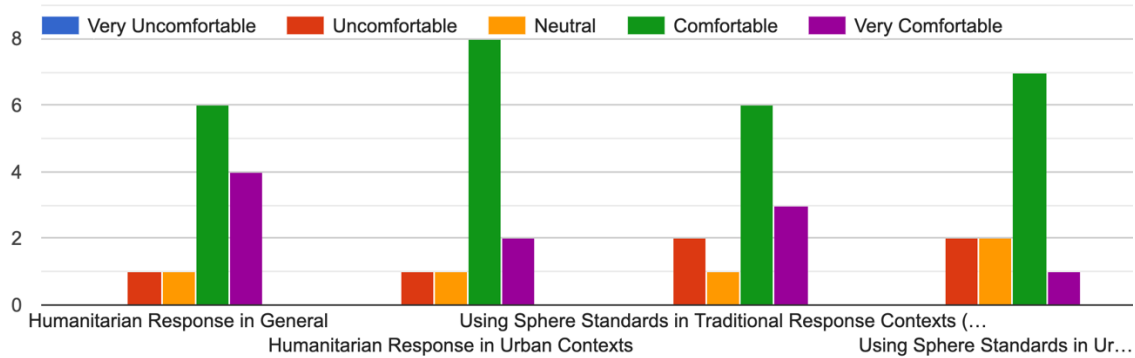
6. Pre and post course surveys results

Participants gave the following reasons for enrolling in this training course at the pre-assessment stage:



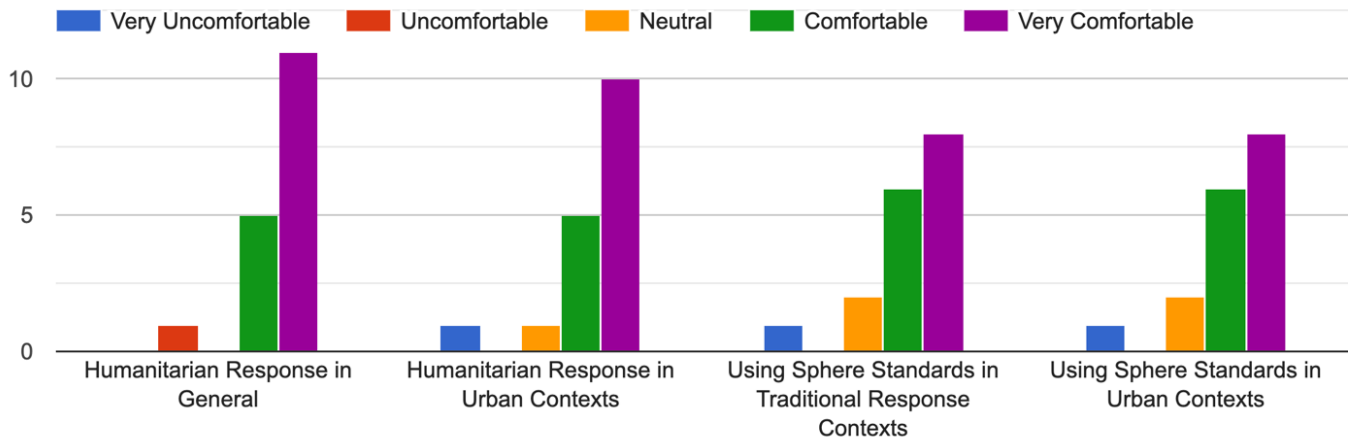
- ◆ Knowledge about humanitarian response in urban setting – Pre-course

Please indicate your level of comfort working with the following:



