

M. UNITED NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE ORGANIZATIONS

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M.1. Introduction

When an UNDAC team is on a mission it will be working within a relief environment that contains a range of organizations working towards the same goal. These vary from the national and local authorities (described at other places in this handbook) through the United Nations organizations to international and local response organizations. The UNDAC members must be aware of these organizations and be able to work together with them in an effective manner often acting as the catalyst for cooperation in the relief community. In this chapter the most likely organizations with which an UNDAC team will meet and cooperate are given a short description.

M.2. The United Nations system

M.2.1. United Nations Disaster Management Team (UN DMT)

A UN Disaster Management Team (UN DMT) is expected to exist in each disaster-prone country. The UN DMT is convened and chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC), who will usually be the UNDP Resident Representative and will also represent OCHA. The UN DMT will normally be comprised of a core group represented by the country level representatives of:

- Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- World Food Programme (WFP)

- World Health Organization (WHO)
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), when present in the country.

Apart from this core group, the composition of the UN DMT is determined by taking the disaster type into account. The team may be enlarged by including personnel from relevant agencies when a disaster occurs. The leader of the UNDAC team should automatically become a member of the UN DMT. The RC/HC is responsible for the UNDAC team while it is in-country. The UNDP disaster focal point officer (often a national officer) serves as secretary for the UN DMT but the RC/HC may choose to designate another person. The offices of UNDP also usually provide the venue and the basic administrative support for the meetings as well as the basic support to the operational aspects of the UN DMT.

Purpose of the UN DMT

The primary purpose of the UN DMT is to ensure that a prompt, effective, and coordinated response by the UN system is made at country level in the event of a disaster. The team should ensure a systematic and integrated programme of UN assistance to the receiving government in respect to rehabilitation, reconstruction, and disaster mitigation. The team should coordinate all disaster related activities, technical advice and material assistance provided by UN agencies, as well as taking steps to avoid wasteful duplication or competition for resources by UN agencies. The UN DMT also interfaces with the receiving government national emergency management team, from which a representative may, where practical, be included in the UN DMT. In practice it is vital that the policies of the UN DMT relate to those approved by the government. It must be remembered that during a disaster the RC/HC and the UN DMT reports to the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC). The UN DMT is also responsible for ensuring adequate preparedness for response. The UN DMT is expected to meet regularly in disaster-prone countries and is also mandated to develop disaster contingency plans.

In some countries, the UN DMT may be expanded to include donor representatives, major non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement. In such cases it is often known as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Country Team. The UN DMT may also be referred to as the UN Country Team (UNCT).

M.2.2. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

In compliance with General Assembly Resolution 2816 (XXVI) and 46/182, the ERC was established by the Secretary-General. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is the office of the ERC who is also the UN Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Humanitarian Affairs. The office is part of

the UN Secretariat and the USG for Humanitarian Affairs/ERC reports directly to the Secretary-General. The goal of the General Assembly is to strengthen the coordination of humanitarian assistance in the UN. The resolution sets out the basic principles for humanitarian assistance to be provided by the organization and recommends specific measures to facilitate a prompt and coordinated response to complex emergencies and natural and man-made disasters. The ERC is mandated by the General Assembly to coordinate and direct all international response to disasters.

OCHA is situated in New York, Geneva and in numerous field offices. The New York office enables OCHA to support the Secretary-General and attend to the political, military and policy related aspects of its work. The Geneva office enables OCHA to be close to the implementing UN agencies and, thereby, strengthen its effectiveness in coordinating field response to natural disasters and complex emergencies. Policy coordination, policy planning, and early warning are dealt with in New York, while Geneva acts as the focal point for emergency operational support and disaster response coordination.

OCHA's response is adjusted according to the type and size of an emergency, e.g., anything from issuing Information Reports (when no appeal has been received from the affected country), through issuing Situation Reports (when an international appeal has been received from the affected country) to full-scale involvement by sending assessment and coordinating teams to the affected area, coordinating relief efforts, launching joint UN appeals, etc.

