

Environmental Emergencies Centre

www.eecentre.org

LEARN. PREPARE. SHARE.

Annual Report 2015



Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit
Prepare. Respond. Protect.



Summary

The document provides information on the EEC developments and site usage in 2015

Background information

The Environmental Emergencies Centre (EEC) was launched in 2013 upon the recommendation of the 8th Advisory Group on Environmental Emergencies (AGEE) as a way to strengthen national capacities for effective environmental emergency preparedness. It has become an online support platform and knowledge hub for environmental emergency preparedness and is managed by the Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit (JEU). Through the EEC, the JEU provides services, upon request, to assist countries in strengthening their capacity to prepare for and respond to environmental emergencies.

As a result of the successful project, supported by the Governments of Norway and Sweden, the EEC is now an online knowledge hub designed primarily to provide national responders with a one-stop shop of all information relevant to the preparedness, response and recovery stages of an environmental emergency. The EEC contributes to awareness-raising and capacity development and enables expertise in the field of environmental emergency response more widely available.

The EEC serves as an online space providing open access to guidelines, advocacy tools, legal documents, training courses, discussion forum, updates on current environmental emergencies and events.

Five e-Learning modules are hosted on the EEC:

- **Beyond Response:** Better Preparedness for Environmental Emergencies available in English, French, Arabic and Spanish;
- **Introduction to Industrial Accidents:** Prevention, Preparedness and Response available in English, French and Russian;
- **Disaster Waste Management:** Best Practices and Tools available in English;
- **Introduction to the Flash Environmental Assessment Tool (FEAT)** available in English; and
- **Environment in Humanitarian Action** available in English and French.

The EEC Resource Library contains guidelines, tools, reports and publications on preparedness and response to environmental emergencies.

The News section of the EEC provides updates on the JEU and partners' activities in the field of environmental emergencies.

The Events calendar shows conferences, meetings, symposia, round tables and events open to public that could be of interest for the site users.

The Global Community contains information on the JEU networks and partners and should in the future contain a complete and up-to-date database of the preparedness and response partners, donors and assistance seekers.

ReliefWeb Newsfeed featuring latest news from <http://reliefweb.int>.

An external link to the discussions forum redirects to LinkedIn on-line forum where users can comment on the latest developments related to environmental emergencies and provide feedback on their use of the EEC trainings and resources.

Environmental Emergencies Centre in 2015

Following achievements were made in 2015:

- A total of 321 EEC users have completed on-line trainings and received certificates throughout 2015. 11,205 people have visited the EEC generating a total of 41,155 page views. 68% of all users visited the EEC for the first time in 2015. The total number of registered users has surpassed 1,400 (doubled in comparison with 2014). Detailed site usage statistics is provided in Annex 1.
- The “Environment in Humanitarian Action” e-learning course has become available in French.
- 23 additional resources (reports, guidelines, tools and various publications) have been added to the EEC Resource Library.
- 35 news items and 32 calendar events of potential interest to the EEC users were added to the site news and calendar page respectively.
- 3 Newsletters were sent to all registered EEC users throughout 2015.

New EEC Manager (Liza Rubach) was hired and assumed her duties as of April 2015. New e-learning Specialist (Angela Wagner) and Learning Expert (Bobby Jourdan) consultants as well as the Russian (Andrei Arkhipets) and Spanish (Julian Mollina) translators were hired late December 2015 and will support the development of new and revision of old e-courses in 2016. The previous learning expert (Daniela Martini) was working on the EEC at 50% as of June 2015 and has left the team as of 8 January 2016. The JEU team (Emilia Wahlstrom, Rene Nijenhuis, Greg Grimsich, Dawit Yared) have been providing support throughout the year.

Web developer company Experientia was selected as a result of the bidding process in April – May 2015. Experientia will take over EEC web management and fix recurring issues with the site, in particular by changing the site server provider and content management system. The company could not assume its duties in 2015 due to administrative delays with contract procurement. The contact with Experientia is expected to be finalized in early 2016. Throughout 2015 and until the finalization of the contract with Experientia, the EEC web-management is supported by Himali Kiran on the basis of a consultancy contract.

The Project “Strengthening National Capacities for Effective Environmental Emergency Preparedness” whereby the EEC was established has undergone independent evaluation (by external evaluator Karen Wong) in April – July 2015. In the evaluation process, an e-survey was sent to registered EEC users. According to e-survey respondents, the EEC has been a good source of information about environmental issues. More than half of the survey respondents consider that the EEC has been somewhat effective in addressing and supporting their information and capacity building needs. The summary of Specific Recommendations for the EEC included in the Terminal Internal Review of the above Project is provided in Annex 2.

The evaluation questionnaire available upon completion of all five e-learning modules shows that 57% of EEC users are very satisfied, 35% are satisfied, 7% neutral and 1% are not very satisfied with the EEC e-learnings (no one said there were entirely dissatisfied). Annex 3 provides detailed statistics on the user satisfaction with each of the e-learning modules.

On-going Discussions with Partners

In 2015 several discussions were held with the JEU partners to explore potential synergies between the EEC and capacity building initiatives and learning platforms of the respective partners. In particular, potential future collaboration was discussed with:

- UNECE: continued partnership in enhancing the Industrial Accidents on-line module, potential inclusion of webinars, review and update of the module;
- The Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions: the possibility of joint on-line trainings, such as, for example, a training on hazardous waste management to prevent and recover from disasters;
- UNCTAD: the possibility of getting support for the Moodle platform but the option has not been explored in detail;
- UNEP DTIE/APELL: APELL and CAPP subdomains of the EEC:
 - ➔ automatic integration to the global website (EEC) of the news, events, publications, etc. posted on subdomains;
 - ➔ overall administration of the subdomains;

These discussions need to be resumed between UNEP DTIE/APELL and Experientia directly once Experientia assumes its duties as EEC web-management company;

- UNU: possible collaboration with the United Nations University, Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) in following areas was discussed:
 - ➔ UNU-EHS has taken over to host the secretariat of the [OPEN ECB Check initiative](#), a new accreditation and quality improvement scheme for E-Learning programmes and institutions in international Capacity Building. This may be interesting as this mechanism is certifying existing e-learning modules. Furthermore, there is also the option to train interested persons to become referees for Open ECB Check, a sort of in-house capacity development;
 - ➔ in spring 2016 UNU-EHS will have a new intake of students and UNU partners can link them to the EEC and its e-learning modules
- OCHA: discussion ensued in area of how to make the EEC respond better to the ESB information needs and make it a useful platform for the whole of OCHA.

It is recommended to continue discussions on above collaborations. These and other partnership opportunities should be explored in 2016.