◆ Knowledge about humanitarian response in urban setting – post-course

Please rank your level of comfort working with the following

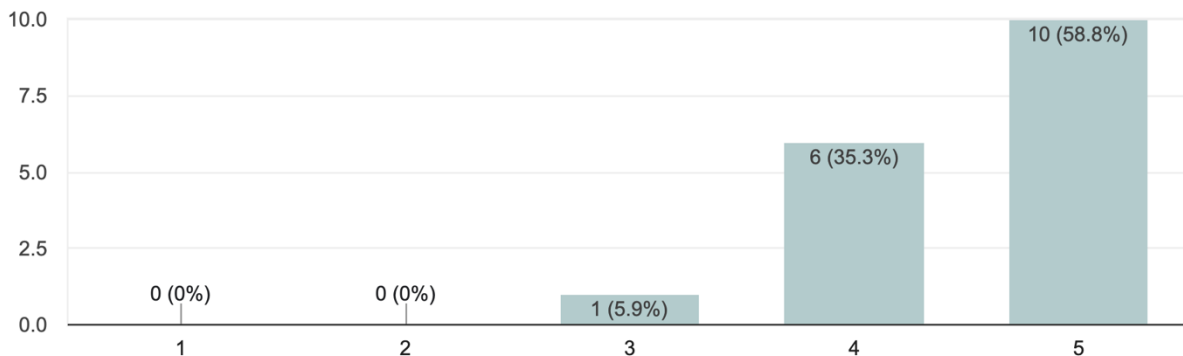


7. Final evaluation²

In summary, the training workshop went well, and at the final evaluation, participants freely provided favourable remarks and suggestions. The majority of participants evaluated day 1 as satisfactory (6/17) and very good (10/17), although they were less satisfied with the online delivery component due to the previously noted connection challenges. They were also highly satisfied with day 2 as good (1/17) and very good (15/17), and day 3 as good (2/17) and very good (15/17). The charts below demonstrate the degrees of satisfaction:

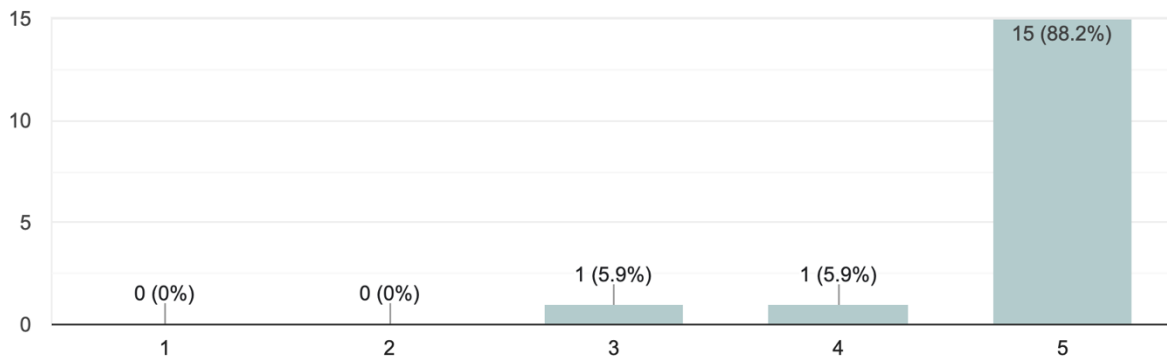
How would you rate this training event (Day 1)

17 responses



How would you rate this training event (Day 2)?

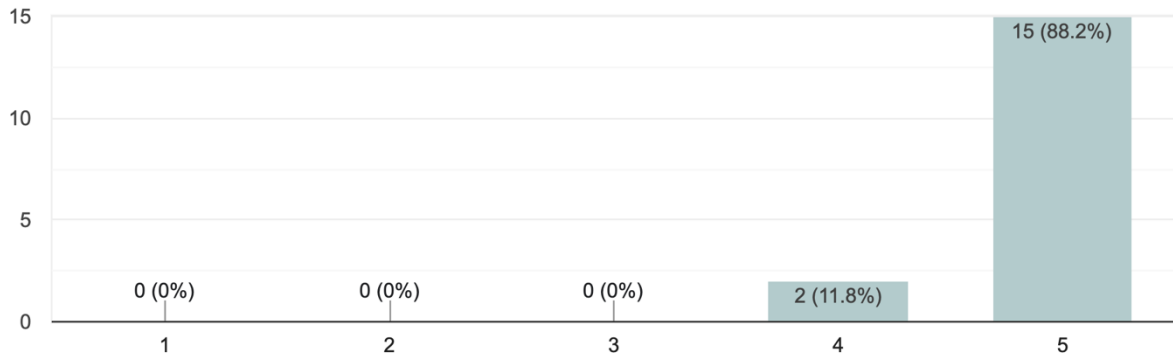
17 responses



² The final evaluation represents the perspectives of all participants; however, one participant did not complete the entire course and was only able to attend 30% of the sessions.