Resources

In addition to OCHA staff, human, technical and logistic resources are supplied by the Danish and Norwegian Refugee Councils, the Danish Emergency Management Agency, the Swedish Rescue Services Agency, and the CHAD Team of the Department for International Development of United Kingdom through the Field Coordination Support Section (FCSS) in Geneva under the aegis of the International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP).

OCHA administers a Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) which may be used for providing urgent funds to the RC/HC in emergency situations. It also has available at its disposal an Emergency Cash Grant of up to US \$ 100 000 to provide to an affected country for immediate response to a disaster (see also Chapter K).

M.2.3. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP focuses on the development-related aspects of natural disasters and aims to mainstream disaster risk reduction into national development strategies through the provision of technical assistance and capacity-development in order to strengthen disaster risk management and establish mechanisms to support post-disaster recovery.

UNDP seeks to ensure that disaster risk reduction considerations are factored into national and regional development programmes and that countries use the recovery process following disasters as a window of opportunity to mitigate future risks and vulnerability by:

1. Incorporating long-term risk reduction and preparedness measures in regular development planning and programmes.
2. Strengthening national and regional institutions working on disaster risk reduction and early warning systems.
3. Providing advice on risk reduction and mitigation strategies as part of recovery programmes.
4. Reviewing the damage caused by natural disaster to places already affected by conflict including assessing their combined impact on settlements of refugees or displaced persons.
5. Enabling countries to share information on strategies and best practices for reducing disaster risk and vulnerability through regional and sub-regional knowledge networks.

UNDP, as the custodial of the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) system, provides administrative and operational support to the functioning of the RC, who often combines the roles of UNDP Resident Representative and that of a Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator.

Resources

Through its Country Offices UNDP provides emergency grants to support launching an immediate response to any emergency conditions created by natural disasters. These resources are intended to support a UN coordinated action by the RC/HC and may include the recruitment of emergency management personnel to assist the government, the UN DMT, the UN Country Team (UNCT) and the UNDP country office, to support and contribute to coordination, needs assessment, reporting and resource mobilisation.

UNDP also helps with assessing needs and subsequent formulation of transitional recovery plans and frameworks, including rapid deployment of recovery experts. A special funding window is dedicated to supporting immediate recovery activities, including the design/testing of new initiatives providing forward links to long term development. This should include efforts to ensure that risk reduction measures are taken as early as possible during the aftermath of the disaster and are included in rehabilitation and reconstruction plans to provide a solid basis for sustainable development.

Organizational arrangements

UNDP works closely with the host government and collaborates with other development partners towards ensuring that all entities concerned with planning development programmes are aware of any known or potential hazards and their likely effects and that these are appropriately taken into account in the country programme. In the event of a disaster the Resident

Representative mobilizes UNDP staff and technical assistance personnel and other resources and acts with the UNCT to meet the needs of the situation, particularly in preparing for early recovery.

UNDP shall consider in all disaster-prone country field offices, the need to designate a senior national officer as a “disaster focal point” for all disaster-related matters including mitigation, response and to enhance in-country UN/UNDP preparedness.

M.2.4. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The majority of UNHCR’s programmes begin as a result of a specific type of emergency, i.e., a sudden influx of refugees. The aim of UNHCR’s emergency response is to provide protection to persons of concern to the organization and ensure that the necessary assistance reaches them in time. With regard to material assistance, UNHCR’s goal is the survival of refugees through ensuring adequate basic and supplementary food supplies, health care, shelter, water and sanitary facilities, clothing, and essential community services. Much of UNHCR’s material assistance is channelled through its implementing partners, i.e., the government of the asylum country and NGOs.

Definitions and fundamental principles relating to UNHCR assistance to refugees

Under the Statute of UNHCR, adopted as an annex to the General Assembly resolution 428 of December 1951, a refugee is:

“Any person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear or for reasons other than personal convenience, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable work, owing to such fear or for reasons other than personal convenience, is unwilling to return to it.”