Next Steps

Key EEC developments for 2016 are expected to be as follows:

- Move to a new Web developers company (Experientia) that will improve the site's usability and fix some identified technical issues;
- The EEC on-line trainings will become available in additional languages:
 - ➔ Chinese and Spanish version of the Industrial Accidents online training module;
 - ➔ French and Spanish versions of the Disaster Waste Management online training module;
 - ➔ Spanish and Russian versions of the Environment in Humanitarian Action online training module;
- Two of the EEC on-line trainings will be reviewed and re-designed by the new E-learning specialist hired to this end. The improved trainings will be available on the EEC in the first quarter of 2016:
 - ➔ Beyond Response: Better Preparedness for Environmental Emergencies; and
 - ➔ Introduction to the Flash Environmental Assessment Tool.
- The EEC Engagement Strategy and Maintenance Document will be finalized.

Potential challenges and constrains for 2016:

- The EEC Manager position will be discontinued as of April 2016;
- Lack of human resources to implement the Engagement Strategy, promote the EEC and follow-up on the recommendations identified through the EEC evaluation and communication with partners and users;
- The establishment of community of practice will be limited in the absence of a dedicated staff member;
- Creation of the database of partners and networks and its systematic update will be hindered due to reduced capacity.

Environmental Emergencies Centre

The Environmental Emergency Centre (EEC) is an online tool designed to strengthen the capacity of national responders to environmental emergencies by building on their own mechanism and drawing on the resources and services of EEC partners.

2015 EEC SITE USAGE STATISTICS

Certificates issued per e-learning module in 2015

CERTIFICATES



BEYOND RESPONSE:
Better Preparedness for Environmental
Emergencies



DISASTER WASTE MANAGEMENT:
best practices and tools



ENVIRONMENT IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION



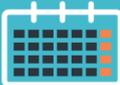
INTRODUCTION TO INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS:
prevention, preparedness and response



INTRODUCTION TO THE FLASH
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT TOOL



TOTAL CERTIFICATES ISSUED FOR
E-LEARNINGS COMPLETION



(01 Jan 2015 - 31 Dec 2015)

EEC Users Statistics 2015

Website Visitor Statistics

Total Visits
11,205



32%

Returning visitors



68%

New visitors



TOTAL PAGEVIEWS - 41,155

Registered Users

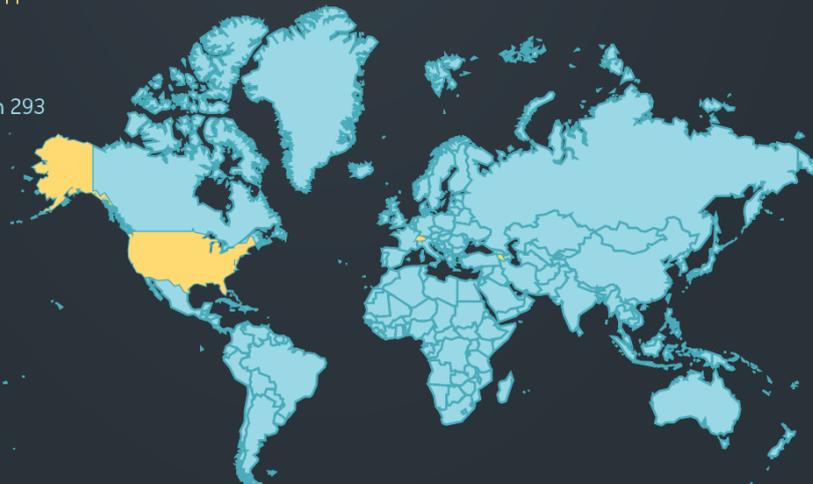
Total Registered Users In 2015 - 661

Total Registered EEC Users - >1,400



Website Visitor Statistics

1. United States 2,114
2. Switzerland 941
3. Armenia 784
4. Nepal 614
5. United Kingdom 293
6. India 283
7. France 281
8. China 269
9. Germany 243
10. Italy 232
11. Canada 210
12. Japan 199
13. Russia 198
14. Sweden 198
15. Kenya 187



GENERAL STATISTICS 2015

Top Contents

42%	Main Page	13,121	
21%	Online Learning	6,628	
20%	Site Registration	6,082	
3%	About EEC	841	
3%	News	817	
3%	Resources	804	
2%	Disaster Waste Management Guidelines (DWMG)	718	
2%	Training Workshops	515	
1%	Tools Guidance	428	
1%	Global Community	393	
1%	Contact Us	332	
1%	Publication	264	
0%	Useful Links	105	

Browser



Devices



Operating system

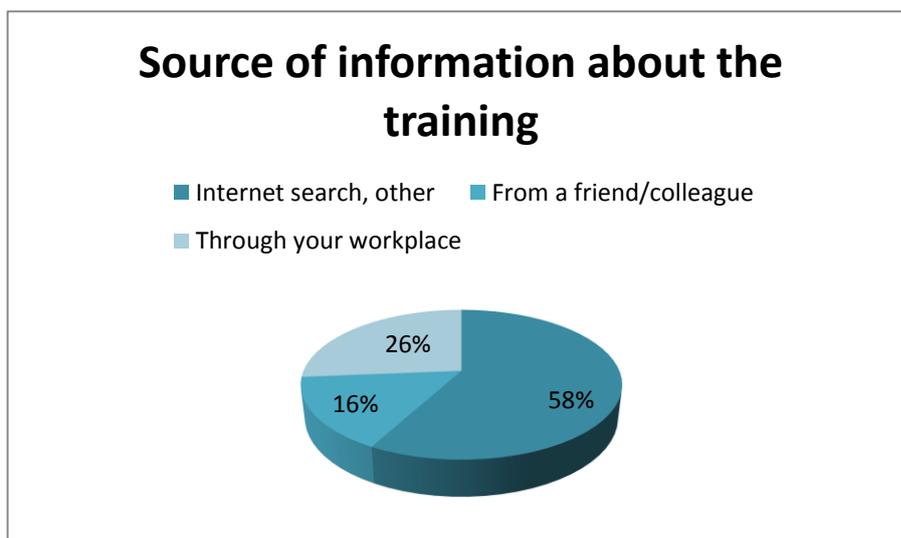
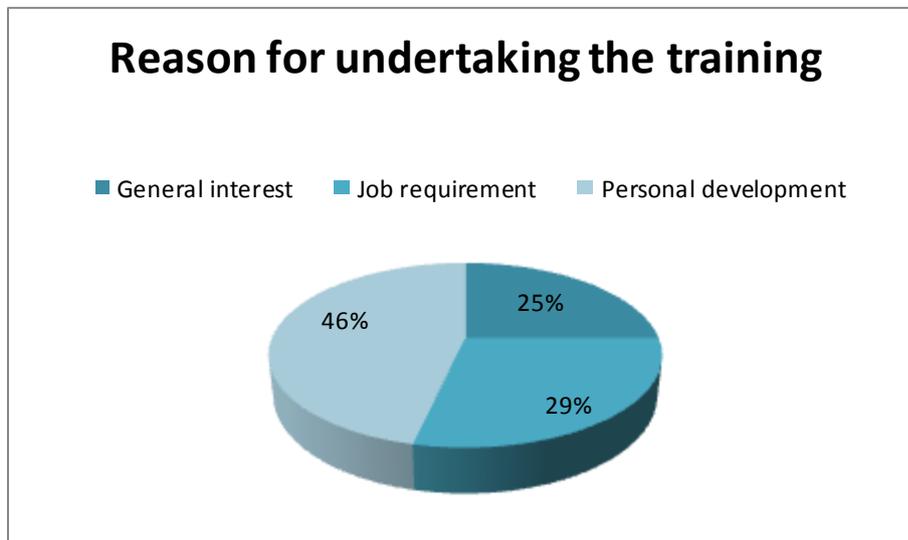