How would you rate this training event (Day 3, TTX) ?

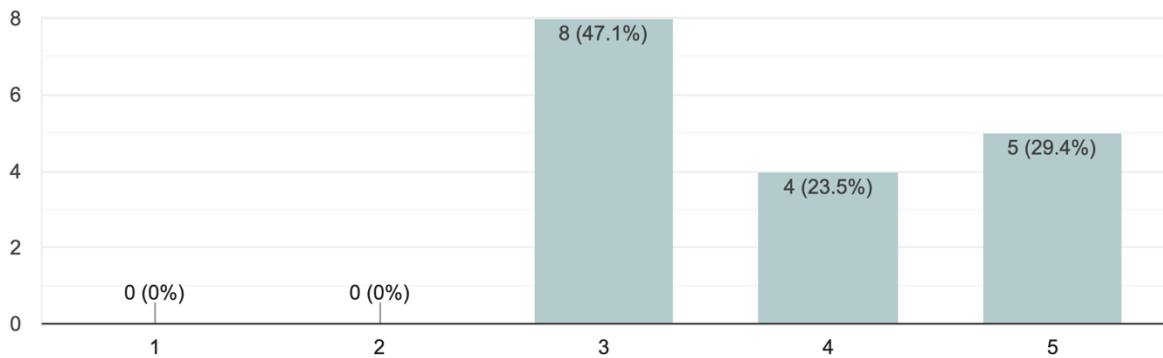
17 responses



As this was a hybrid delivery training that incorporates online an in-person sessions, the online delivery part was particularly evaluated in the post survey, where participants somehow expressed positive opinion about the online modality with (8/17) rating is as fair, (4/17) as good, and (5/17) as very good as displayed in the following chart

How would you rate the online delivery part of this training?

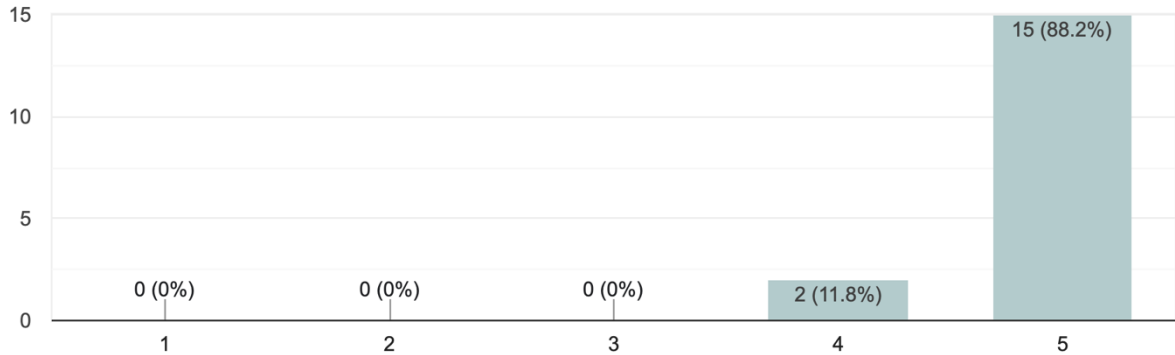
17 responses



Participants also rated the main facilitator performance as (2/17) good, and (15/17) very good as shown below:

How would you rate the trainer (Aya) performance and delivery?