Resources

UNHCR has an Operational Reserve from which financial assistance may be provided to refugees and displaced persons in emergency situations for which there is no provision in existing annual programmes. The High Commissioner may allocate from the Reserve for emergencies, provided that the amount made available for any one single emergency shall not exceed \$10 000 000 in any one year.

In the UNHCR Emergency Preparedness and Response Section (EPRS) there are 5 Emergency Preparedness and Response Officers (EPRO) who are on standby to lead emergency response teams. They may be supported or complemented by a wide variety of other human resources namely:

- 1 Emergency Administrative Officer and 2 Emergency Adminis-

trative Assistants on standby for setting up offices in emergency situations.

- 30 members of an Emergency Roster, who are staff with various levels of skill and experience and who are occupying posts throughout the world but who are expected to be immediately released for emergency deployment. The composition of this roster is changed periodically to ensure a high level of staff preparedness and availability.
- An arrangement with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) to provide various categories of staff at short notice for emergency deployment. There are some 500 persons on this standby roster.
- A roster of external consultant technicians in various sectors such as health, water, sanitation, logistics and refugee shelter.
- An arrangement with selected NGOs for rapid deployment to implement assistance activities in different sectors such as health, sanitation, logistics and social services.

All these staff may be supported under an arrangement with the Swedish Rescue Services Agency (SRSA) which can set up a base camp and office, in extreme conditions, with 48 hours notice. Additional stockpiles of vehicles, telecommunications equipment, computers, personal field kits, and pre-packaged office kits are maintained for staff support.

UNHCR maintains a centrally controlled stockpile of prefabricated warehouses, blankets, kitchen sets, water storage and purification equipment and plastic sheeting. These are stored in regional warehouses or are on call with established suppliers who guarantee rapid delivery. UNHCR also has arrangements with external stockpiles outside the UN system such as with the Swedish Rescue Board and is negotiating similar arrangements with NGOs which maintain their own stockpiles.

UNHCR representatives may commit a limited amount of resources, including financial, material and technical, to a refugee emergency when there is already an existing operation in that country.

Procedures for country level staff in relation to post-disaster assessments and reporting

UNHCR field staff are responsible for carrying out emergency needs/resources assessments, frequently with the assistance of EPRS staff and technical experts from headquarters. General guidelines for assessment surveys are available in the UNHCR Handbook for Emergencies. Reporting to Headquarters takes place through situation reports, a format for which is also available in the UNHCR Handbook for Emergencies. Plans for carrying out such assessments and situation reports should be detailed in each Branch Office's Refugee Emergency Contingency Plan.

Until the refugee status of individuals or groups presenting themselves as refugees has been determined - by State Party or the 1951 Convention and/or the 1967 Protocol - they are considered asylum-seekers and are entitled to the protection of the UNHCR. The UNHCR has the responsibility to extend protection to such persons whether or not the government of the country in which they are seeking asylum has made any formal request for the intervention of the Office. The High Commissioner has the right to take initiatives to extend protection. Material assistance is however, only given in response to an official request.

Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) have, in some cases, called upon the High Commissioner to concern her/himself with displaced persons, often within the framework to United Nations humanitarian endeavours for which the office may have particular expertise. The High Commissioner may participate in such endeavours with other United Nations agencies, as required, at the invitation of the Secretary-General of the General Assembly.

M.2.5. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Brief facts about UNICEF and emergencies

- Approximately 40% of the organization's budget goes toward emergency activities.
- UNICEF maintains 126 country offices, and works in 150 nations and territories around the world.
- UNICEF has numerous full-time emergency staff members, based in regional offices, headquarters and a number of key country offices, as well as part-time emergency focal points in every division.
- UNICEF has an organization-wide responsibility to ensure effective response to emergency situations in terms of supplies, staff and other resources.

Goals and objectives

UNICEF's goal in emergency situations is broadly defined as follows: "In emergency situations that pose a violent, extreme and often sudden threat to the survival, protection and development rights of children and women and to the integrity and stability of the family, UNICEF advocates for the special protection and care of affected children and women and extends assistance to them impartially, without discrimination and on the basis of need."