Annex 2. Specific Recommendations for the EEC from the Terminal Internal Review of the UNEP Project “Strengthening National Capacities for Effective Environmental Emergency Preparedness”

1. Make the EEC and its services more visible to the intended audience. For example, announcing the e-learnings on LinkedIn to make more people aware of the training. Some EEC users found the e-trainings by searching for online free training programs in the humanitarian field.
2. Develop a standardized training curricula of basic issues that staff have to understand and manage in the preparedness and response in environmental emergencies and group the series of trainings in a comprehensive and mutually reinforcing way that can allow participants to get a Diploma -or other kind of certification- on Environmental Emergency Preparedness.
3. To better meet users’ learning needs and requirements, e-Survey Respondents have indicated the following options in priority order.
 - Offer possibility to download online modules as PDF
 - Instructor-led online courses with completion deadlines and reviewed assignments
 - Add multimedia (video and audio)
 - Instruction-led courses (vocal guidance throughout online modules)
 - Include webinars
 - Facilitate opportunities to peer-to-peer learning exchange (through Discussion forums and other peer-to-peer learning opportunities)
 - Be available in other languages (Spanish was mentioned three times)
 - Cover more topics
4. In case of limited funding, it is recommended to give preference to offer the possibility to download online modules as pdf, include mentored-online trainings, add optional multimedia functionalities, and facilitate opportunities to peer-to-peer learning exchange opportunities.
5. Secure the role of a Knowledge Manager who can moderate discussions in a Discussion Forum and support the establishment of a Community of Practice/Learning Community per topic.
6. Allow a bi-directional communication between EEC and users and document case studies and implementation efforts or challenges faced by e-learning participants.
7. Enhance the eLearning modules by including sections of practical application of different tools.

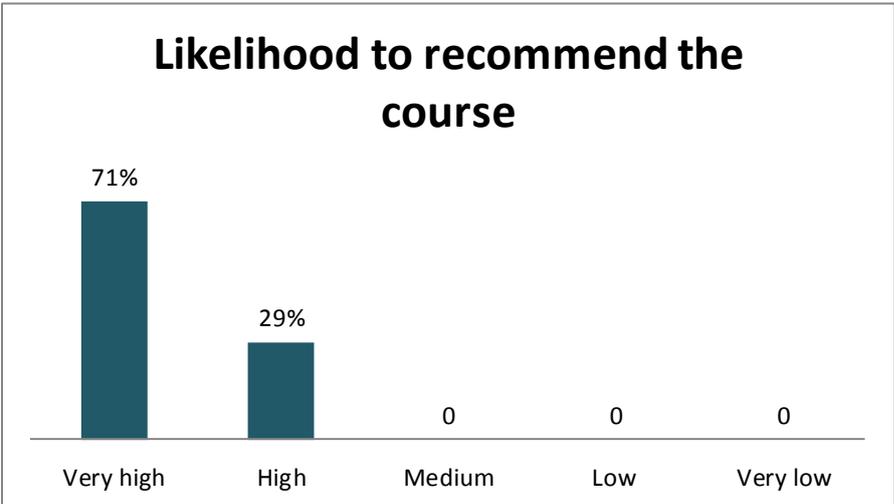
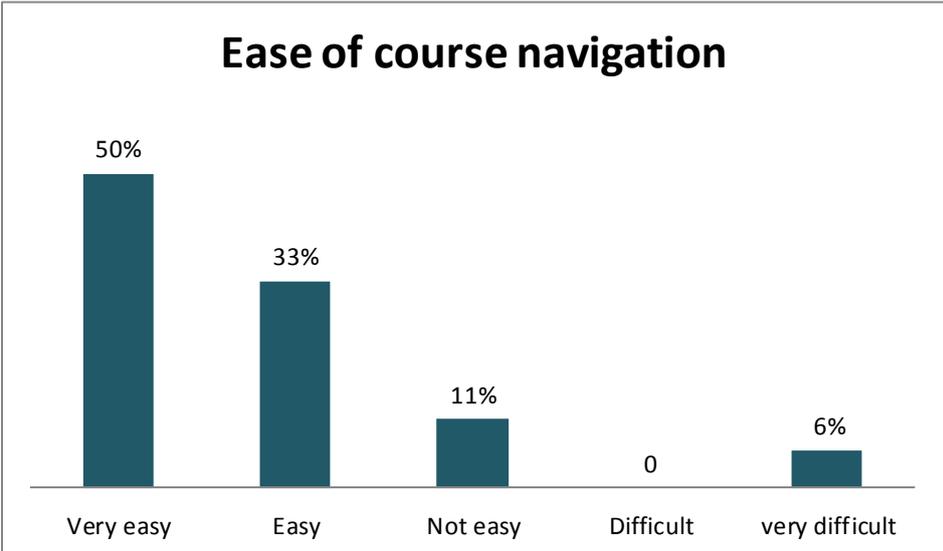
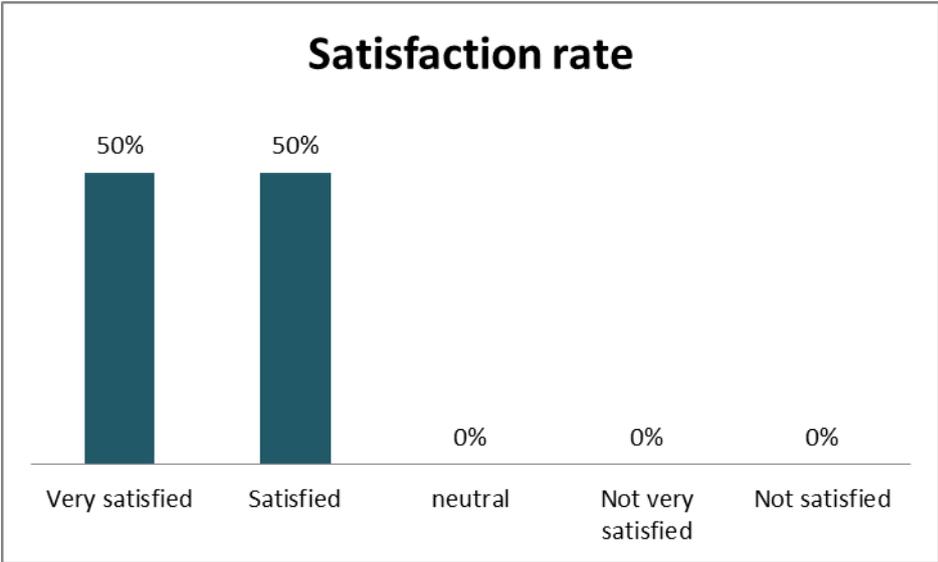
Annex 3. User satisfaction with the EEC on-line learnings

From March to December 2015, a total of 18 respondents provided answers to the questions of on-line questionnaire in respect of the e-learning course *“Beyond Response: Better Preparedness for Environmental Emergencies”* after undertaking this e-learning course. Below is the summary of survey results.

