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Security and resilience — Crisis management — Concepts, principles and framework

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 292 *Security and resilience*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

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Introduction

0.1 Context

The ability to respond to and recover from a crisis has become a primary concern of governments, public and private sector organizations, and regional, urban, and local communities. This concern has led to an increased emphasis on crisis response and governance by boards of management and business owners.

Crises conditions can manifest throughout all elements of society and significantly impact upon the goals and objectives of nations, regional and urban areas, communities, organizations (both public sector and private enterprise) and individual people.

Crises may arise from failures to manage security of assets, information, reputations or sovereign risks to governments or organizations or to provide safety and protection of members of society from personal injury, loss, or harm.

Guidance on crisis management and decision making under uncertainty is a much sought-after global commodity.

This document provides guidance on the origins of crises and their relationship to the global social, economic, and technological systems and their interaction with the natural environment. A social-ecological system (SES) model is used to define the social and environmental dependencies and how the condition of these systems can change unexpectedly. It provides the knowledge to build a framework for crisis prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

Integral to the framework is recognition of an organizations internal and external context in which crises conditions can develop. The SES model explains the complex relationship between elements of the total systems environment in which the organization operates and achieves its objectives. The framework also establishes concepts, principles, and a structure under which all standards relating to crises can be defined and classified, creating a logical reference for the development of an ISO family of standards for crisis management.

0.2 Focus

This document provides an informative guide to the factors contributing to crises which have the potential to pose an existential threat to people, organizations, communities, government, and societies.

In relation to societal security and resilience, a state of crisis comprises an increased level of complexity with interconnecting elements and a range of changing circumstances, often under conditions of high uncertainty. Significant adverse consequences can arise that create challenges for individuals and organizations if early warning indicators of crises are not recognised and acted upon.

Understanding the nature of crises, their key elements, characteristics and traits and the way crises evolve, is an essential prerequisite for implementation of policies, strategies and plans for anticipating crises and their management during and in post crisis situations.

Crises can be viewed from a range of different perspectives. They arise out of varying circumstances and with different effect in almost any personal, community, organizational or natural environment. Often the human element is a common thread contributing to systemic failures and crises.

With a high degree of interconnectivity, a state of crisis can also create a contagion effect, transmitting the consequences of crises among people and to organizations.

Frequently, the emergence of a state of personal crises for an individual may have a direct effect on other people, creating social crisis contagion, simply by association. The inability of people to cope with difficult or intolerable personal circumstances can result in poor judgement or irrational decision making in the workplace, thereby exposing the organization to failures that may ultimately affect the operational integrity of the business and its brand and reputation.

Systemic failures such as the global financial crisis and the world-wide COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrate that crises can transition to, and transcend all boundaries of modern society.

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In today's complex and interconnected society, organizations need to better understand the multiple sources and vectors of risk and how knowledge of these critical interdependencies and their influences on people, organizations and communities can contribute to more effective crisis management policies and strategies and plans.

The social-ecological system (SES) model and framework for establishing the contexts in which crises originate and how they determine a crisis, is shown in Figure 1.

