International Sanctions and their Humanitarian Impact Training Course

Professional Development Training Course Outline

Category	Political Science and International Relations	**Duration**	5 Days
Base Fee	$1,500 USD	**Delivery Mode**	Online / On-site Hybrid

Course Introduction

International sanctions have become a prevalent tool in modern **geopolitics** and **foreign policy**, aiming to influence the behavior of states and non-state actors. While these measures, such as **economic restrictions**, **asset freezes**, and **trade embargoes**, are designed to achieve specific political objectives like combating terrorism or deterring nuclear proliferation they often have profound and unintended **humanitarian consequences**. These impacts include exacerbating poverty, disrupting essential supply chains for food and medicine, and hindering the vital work of humanitarian organizations. Navigating this complex intersection requires a deep understanding of both the **legal frameworks** of sanctions and the principles of **international humanitarian law (IHL)**.

International Sanctions and their Humanitarian Impact Training Course is meticulously designed to provide a comprehensive and practical understanding of how sanctions regimes interact with humanitarian operations. It will equip participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure **sanctions compliance** while upholding humanitarian principles. By exploring the legal intricacies and real-world challenges, the course will enable professionals to mitigate risks, protect vulnerable populations, and advocate for more effective, **human-centered sanctions policies**. The focus is on a **risk-based approach** to compliance that safeguards humanitarian action and ensures aid reaches those in need, even in the most complex and restrictive environments.

Programme Curriculum

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Course Duration

5 days

Course Objectives

- Master the **legal frameworks** and **regulatory landscape** of major international sanctions regimes (UN, US, EU).
- Analyze the **unintended humanitarian impacts** of sanctions on civilian populations and aid delivery.
- Understand the critical intersection between **international humanitarian law (IHL)** and sanctions compliance.
- Identify and implement **humanitarian exemptions** and carve-outs within sanctions regimes.
- Develop a **risk-based sanctions compliance program** tailored for humanitarian organizations.
- Conduct effective **due diligence** and **sanctions screening** in high-risk environments.
- Recognize and address common **red flags** and **sanctions evasion tactics**.
- Formulate strategies to mitigate the effects of **over-compliance** and **de-risking** by financial institutions.
- Explore the use of **smart sanctions** and their implications for humanitarian action.
- Examine **case studies** of recent sanctions regimes, including in conflict zones like Syria, Afghanistan, and Venezuela.
- Learn how to effectively engage with and advocate to **sanctioning bodies** and governments.
- Enhance organizational resilience and **reputational integrity** through robust compliance.
- Build a network of professionals and experts in the fields of sanctions and humanitarian aid.

Organizational Benefits

- Reduces the risk of severe legal penalties, financial fines, and operational disruption due to sanctions violations.
- Ensures uninterrupted aid delivery and financial transactions by navigating complex sanctions regulations with confidence.
- Upholds the organization's ethical standing and credibility as a responsible humanitarian actor.
- Equips staff with the knowledge to make informed, risk-aware decisions in complex contexts.

- Fosters a culture of compliance and ethical awareness throughout the organization, from frontline workers to senior leadership.
- Provides the foundation for effective engagement with policymakers to shape more humanitarian-friendly sanctions policies.

Target Audience

1. Compliance Officers and Legal Counsel in non-profit and humanitarian organizations.
2. Program Managers and Field Staff working in sanctioned countries.
3. Financial Sector Professionals involved in international aid financing and de-risking.
4. Government Officials and Policy Advisors focused on sanctions and foreign policy.
5. International Relations and Development Professionals.
6. Supply Chain and Logistics Managers in the humanitarian sector.
7. Risk Management Professionals in global organizations.
8. Internal Auditors and Corporate Governance Specialists.

Course Outline

Module 1: The Foundations of International Sanctions

- Introduction to sanctions: history, purpose, and types (economic, financial, sectoral).
- Overview of key sanctioning bodies: UN, US (OFAC), EU, and UK.
- The evolution from comprehensive to targeted and "smart" sanctions.
- Understanding the legal basis and authority behind sanctions.
- **Case Study**: The evolution of **UN sanctions against North Korea** and the impact on essential goods and services.

Module 2: Sanctions and International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

- Core principles of IHL: humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence.
- The legal and ethical conflict between sanctions compliance and humanitarian principles.
- Sanctions as a tool of statecraft versus the imperative to protect civilians.
- Examining the concept of **"humanitarian space"** and how sanctions can shrink it.
- **Case Study**: Analyzing the humanitarian consequences in **Yemen**, where overlapping sanctions and a complex conflict have severely restricted aid delivery.