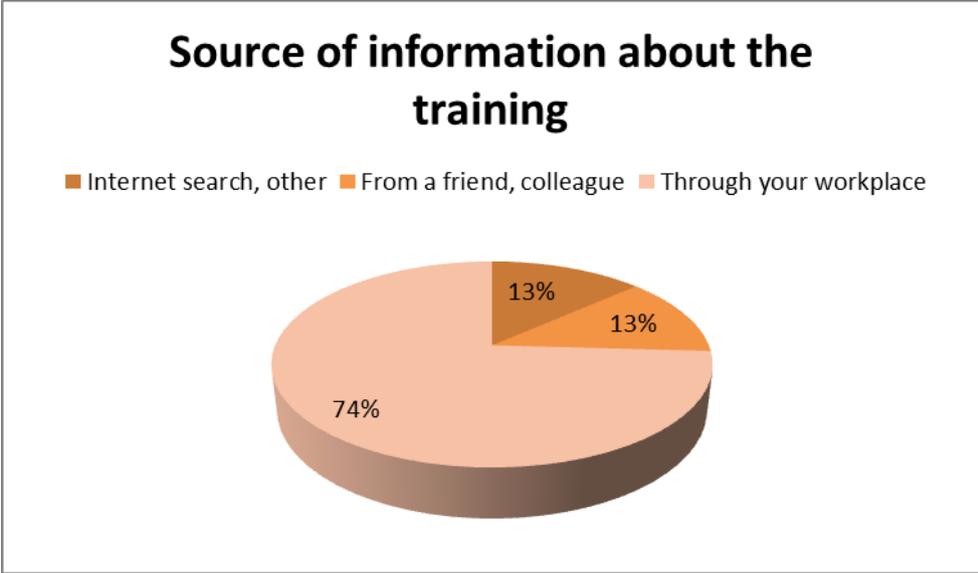
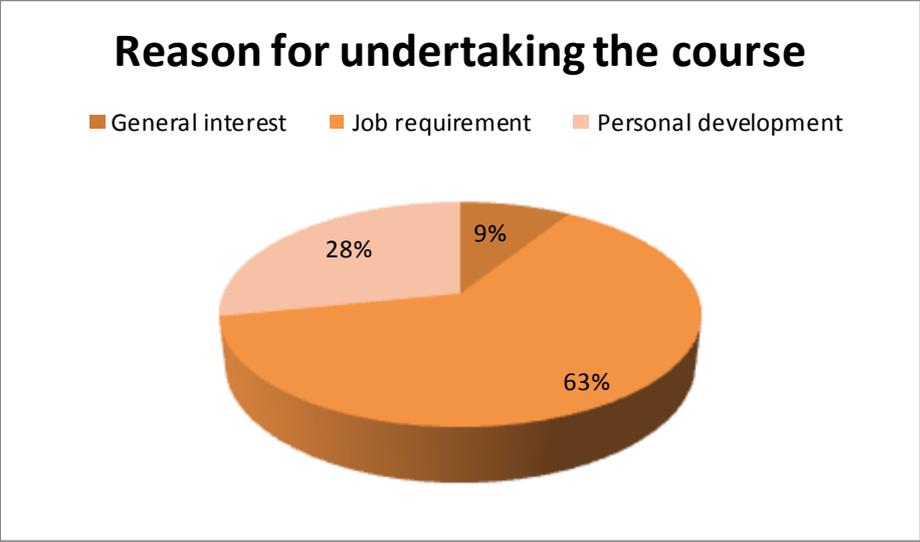


In general, the second unit of the course was perceived as **the most relevant part** of it, as it was the longest and most exhaustive. The first unit was pointed out as crucial as well in providing an introduction to hazards and showing the steps of multi-hazard risk assessment. The Flash Environmental Assessment Tool (FEAT) was also indicated as extremely relevant in the course. Depending on their role and profession, participants seemed eager to **apply the information gained** during the course to their daily duties and activities. From field missions to new programme initiatives in different organizations and personal activities, everyone agreed on the importance of embedding the content of the training in a variety of professional and humanitarian contexts. Most participants affirmed to have experienced **technical issues** while taking the course. Some documents couldn't be downloaded and the evaluation part couldn't be properly accessed. In addition to this,