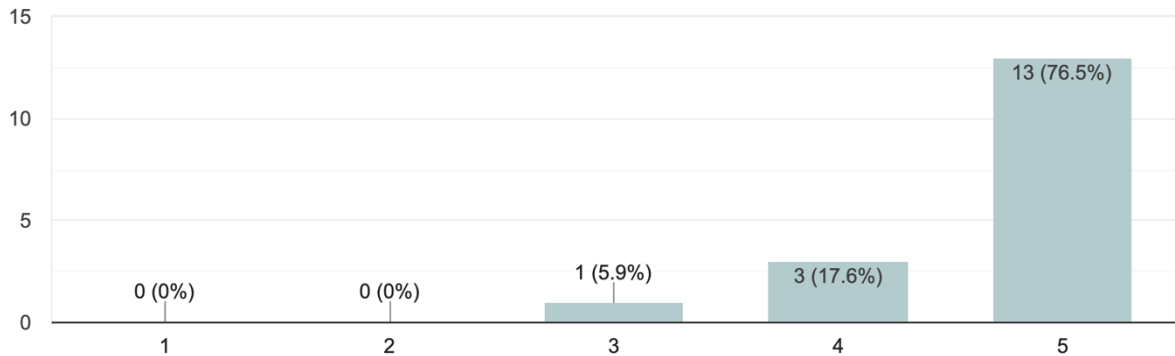
17 responses



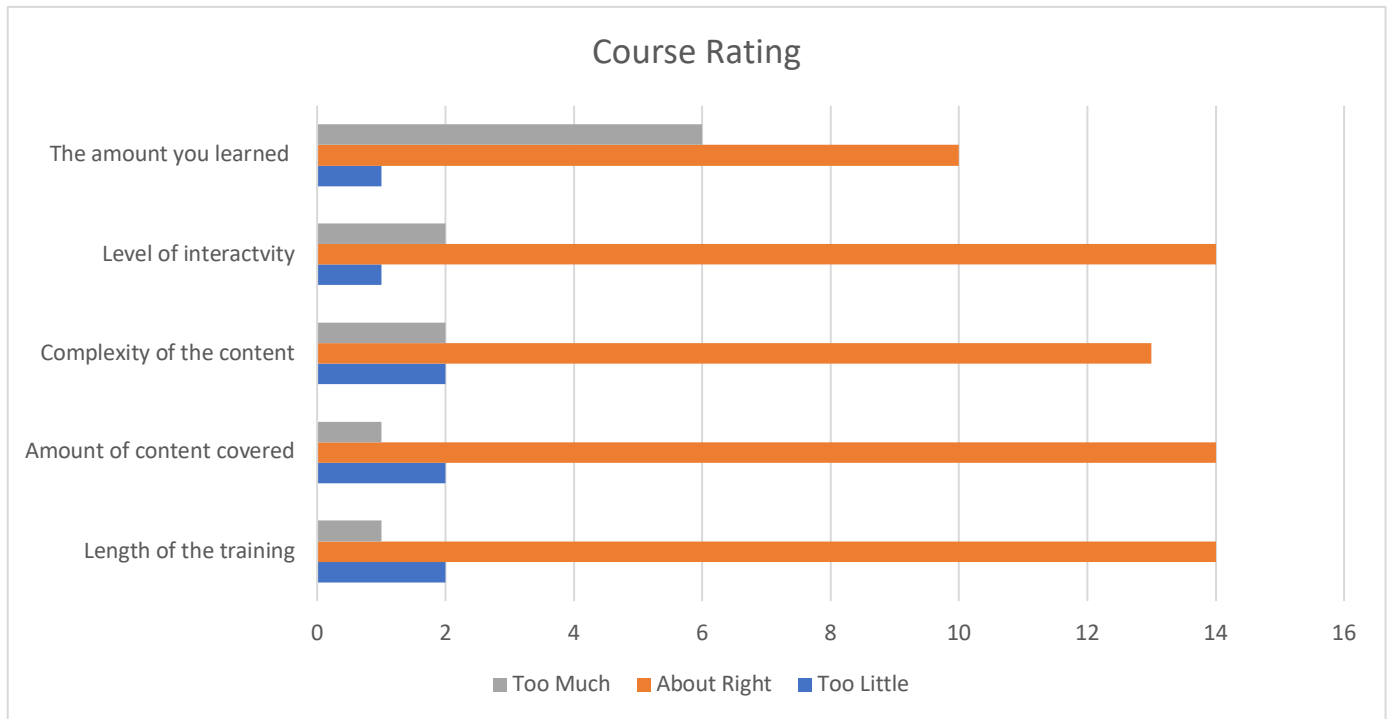
And, as seen in the table below, the majority of them said they would recommend the training course to other colleagues and their teams.