Module 3: Humanitarian Exemptions and Licensing

- Navigating humanitarian carve-outs and exceptions in sanctions regimes.
- The process of applying for and managing **humanitarian licenses** from OFAC and other bodies.
- Distinctions between general licenses, specific licenses, and reporting requirements.
- Overcoming operational challenges in using exemptions, including bank reluctance.
- **Case Study**: The **US general licenses for Afghanistan** and their effectiveness in facilitating aid after the Taliban's takeover.

Module 4: Building a Sanctions Compliance Program

- Key components of a robust, risk-based compliance program for humanitarian organizations.
- Developing and implementing policies, procedures, and internal controls.
- Training and awareness-building for all staff members.
- The role of due diligence and risk assessment in identifying sanctions exposure.

- **Case Study**: A framework for a humanitarian NGO to build a compliance program in **Syria** while operating under multiple sanctions regimes.

Module 5: Practical Sanctions Screening and Due Diligence

- Understanding different sanctions lists (SDN, Consolidated List, etc.).
- Techniques for effective screening of partners, vendors, and beneficiaries.
- Managing "false positives" and documenting the screening process.
- Enhanced due diligence (EDD) for high-risk transactions and activities.
- **Case Study**: The complexities of screening local partners and third-party vendors in **Sudan**, a context with significant financial and reputational risks.

Module 6: Financial Services and the Challenge of De-risking

- The impact of sanctions on the global financial system and banking.
- The phenomenon of **de-risking**, where banks withdraw from providing services to humanitarian organizations.
- Strategies for engaging with financial institutions to maintain access to services.
- Exploring alternative financial mechanisms for aid delivery.
- **Case Study**: How humanitarian organizations have attempted to circumvent banking de-risking in **Iran** to deliver life-saving aid.

Module 7: Sanctions Evasion and Enforcement Trends

- Identifying common methods of sanctions evasion and circumvention.
- Recognizing red flags for potential sanctions violations.
- Recent enforcement actions, penalties, and lessons learned from past cases.
- Reporting and self-disclosure requirements in the event of a potential breach.
- **Case Study**: Analysis of recent **OFAC enforcement actions** against financial institutions and their implications for compliance.

Module 8: Advocacy and The Future of Sanctions

- The role of humanitarian organizations in advocating for policy reform.
- Engaging with policymakers and sanctioning bodies to improve humanitarian access.
- Exploring future trends in sanctions, including the use of technology and targeted measures.
- Developing and promoting **human-centered sanctions policies**.
- **Case Study**: Successful advocacy efforts to influence **EU sanctions policy** to better protect humanitarian action.

Training Methodology

This course uses an **interactive, hands-on methodology** that moves beyond traditional lectures. It will include:

- **Expert-Led Presentations**: Delivered by seasoned sanctions and IHL practitioners.
- **Interactive Workshops**: Participants will work in small groups to solve complex scenarios.
- **Real-World Case Studies**: In-depth analysis of high-profile sanctions incidents.
- **Group Discussions**: Fostering peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing.
- **Practical Exercises**: Including simulated sanctions screening and due diligence tasks.
- **Q&A Sessions**: Direct engagement with instructors to address specific challenges.

Register as a group from 3 participants for a Discount

Send us an email: info@fineskilltrainingcenter.org or call *+254769199797*

Certification

Upon successful completion of this training, participants will be issued with a globally- recognized certificate.

Tailor-Made Course

We also offer tailor-made courses based on your needs.

Key Notes

a. The participant must be conversant with English.

b. Upon completion of training the participant will be issued with an Authorized Training Certificate

c. Course duration is flexible and the contents can be modified to fit any number of days.

d. The course fee includes facilitation training materials, 2 coffee breaks, buffet lunch and A Certificate upon successful completion of Training.

e. One-year post-training support Consultation and Coaching provided after the course.

f. Payment should be done at least a week before commence of the training, to Fineskill Training Center account, as indicated in the invoice so as to enable us prepare better for you.

Upcoming Scheduled Sessions

Start Date	End Date	Location	Price
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Online	$1,000
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Physical	$1,500
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Physical	$3,000
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Physical	$3,000
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Physical	$6,000
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Physical	$4,500
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Physical	$6,000
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Physical	$6,000

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