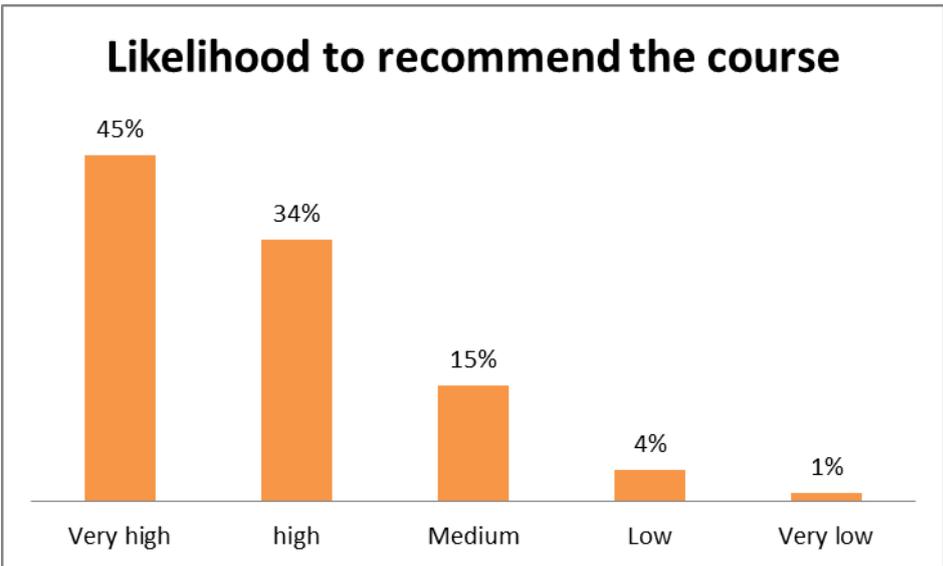
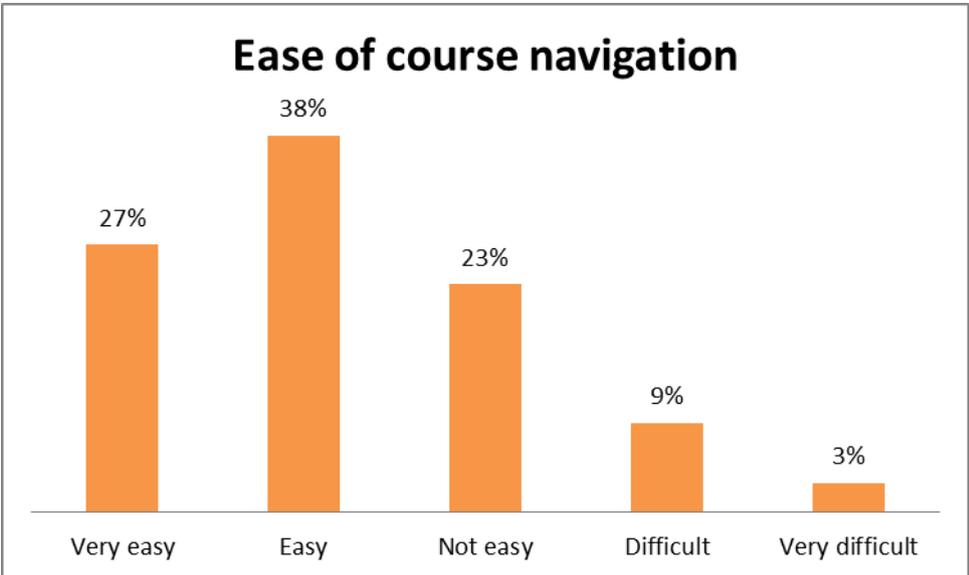
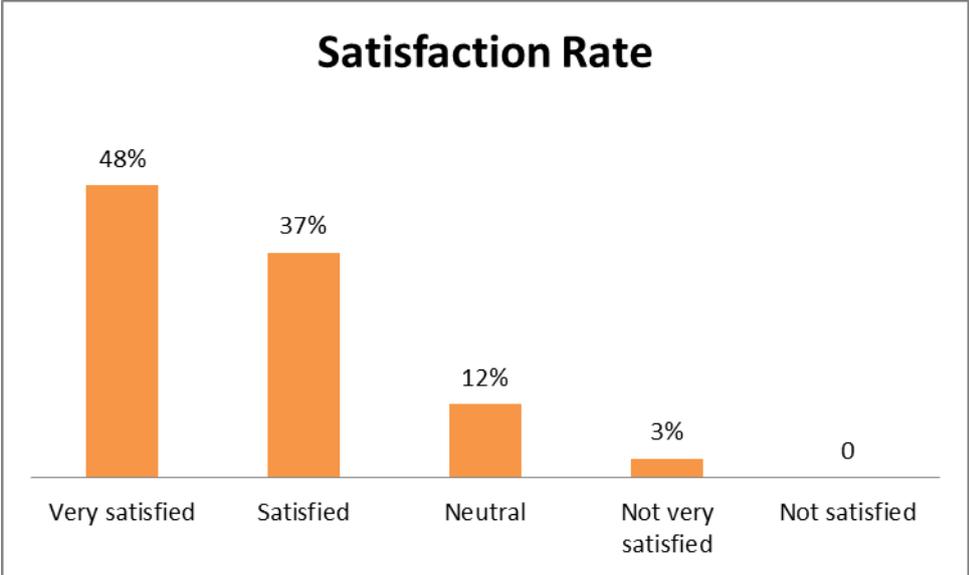
some students suggested adding more multimedia to each section, to make it more visual and interactive.



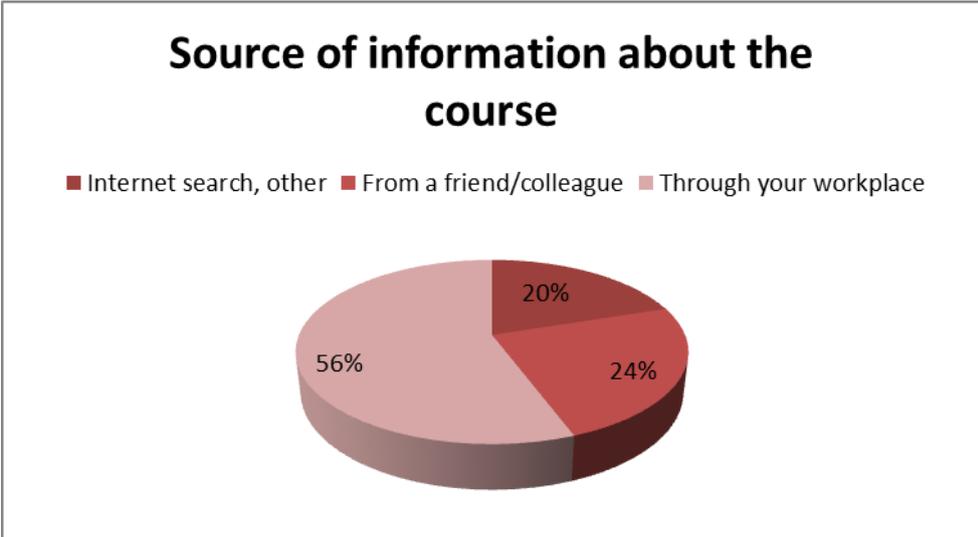
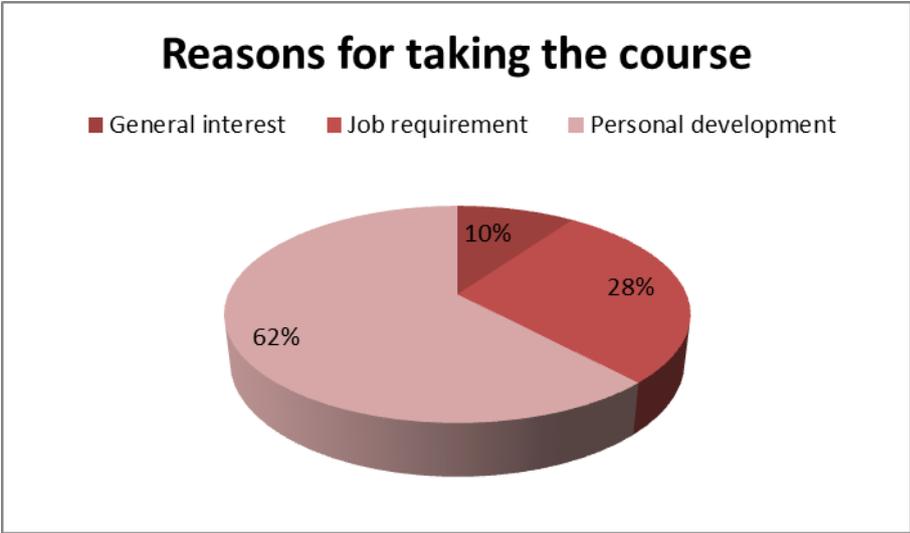
From June to October 2015, a total of 111 respondents provided answers to the questions of on-line questionnaire in respect of the e-learning course *“Introduction to the Flash Environmental Assessment Tool”* after undertaking this e-learning course. Below is the summary of survey results.