How likely are you to recommend this training to others?

17 responses

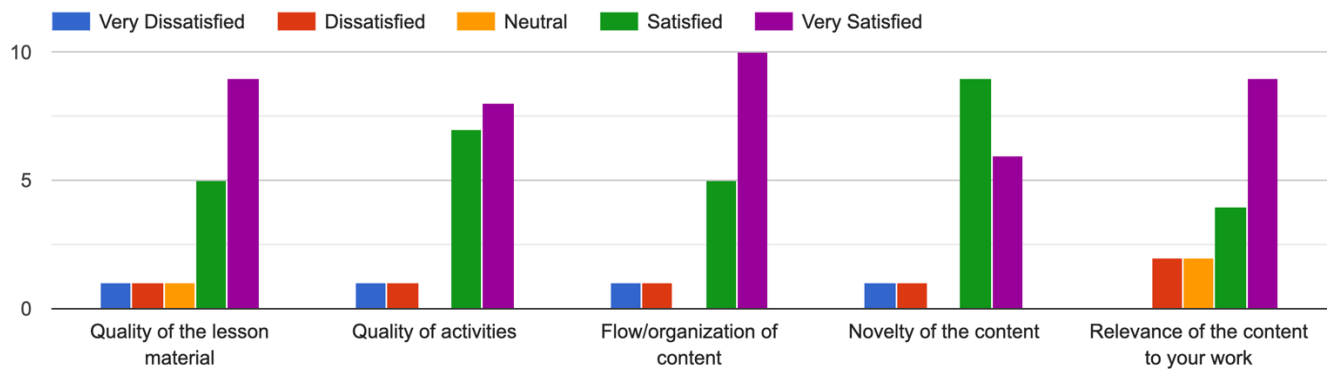


Participants offered their thoughts on the following charts when rating the extent to which they could comprehend and learn:



Participants provided the following feedback on the course content:

Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following:



What did you like the most about this training?

- (7/17) Application of learning through the Tabletop Exercise (TTX).
- (6/17) Group exercises that promoted learning and sharing experience.
- The diversity of participants (red cross, civil protection, nationalities), great group dynamic,
- Discovering new methodologies for context analysis (SPICE).
- Sharing different experiences, considering complexity of urban context.
- The training is providing knowledge to the participants with activities not only providing information.
- From my point of view, a member of civil protection, it is very useful to know the standards, and to use them in future work. and know how flexible the sphere standards are.

What did you like the least about this training?

- Not being familiar with the Sphere Standards before.
- (7/17) Time limitation specially for exercises.
- (2/17) Training was condensed in time and content.
- (4/17) Technical difficulties of online lectures.
- There is a need for practical examples of implementation of sphere in urban contexts. Concrete problem-solving examples.
- (2/17) Nothing.

How do you think this training could be improved?

- Could be useful for Urban context to have case studies with their real-life solutions, from different countries and disasters.
- To include one more exercise with more Sphere references or extend the TTX, so that responding organization can conduct part of planning, proposals according to Sphere.
- From my point of view, the TTX was more based on logistics part rather how to apply or test the standards in response time.
- Yes, for the TTX to be given more info to the Community group, because from a side they are giving the tips to the other groups, the needs and other. Also, as an idea the community group could be represented by moderators - as to be sure that the information which is provided to be accurate. Also, to be given more possibilities to be going after every day to the community as they understand what is doing from everyone for them so to prepare the new information. The TTX is great.
- To organize follow up online meeting with all participants with the aim to discuss TTX on Sphere - preparation for FLEX

Quotes from participants

“TTX was an amazing thing to experience something that happens every day in real world and for us to be able to learn how to react in those situations.”

