

American Logistics Aid Network Supply Chain Disaster Simulation

Overview

How would you respond to a crisis if your business supplied items desperately needed after a disaster? If you worked for a non-profit, could you ensure disaster survivors received everything they needed? What if you were a government employee charged with managing logistics for emergencies?

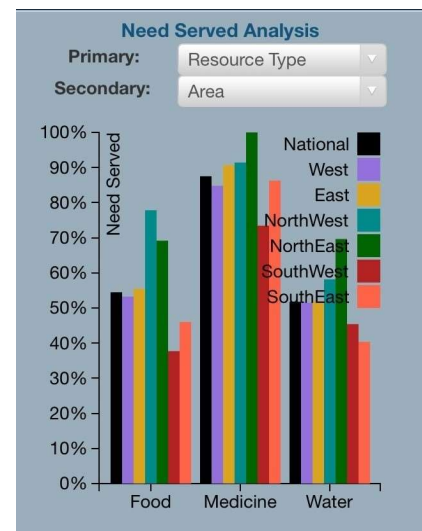


The American Logistics Aid Network (ALAN) Disaster Simulation uses virtual and live action role playing to simulate post-disaster supply chains for key commodities. Attendees use smart-phones or tablets to play the role of a business, government, or non-profit organizations working in a crisis scenario. Each role has a different objective, requiring players to coordinate and collaborate with their sector, demographic, and geographic partners to fill gaps and reduce overlap to keep supply lines open. Players begin with resources they can sell or donate, and money they can donate or use to acquire additional resources to reach individual and team goals. A three day horizon mimics the critical 72 hour window faced during real-life relief efforts. The session includes visual performance metrics to allow players to review system-wide impacts of their actions, and a hot-wash style discussion reveals strategies for addressing the real world gaps reflected in game-play.

Learning Objectives

The exercise illustrates how differing objectives and perceptions may inhibit effective response, and highlights the need for coordination across sectors. The debrief can be customized to include additional conversations on topics such as:

- Planning vs. execution
- Breaking down silos between and within sectors and jurisdictions
- Leveraging public and private resources to meet community and survivor needs
- Coordination without unity of command
- Synchronization and optimization of disaster relief supply chains
- Effective communications / information sharing
- Cross-sector partnerships
- Team building
- Trust & reputation
- Communication, Cooperation, Collaboration, Coordination, & Competition
- Complexity & adaptation in supply networks



Anticipated Outcomes

Feedback from this simulation indicates that this format of learning is extremely effective at breaking down silos and quickly building camaraderie. The gameplay rewards not just those who are individually effective, but requires all attendees to work together towards a common goal of serving the shelter populations. This experience plants the seeds of trusted relationships critical to effective collaboration during a real emergency event.