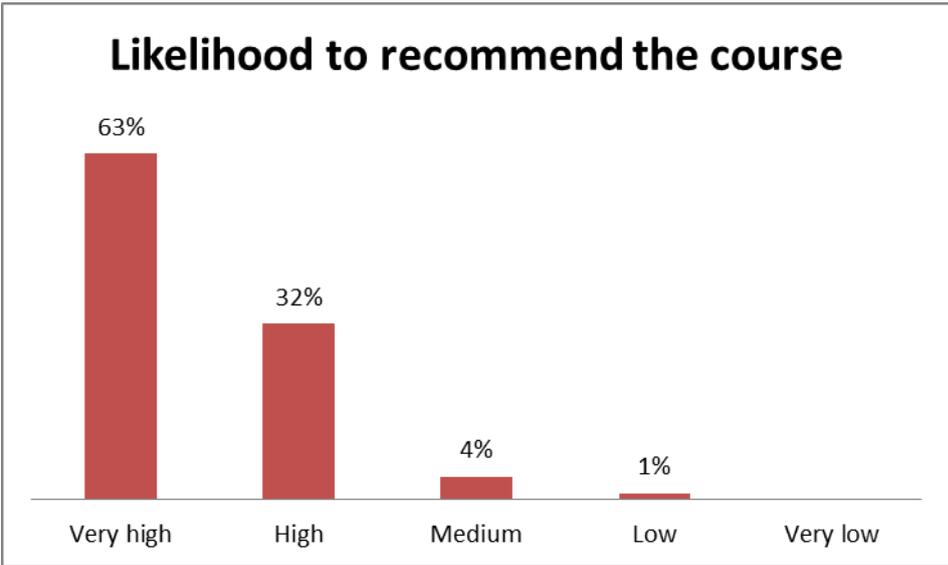
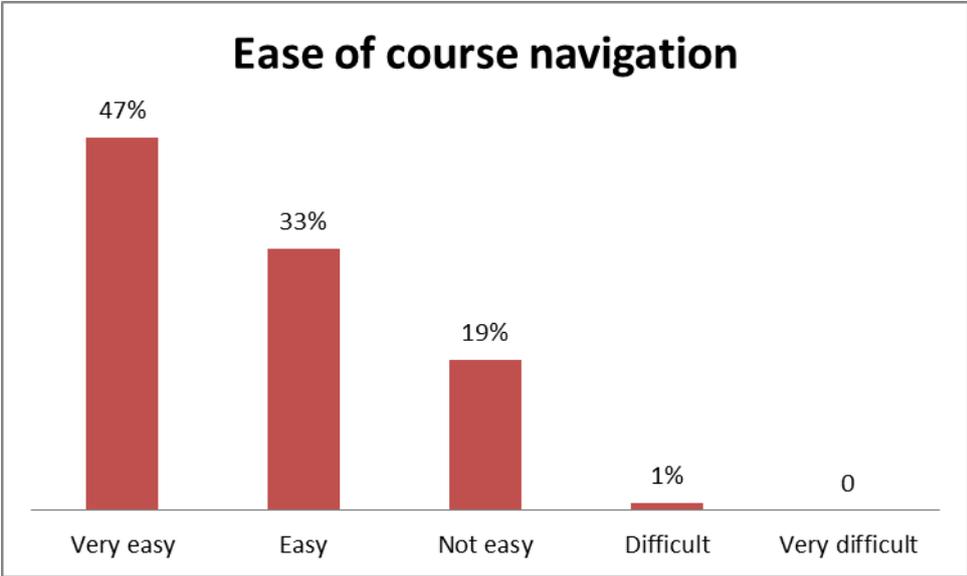
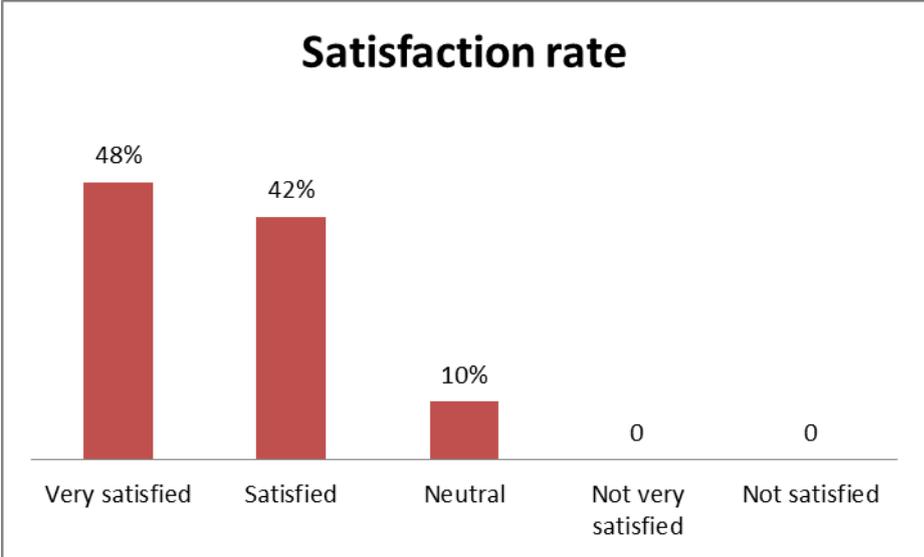
While mostly participants agree on the course being important in all its parts, the part concerning the practical usage of the tool and guidance while in the field was rated as **the most relevant**, especially from the operational perspective. All participants agreed on the importance of embedding the content of the training in UNDAC deployments, relevant for site assessment and field operations in general. The tool was said useful also as additional guidance when providing recommendations. The overall feedback on the course was positive. Many participants said that it would be good to improve the **navigation** side of the training, in terms of layout, usability and the design in general.



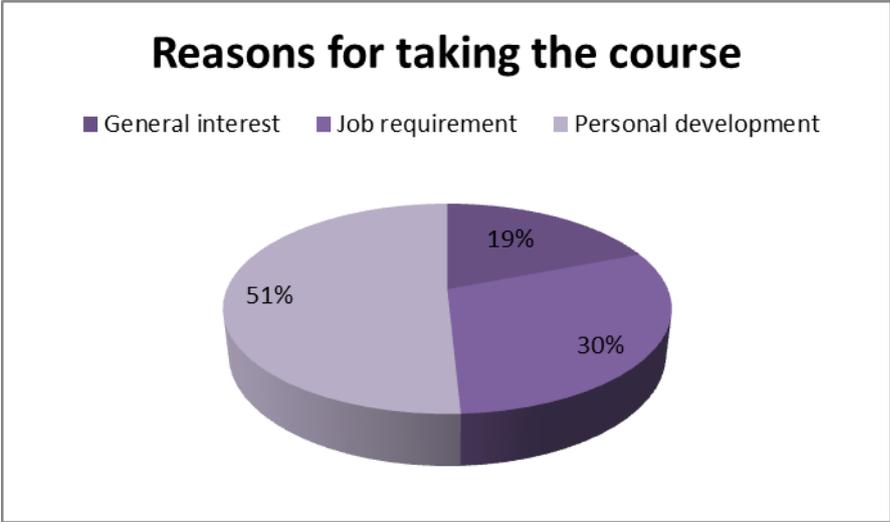
From June to October 2015, a total of 82 respondents provided answers to the questions of on-line questionnaire in respect of the e-learning course *“Introduction to Industrial Accidents: prevention, preparedness and response”* after undertaking this e-learning course. Below is the summary of survey results.