“From my point of view, a member of civil protection, it is very useful to know the standards, and to use them in future work. and know how flexible the sphere standards are.”

“Could be useful for Urban context to have case studies with their real-life solutions, from different countries and disasters.”

“It was really great and supported me to see and understand more in details the urban context.”

8. Lessons learned

- Conduct the training entirely in-person or entirely online, as the hybrid approach was not so effective.
- It is advised that participants have basic Sphere knowledge and understand how indicators are adaptable to different contexts before joining this course.
- Provide practical examples from the applied urban context to supplement the curriculum, particularly for the urban concepts and systems approach.
- Extend and explain some of the technical approaches, such as the SPIC approach, using examples.
- Assign at least two facilitators to manage group action submissions and provide daily updates for the TTX.
- Update the TTX with new statistics and community profile information.
- Provide detailed instructions to the community group in order to maximize their participation in the TTX.

9. Appendix

Course Structure

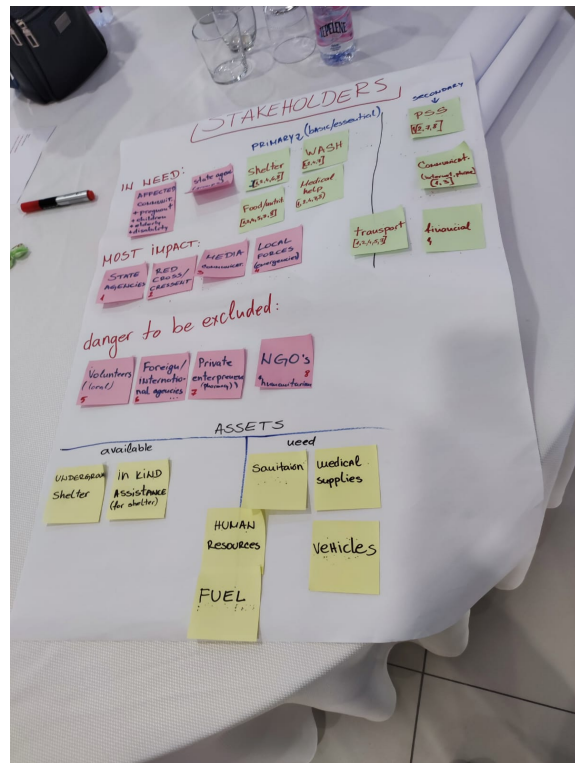
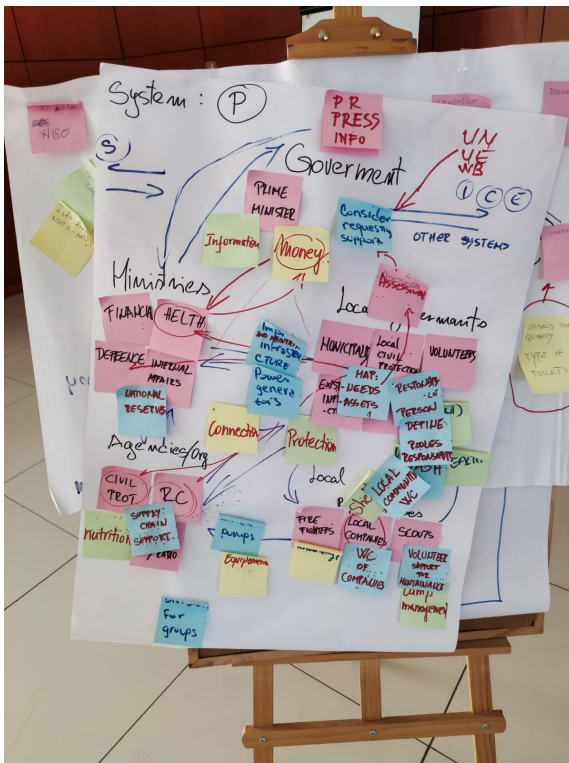
Day I	Module I. Introduction to Humanitarian Response in Urban Contexts	
SESSION TIME	SECTION	SUB-SECTION
09:00 – 10:30	Session 0. Introduction to the Course	0.I. Introduction to the Course 0.I. Module Overview ● Activity 0.I. Introductions 0.I.A. Course Learning Objectives ● Activity 0.I. Setting Expectations 0.I.C. Training Structure Overview 0.I.D. Activity Environment 0.I.E. Training Schedule Overview
10:30 – 10:45	Coffee break	
10:45 – 11:45	Session 1.0 Introduction to Humanitarian Response in Urban Contexts	1.0.A. Case Study: War in Ukraine ● Activity 1.0. Introducing the Urban Context 1.0.B. Key Features of Urban Contexts ● Activity 1.0. Why Are Urban Contexts Important? 1.0.C. Framing Urban Contexts Through Systems Thinking 1.0.D. Learning Objectives for Module I 1.0.E. Module Overview 1.0.F. Additional Reading
11:45 -12:30	Session 1.1 Defining the Urban Context	1.1. Section Overview ● Activity 1.1. Part 1 - Define the Urban Context 1.1.A. Definitions of Urban Contexts ● Activity 1.1. Part 2 - Group Definition of the Urban Context 1.1.B. Comparing Contexts 1.1.C. Identifying Opportunities 1.1.D. Identifying Challenges 1.1.E. Additional Reading
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch Break	