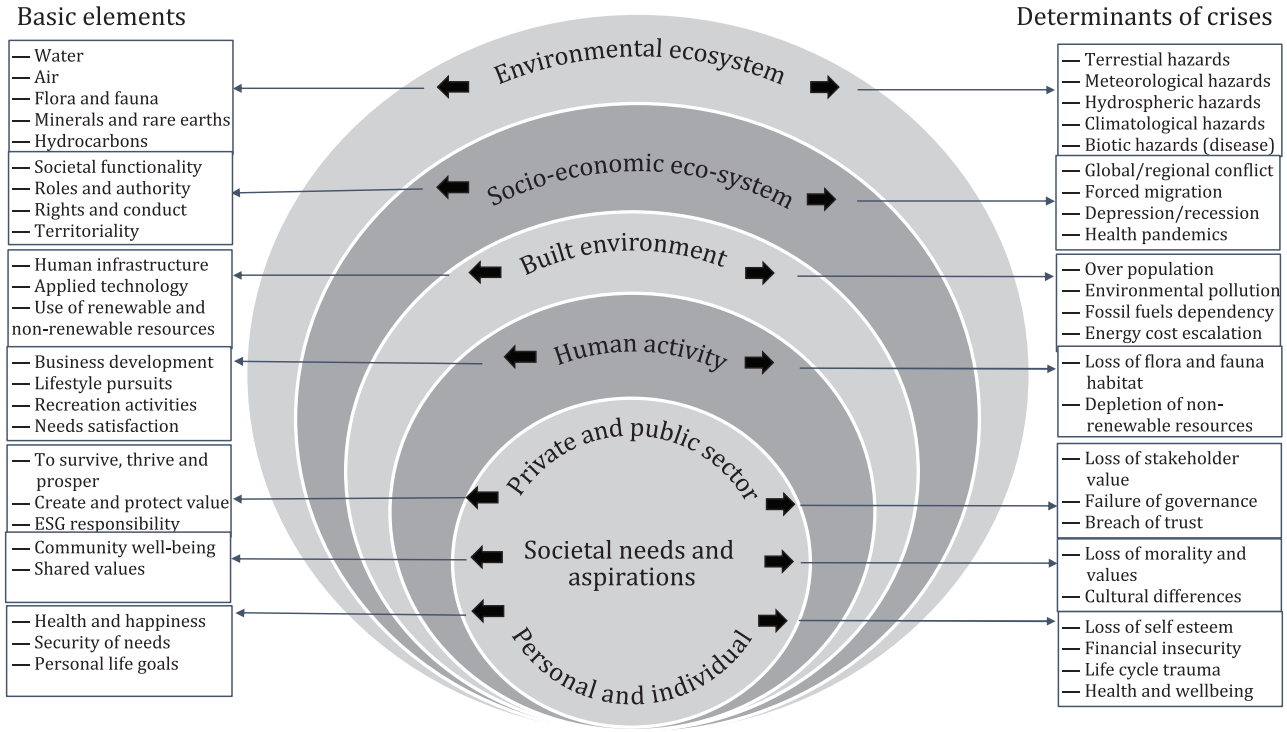

Figure 1 — Crises framework - the social-ecological system (SES) model

Figure 2 provides the basis for understanding of sources of crises. It illustrates the fundamental elements of a social-ecological system and the interactions between multiple system components. Any changes in context (structure or composition) in any of the sub-systems, or changes in interconnected and overlapping relationships, can be the source of abnormal or extraordinary events, and unstable conditions leading to issues, incidents, emergencies, and potential crisis situations.

Early detection of changes in conditions within systems that are often complex, creates awareness of potential factors that can influence or contribute to crises affecting an individual, organization, community or society and the way in which they interface with the natural environment.

Issues, incidents, emergencies, and crises can emerge directly from changes in a single system component. However, the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity associated with unstable conditions in the connecting nodes and their links within a social-ecological system can significantly influence the rate at which these changes in the environment can transition to emergency or crisis conditions.

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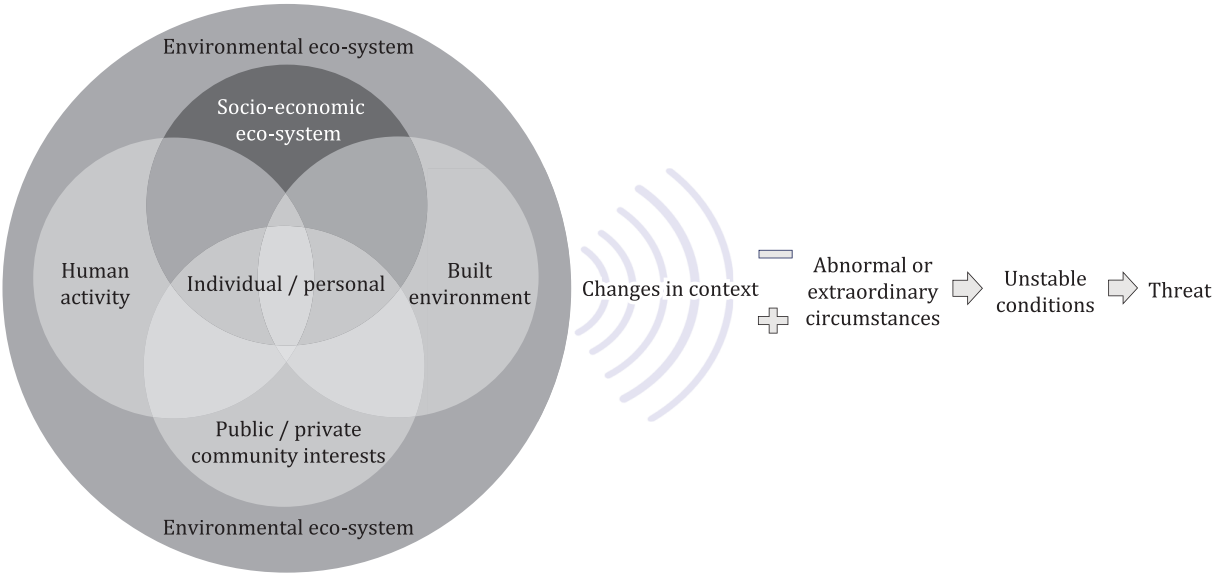