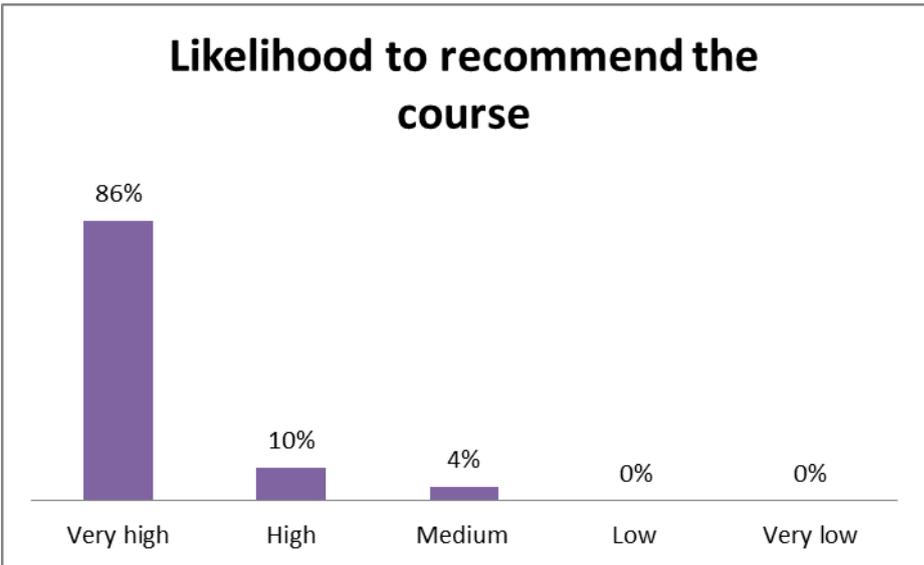
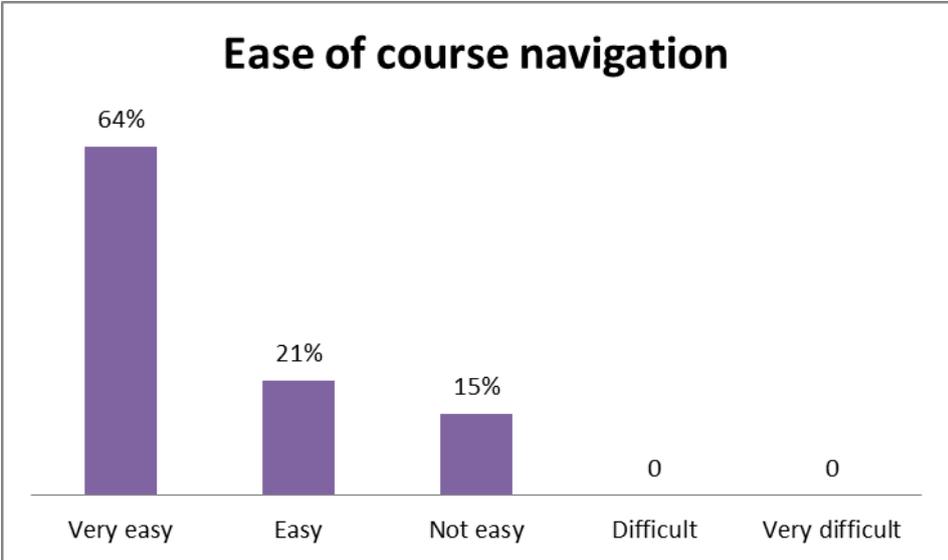
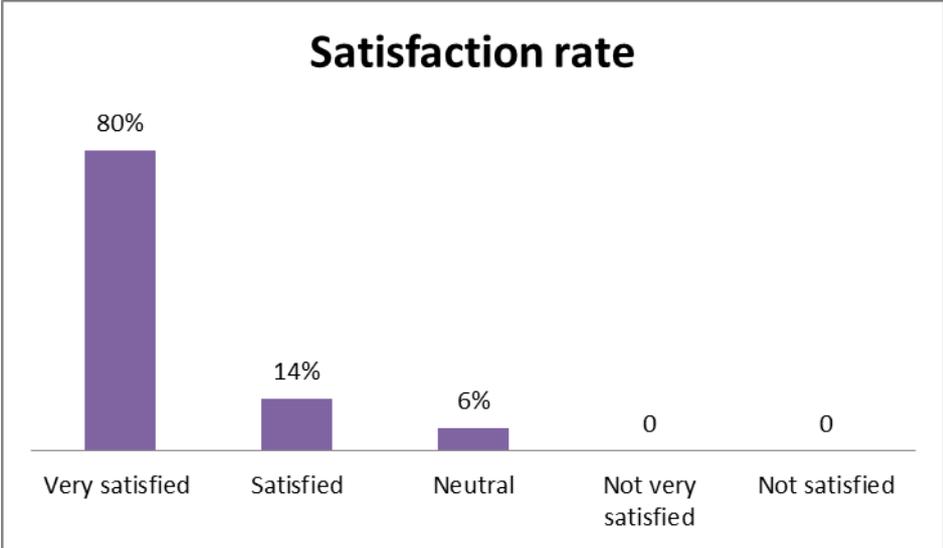
Many participants have rated as **most important part** of the course the one covering the phases and elements of the national industrial accidents programme. Furthermore, the part on international assistance was also rated as significant. Several users answered that the whole course was equally interesting in all its parts. Participants seem eager to use the information gained in the course. From developing further training material, enhancing capacity building and influencing community awareness on industrial accidents to local governments and NGOs that work in this area, everyone agreed on the importance of embedding the content of the training in various aspects of their professional activities. Some of the suggestions included adding more multimedia material and improvement of the form of questions-answers in the evaluation section. However, most participants agree on the high quality of the overall training and wouldn't change anything.