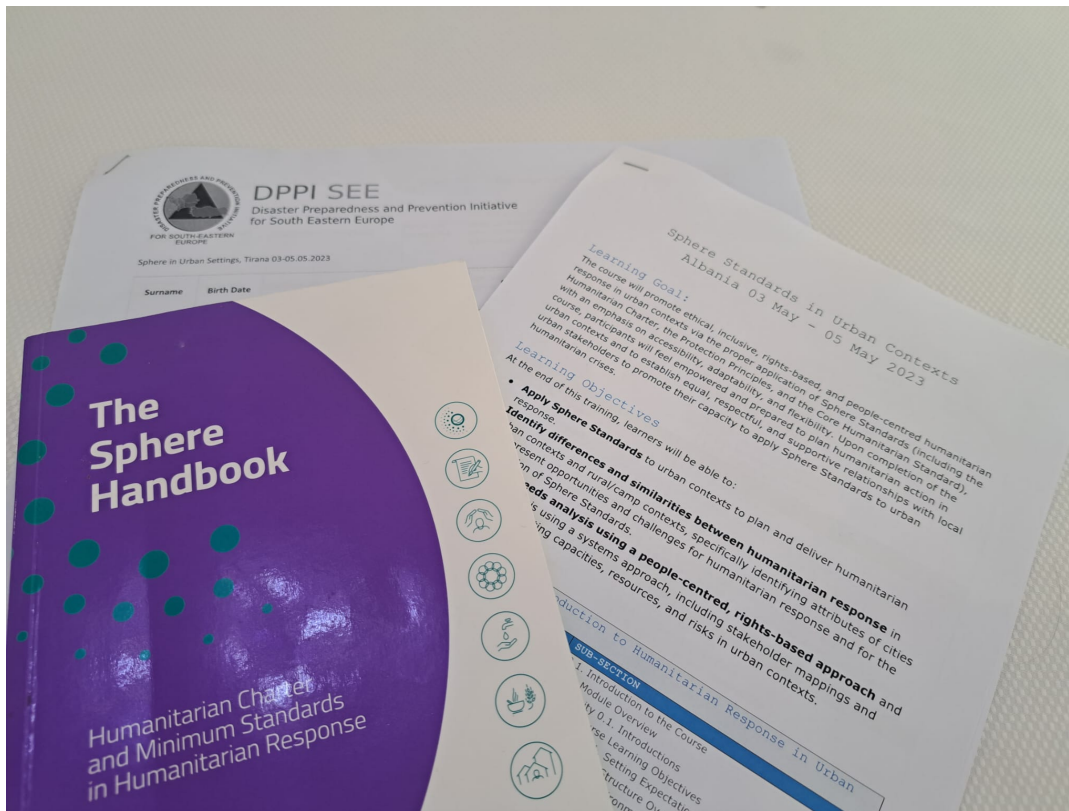
13:30 – 15:30	Session 1.2 Conceptualizing the urban context	1.2. Section Overview 1.2.A. Conceptualising Urban Response 1.2.B. Needs Analysis Using a People-Centred Approach ● Activity 1.2. Part 1 - Needs Analysis Using a People-Centred Approach 1.2.C. Context Analysis Using a Systems Approach 1.2.D. Systems Approaches to Context Analysis
15:30 – 15:45	Coffee Break	
15:45 -16:45	Session 1.2 Conceptualizing the urban context (continue)	● Activity 1.2. Part 2 - Systems Modelling Using the Five Urban Systems Approach
16:45 – 17:00	Session 1.4 Conclusions	Module Conclusions
Day 2	MODULE 2. Adapting and Applying Sphere Standards in Urban Contexts	
09:00 – 09:15	Session 2.0 Introduction to Sphere Standards in Urban Contexts	2.0.A. Relating Needs, Context, & Standards 2.0.B. Learning Objectives for Module 2 2.0.C. Module Overview 2.0.D. Additional Reading
09:15 – 10:30	Session 2.1. Defining the Sphere Standards	2.1. Section Overview 2.1.A. Defining Sphere 2.1.B. The Sphere Handbook 2.1.C. Defining the Sphere Standards 2.1.D. Meeting Sphere Standards ● Activity 2.1. Standards vs. Targets 2.1.E. Additional Reading
10:30 – 10:45	Coffee break	
10:45 – 12:30	Session 2.2. Conceptualising the Sphere Standards in Urban Contexts	2.2. Section Overview 2.2.A. Sphere Standards in Urban Contexts 2.2.B. Urban Complexity & Sphere 2.2.C. Case Study: War in Ukraine ● Activity 2.2. Exploring Standards in the Urban Context 2.2.D. Conceptualising Application 2.2.E. Adapting Indicators ● Activity 2.2. Adapting Indicators for the Urban Context 2.2.F. Additional Reading
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch Break	