Figure 2 — Systems changes and emergence of initiating events

0.3 Purpose

This document provides information to help users understand crisis concepts and principles. It explains the inherent characteristics of crises, and identifies areas for analysis where improved policies, strategies and standards can be developed to enhance the resilience of people, organizations, communities, governments, and societies, to anticipate, prepare, respond to, recover from, or adapt to crises. It establishes a conceptual framework, applying an integrated social-ecological systems approach to contextualizing crises as they relate to the human factor, and their impact upon, communities, organizations, governments, and society generally.

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Security and resilience — Crisis management — Concepts, principles and framework

1 Scope

This document provides an outline of crisis concepts and the principles that inform and support contemporary thinking on the circumstances and conditions under which crises can develop.

It specifies:

— concepts and principles, governing crises;

— the social-ecological system (SES) framework in which crises develop;

— factors that contribute to crises;

— the progression and evolution of a crisis;

— a structure for classifying crises;

— the relationship between issues, incidents, emergencies, disasters, and crises;

— a crisis taxonomy for the systematic development of policies, strategies, and standards, relevant to crisis management (see Annex A).

This document does not provide guidance on how organizations can:

— manage physiological or psychological aspects of human reactions to personal crises;

— manage personal health or public health crisis affecting individuals, communities, or having broader impacts on society;

— design, develop or implement crisis management programs or plans;

— develop a strategic capability for crisis management;

— apply crisis management techniques to specific crisis situations.

This document is applicable to all organizations. It can also be applied by standards users and standards writers and educators. It encourages a better understanding of crisis concepts and the interconnected characteristics of factors that contribute to crises through referencing the crisis controls and effects social-ecological system model. The application of the principles described in this document can encourage consistency in the use of crises related terms and definitions and complements other ISO standards for crisis management.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 22300, *Security and resilience — Vocabulary*

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3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 22300 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at https://www.electropedia.org/

3.1
all-hazards approach
comprehensive approach to preparedness that ensures that organizational capabilities, and controls are designed and applied in such a way as to be able to respond to all types of disruptive events, irrespective of their nature or cause

Note 1 to entry: In relation to crises, the all-hazards approach recommends the use of a single set of crisis management response systems that are appropriate to any source or type of hazard and crises.

3.2
context
external and internal factors that form the setting for an event, activity, statement, idea, or concept

3.3
crisis
unstable condition involving an impending abrupt or significant change that requires urgent attention and action to protect life, assets, property or the environment

Note 1 to entry: In the broader context of society, a crisis can pose an existential threat to an individual, organization or community or have a significant impact on the viability and integrity of the party exposed to the threat.

Note 2 to entry: Crises can include a high degree of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity which can change the context in which relevant parties achieve their objectives.

Note 3 to entry: Crises require an appropriate response at a decisive or critical control point in their development,

[SOURCE: ISO 22300:2021, 3.1.60, modified — Notes 1, 2, 3 to entry have been added.]

3.4
crisis condition
set of circumstances or measurable factors that determine the state of a crisis

Note 1 to entry: Conditions that determine the state of a crisis can change from its original inception, through stages of intervention or escalation or resolution.

3.5
crisis intervention
provision of specialist support and coping strategies to immediately stabilize individuals experiencing a personal crisis and to restore affected individuals to pre-crisis levels of functioning and cognitive ability

Note 1 to entry: Crisis intervention is an immediate short-term action with a focus on situation management rather than resolution.

Note 2 to entry: Unstable conditions are the most common cause of a situational crisis, where crisis intervention techniques are applied.

3.6
disaster
situation where widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses have occurred that exceeded the ability of the affected organization, community or society to respond and recover using its own resources

Note 1 to entry: in the context of an individual, a disaster may exceed the ability of a person to respond and recover without external support from crisis intervention specialists.

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