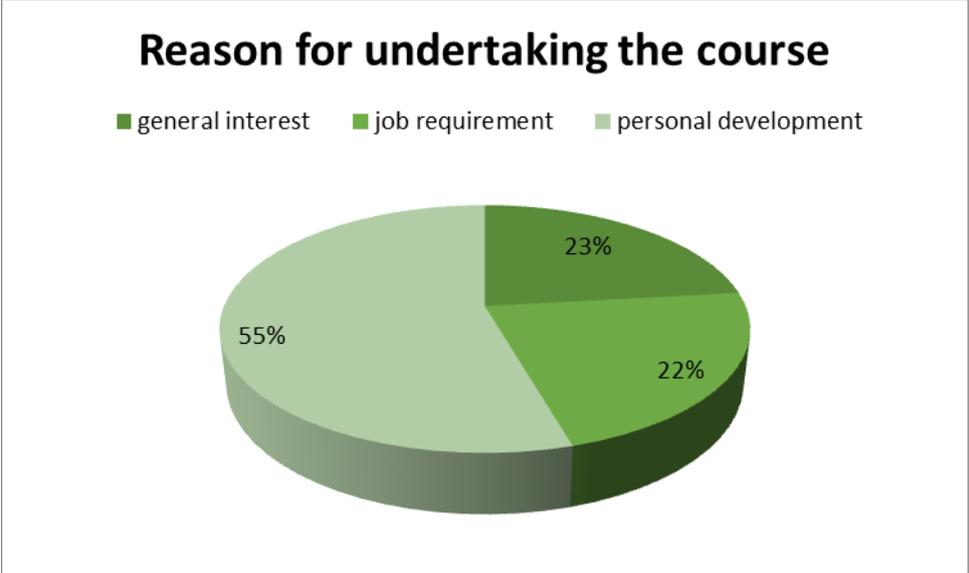
From March to December 2015, a total of 49 respondents provided answers to the questions of on-line questionnaire in respect of the e-learning course “Disaster Waste Management: best practices and tools” after undertaking this e-learning course. Below is the summary of survey results.



In general, the participants have rated as **most important** parts of the course the one on the identification of different types of waste and on the treatment and disposal technologies for health care waste. From refugee camps work, capacity building and influence community awareness, everyone agreed on the importance of embedding the content of the training in various professional and humanitarian contexts they are involved in. Most participants affirmed to have experienced **technical issues** while taking the online course, the navigation of the different parts being difficult. In addition to this, some users suggested adding more practical examples to encourage creative participatory response and a clearer formulation of some of the review questions.

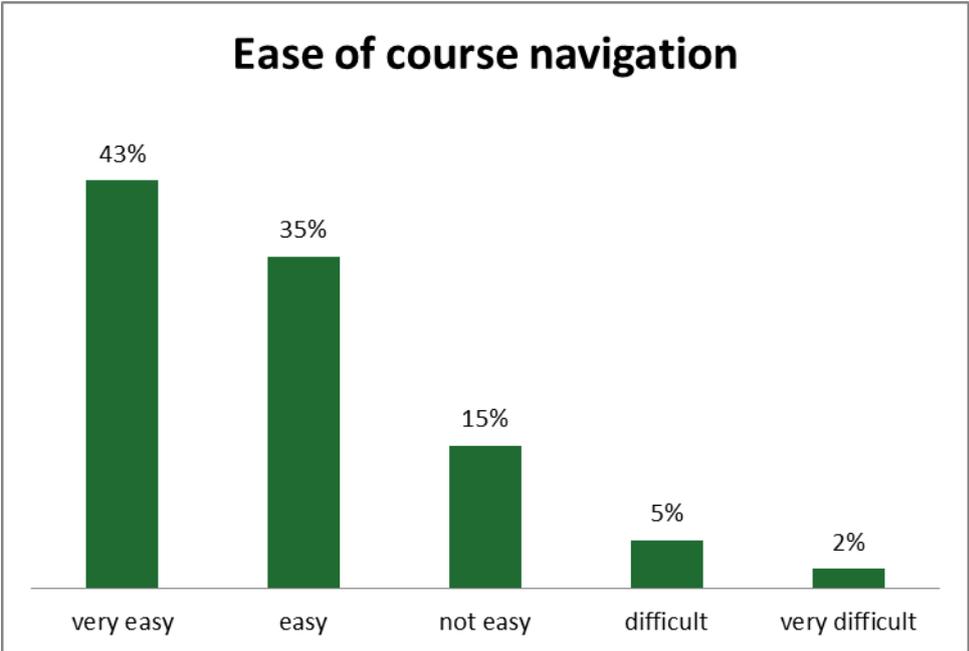
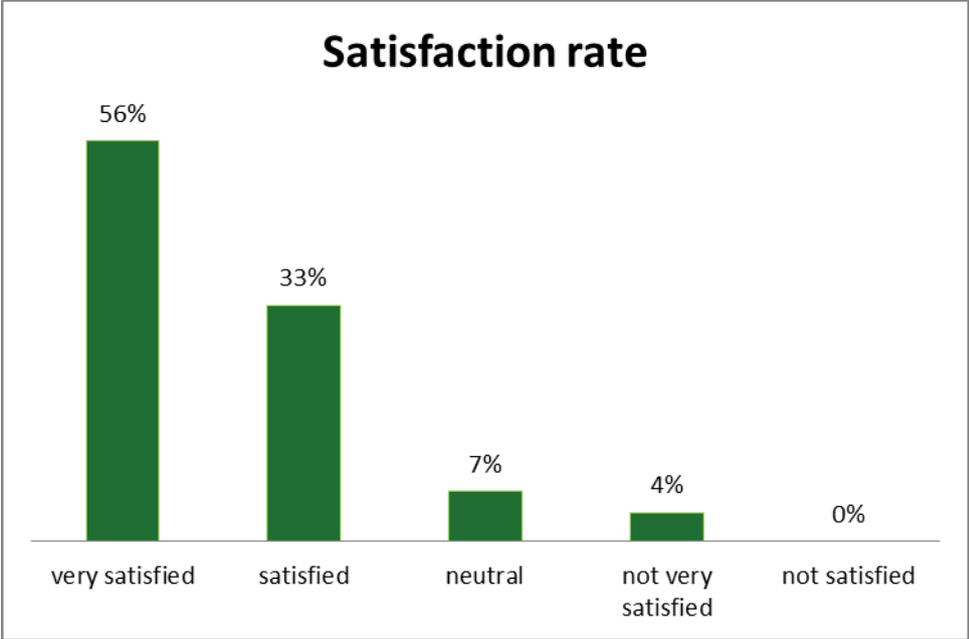


From November 2013 to September 2015, a total of 85 respondents provided answers to the questions of on-line questionnaire in respect of the e-learning module “*Environment in Humanitarian Action*” after undertaking this e-learning course. Below is the summary of survey results.



While most participants weren't able to point out a particular part of the course that was more important than the rest, many stressed the relevance of the environmental issues to be considered and linked to humanitarian assistance. In particular, participants were more interested in those topics that matched their own areas of expertise (e.g. water and sanitation, landslide, etc.). Practical examples given during the course were much appreciated, as well as the case studies presented. Compared to the second, the first case study was generally perceived as clearer and more insightful. Most participants affirmed to have experienced technical issues while taking the online course. Some of the images links for more information on certain topics weren't available and sometimes the correct answer to a question wasn't provided. Some students suggested adding more multimedia to

each section, to make it more visual and interactive. In general, a greater focus on case studies and more elaboration on challenges to integrate environment in humanitarian response is desired.



Likelihood to recommend the course