13:30 – 15:30	<p>Session 2.2. Continue</p> <p>Session 2.3 Applying the Sphere Standards in Urban Contexts</p>	<p>● Activity 2.2. Adapting Indicators for the Urban Context</p> <p>2.2.F. Additional Reading</p> <p>2.3. Section Overview</p> <p>2.3.A. Practice Applying the Standards</p> <p>● Activity 2.3. Standards, Indicators, and Systems (Required)</p> <p>2.3.B. Additional Reading</p>
15:30 – 15:45	Coffee Break	
15:45 -17:00	<p>Session 3.0 Introduction to the TTX</p>	<p>3.0 Introduction</p> <p>3.1 Roles</p> <p>3.2 Exercise Landscape</p> <p>3.3 Actions</p> <p>3.4 Submitting Actions</p>
Day 3	MODULE 3. Applying the Sphere Standards to an Urban Humanitarian Response TTX	
09:00 – 10:30	<p>Session 3.1 Simulation</p>	TTX Simulation-Part I
10:30 – 10:45	Coffee break	
10:45 – 12:00	<p>Session 3.1 Simulation</p>	TTX Simulation-Part 2
12:00 – 12:30	Evaluation and Certificates	Evaluation and Certificates
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch Break	

Photo gallery







Event links on the DPPI and Sphere websites:

DPPI website: <https://www.dppi.info/dmtp/trainings-courses/albania/tirana/03-05-23/sphere-standards-urban-context-tirana-03-05-may-2023>

Sphere website: <https://spherestandards.org/event/sphere-standards-in-urban-contexts-3-5-may-2023-albania/>