PEOPLES UNIVERSITY

Disaster Management and Emergency Planning Module

Introduction to Disasters and Emergency Planning

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The issue is not whether emergencies will happen but when and how frequently. ’

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Outline

- Terminology
- Disaster types
- Components of emergency planning and response

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Terminology: Emergency or disaster?

- These two terms are often used interchangeably but there are subtle differences:
- Both are extreme events where the community has to react and respond to immediately.
- In an *emergency*, the community is able to cope with the situation. In a *disaster*, the severity of the situation exceeds the community ṡ ability to cope.

Terminology: Hazard or Risk?

- Another term often used is that of ‘hazard’. A *hazard* is the inherent property of a material or a situation to cause harm. Hazards are natural or manmade phenomena that can threaten lives or property.
- The *risk* is the likelihood that harm will arise as a result of that hazard.
- A hazard only becomes a *disaster* when lives are lost and property damaged and destroyed.
- For example:
  - Hazard – A deforested hillside
  - Risk – Likelihood of rainfall triggering a landslide in the deforested hillside
  - Disaster – Heavy rains triggered a landslide that killed dozens of people living in houses built on a deforested hillside.

Disaster types

- There are many different types of disasters.
- Some disasters occur rapidly within hours, days and weeks, e.g. cyclones and flooding. Other disasters manifest themselves gradually over months and years, such as the effects of drought and famine.
- Although often associated with natural phenomena, disasters can also be man-made. The effect of wars is a classic example of man-made disasters.

Disaster types - continued

- Rapid Onset
  - Natural disasters
    - earthquakes
    - cyclones
    - floods
    - landslides
    - tsunami
  - Man-made disasters
    - war
    - riots
    - fires
    - train accidents
    - oil/chemical spills
    - industrial accidents
- Slow Onset
  - Natural disasters
    - drought
    - Epidemics e.g. HIV/AIDS
  - Man-made disasters
    - chronic war
    - displacement
    - overfishing
    - environmental degradation
    - industrial pollution

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Disaster consequences

- Disasters can cause widespread damage and destruction.
- Emergency planners should try not to solely focus on the scenario (flooding, drought, etc.). What is more important is to try to anticipate the consequences of a disaster, and make plans and preparations to minimize or prevent these consequences from happening.
- It is not always necessary to develop individual emergency plans for every single hazard that exists. The consequences of the various disasters and the emergency response to these disasters can be very similar. As such, generic emergency plans can be developed to cope for a variety of situations.

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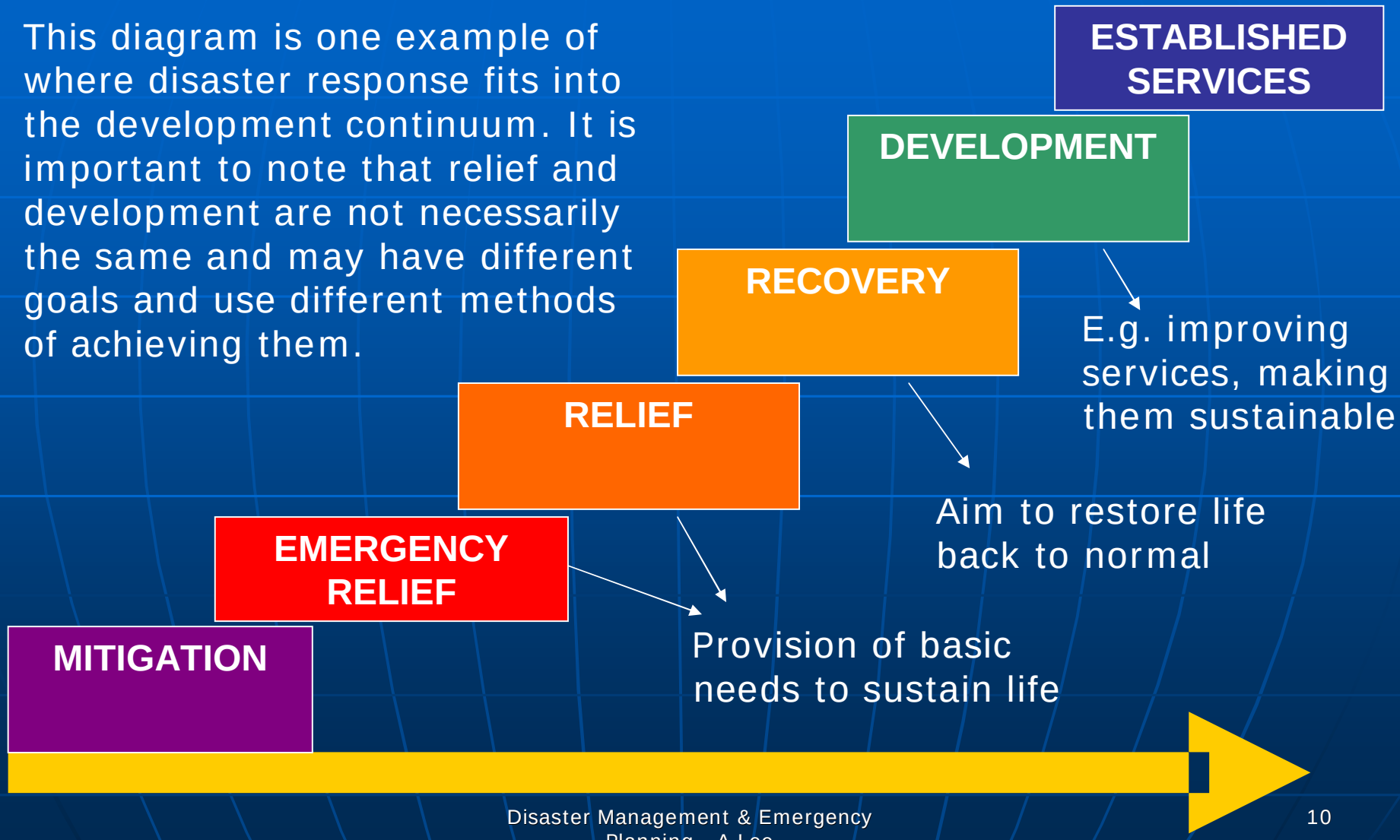
Disaster consequences

