

CSER Course: Cooperation in Stability Operations

Disasters and conflicts are on the rise. How can responders increase their operational effectiveness even with diminishing resources? How can public, private, military, and voluntary sectors efficiently pursue both emergency relief and longer-duration reconstruction operations?

The Problem: Some organizations consult, coordinate and even plan with one another in a crisis, but too much evidence persists of stove piping, prejudice and misperceptions. The wasteful gaps and inefficiencies, particularly in logistics, are still evident during crises and are the subject of public criticism. Much of the problem lies in a lack of trust, preconceived attitudes, and self-generated impediments. Individual crisis responders are rarely—if ever—educated in the culture of their counterparts in other organizations. As a result, their strategies and planning are often inadequate or ineffective –unaffordable in today’s era of diminishing human, material, and financial resources.

The Mission: This five-day professional education program aims to change these dynamics, by assembling in an academic setting the relevant actors from a wide variety of crisis-response organizations. We build a level of communication and trust that leads to improving outcomes through cooperation. Educating planners, operators, and logisticians from different organizational cultures to understand one another and be interoperable and agile in crisis environments, is critical for success. We discuss challenges during a crisis such as the absence of command authorities, sharing scarce logistics channels, and prioritizing short- versus medium-term requirements of victim populations. The course also focuses on the role of the host nation, which is sometimes neglected in the implementation of stabilization strategies. The sovereignty, capacity, and authorities of the host government and local non-governmental entities are essential parts of any collaborative stabilization effort, especially regarding logistics operations.



Communication across disparate organizational cultures is the focus of this course.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify misperceptions, biases, and miscommunications that destroy trust and prevent cooperation;
- Discuss missions, roles, cultures and toolkits of participating organizations;
- Raise the profile of host nations’ public and private sectors in stabilization solutions;
- Expose non-logisticians to the logistics challenges of crisis environments;
- Promote innovation and leadership in overcoming institutional inertia;
- Elicit lessons and best practices from a 360° review of recent high-profile case studies; and
- Leverage the residential experience to deepen professional networks across functions and organizational cultures.

Who Should Take This Course? The desired participant profile is an individual involved in planning, operations or logistics, and experienced in post-disaster/post-conflict environments: U.S. government civilians – GS-13 to GS-15; U.S. and international military – O-4 to O-6; international organizations – equivalent of GS-13 to GS-15; NGOs and private sector –managers with comparable experience in crisis response.

Upcoming Programs: March 13-18 and August 7-12, 2016; all in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Please contact us for information on course cost.

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