- Using the Asian tsunami disaster of 2004 as an example, here are some of the possible impacts:
  - Loss of life and multiple injuries
  - Displacement of people
    - This includes separation of families and communities
  - Transport infrastructure
    - e.g. damage to roads, railways, bridges
  - Communication
    - e.g. damage to telephone lines
  - Shelter
    - e.g. damage to homes
  - Utilities
    - e.g. loss of electricity, contamination of water supply, disruption of sanitation
  - Economic
    - e.g. damage to fishing boats, contamination of agricultural land
  - Dislodged mines in war affected areas
  - Damage to hospital buildings and stores

The Development Continuum

This diagram is one example of where disaster response fits into the development continuum. It is important to note that relief and development are not necessarily the same and may have different goals and use different methods of achieving them.



Key Components of Emergency Management

Key Components of Emergency Management

- Mitigation
  - Activities that reduce the degree of long-term risk from hazards
- Preparedness
  - Activities that develop operational capabilities for responding to an emergency
- Response
  - Activities taken immediately before, during, or directly after an emergency
- Recovery
  - Short-term activities to restore vital life-support systems to minimum operating standards and long-term activities that return life to normal

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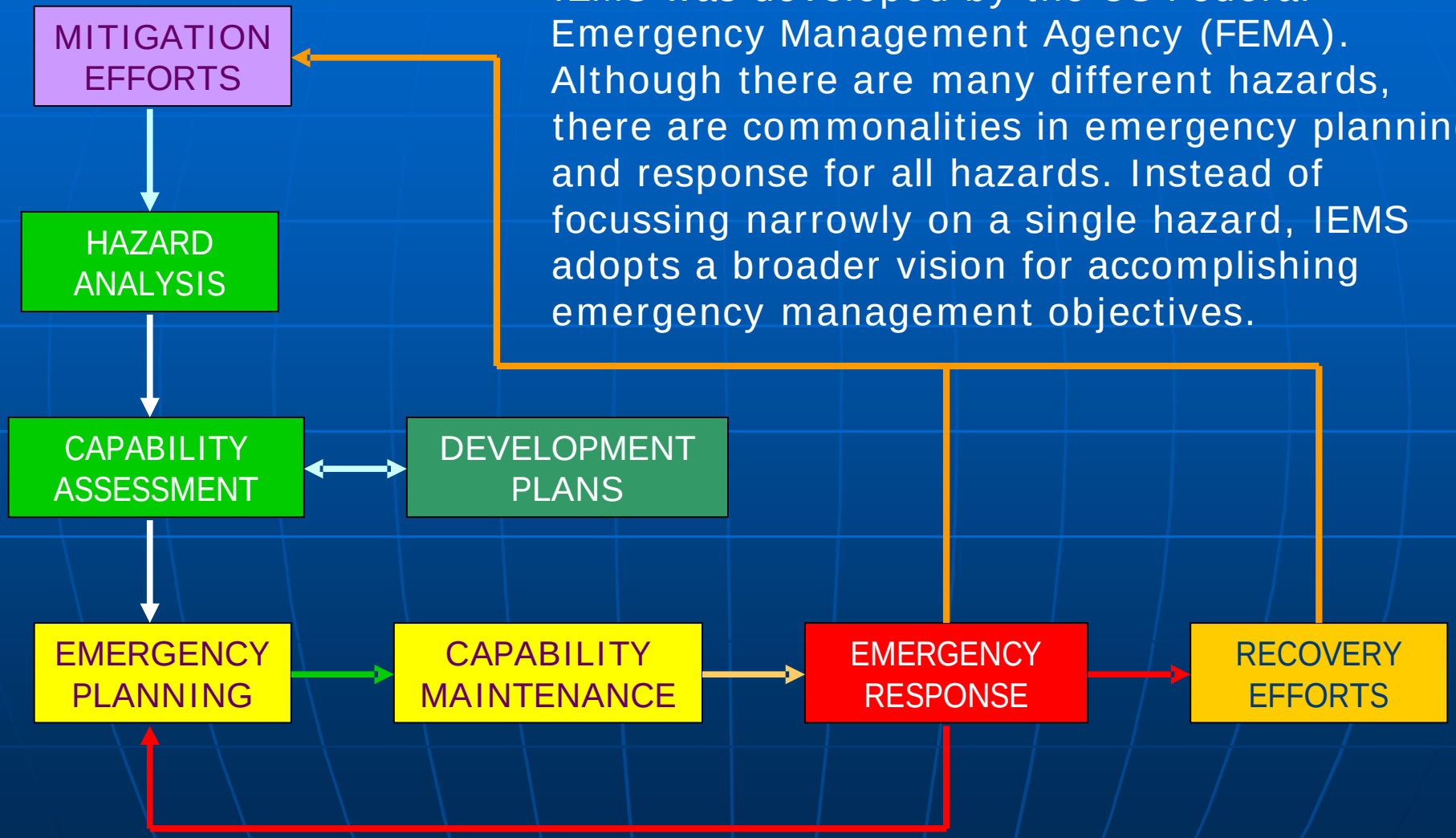
- *Anticipation and assessment,*
- *Prevention and preparation,*
- *Response and recovery*

- This is another simple framework which identifies 6 core components of emergency planning, preparation and response

Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS)

IEMS was developed by the US Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Although there are many different hazards, there are commonalities in emergency planning and response for all hazards. Instead of focussing narrowly on a single hazard, IEMS adopts a broader vision for accomplishing emergency management objectives.



IEMS Components:

- Hazard analysis
  - Identify potential hazards that might threaten the community
- Capability Assessment
  - Assess resources available and identify gaps
- Emergency Planning
  - Making plans and preparations in anticipation of a disaster
- Capability Maintenance
  - Updating plans, training staff and rehearsing plans to ensure readiness to respond to a disaster

IEMS Components - continued:

- Emergency response
  - Immediate actions to save lives and protect property
- Recovery
  - Action to restore the community back to pre-disaster state
- Mitigation
  - Planned actions to prevent and/or reduce the impact of (further) hazards
- Capability Maintenance
  - Updating plans, training staff and rehearsing plans to ensure readiness to respond to a disaster

? Exercise: The need to plan

- Consider in your setting:
  - Why is there a need to plan?
  - Who should do it?

Resources Disaster Management Topic 1

- *Public Health in the aftermath of disasters*
  - This article briefly outlines the challenges faced in disaster situations and the key priorities for action.
- *Hyogo Framework for Action*
  - This brochure outlines the international strategy for disaster reduction and priorities for action.
- *Hazard Assessment*
  - This appendix lists various natural hazards that may be encountered.
- *Natural disasters*
  - This article describes the different types of natural disasters that could be encountered, and has a useful figure which shows how needs can change over time.
- *ALNAP Lessons Papers*
  - This is an excellent web resource with several documents summarizing important lessons learnt from various disasters worldwide.