The basis objectives are to:

- Prevent exposure of children to risk by addressing root causes of conflict;
- Ensure the survival of the most vulnerable children and women- including those displaced within their own countries- and protect them against malnutrition and disease during dangerous and chaotic early days of acute emergencies, through access to essential life-

saving and life-sustaining services;

- Assure protection against intended violence, exploitation, abuse, rape, and recruitment into armed forces;
- Support the rehabilitation and recovery of people and communities through development actions to restore psycho social health, maternal and child health care, schools, water supply, and sanitation systems.
- Promote long-lasting solutions by creating and strengthening self-help capacities at family community levels and by supporting women's participation in the development and management of such solutions.

Overall strategies

- **Family Focus** - UNICEF's actions in emergencies recognize the primary responsibility of parents and families for ensuring children's rights and well being. Its overall aim is to reinforce the capacity of families to provide appropriate care to children and to reunite separated families by supporting national and local governmental and non-governmental delivery systems and institutions upon which families depend. Where these are weak or non-existent, UNICEF also works directly through international non-governmental organizations.
- **Development Orientation** - The foundation of UNICEF action lies in its long-term country programme approach and its development orientation. Recognizing the central importance of building capacity and self-reliance for effective and sustainable assistance and to reduce the vulnerability of children to future emergencies, UNICEF aims to enhance rather than supplant locally available resources and mechanisms. The maximum involvement of individuals, communities and local and national institutions is stressed at all levels of UNICEF emergency action.
- **Integrated Approach** - UNICEF adopts an integrated approach in addressing the needs and rights of women and children in emergencies. This approach recognizes the complex range of factors and the interrelationship between physical and emotional security, social and cognitive development, and health and nutritional status. This integrated approach provides a broad perspective in addressing and assessing the specific needs of children and women in an emergency situation.
- **Funding emergency action** - UNICEF's emergency programmes are an extension of regular UNICEF programme activities in response to an emergency and any additional activities outside the framework of regular country programme. Emergency activities are funded primarily from supplementary funds for which purpose a specific emergency programme plan of action is developed. The emergency

programme plan of action may be planned, launched and implemented under the authority of the Executive Director, without prior approval by the Executive Board. In the case of a major or complex emergency, the coordination of programming with other agencies is formalized through the preparation of a combined humanitarian action plan (CHAP) and a consolidated inter-agency appeal (CAP).

In order to enable an immediate but limited response to an emergency situation, UNICEF Representative can divert from country programme resources to emergency activities up to US \$150,000 or 200,000, depending on the size of the country office budget. When the emergency situation significantly weakens the relevance of the established country programme, the UNICEF Representative may re-programme additional resources with government concurrence, headquarters authorization and, when necessary, donor approval.

UNICEF's Emergency Programme Fund (EPF) comprises of a two-year allocation of US \$ 25 million out of which a release can be made to provide necessary cash-flow for initial response to an emergency.

Institutional arrangements and responsibilities within UNICEF

The UNICEF Representative has the responsibility to plan and manage UNICEF's response at the country level. The Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS), which has staff both in New York and in Geneva, has the overall responsibility for coordinating UNICEF's emergency related activities in close collaboration with UNICEF Programme Division, managing the Emergency Programme Fund, and ensuring close inter-agency coordination with international humanitarian organizations.

As part of the overall response capacity in emergencies, UNICEF may call on experienced staff with skills and competencies from UNICEF offices world wide to provide support to a country office affected by an emergency situation. These staff are well-trained UNICEF personnel, experienced in the areas of emergency programme design and management, operations, supply, information, communications and security in emergency situations. EMOPS has, in addition, an Emergency Response Team based in New York, consisting of five high-level cadres with different sets of emergency expertise and which is available for short-term deployment to support emergency-affected countries around the world.

UNICEF Supply Division in Copenhagen is the designated focal point to ensure rapid response in emergency situations for provision of supplies. The Supply Division maintains three regional hubs in Dubai, Johannesburg and Panama equipped with a renewable stock of the most commonly required emergency supplies for a standard number of affected populations (100,000, 100,000, and 20,000 persons, respectively). The reimbursable procurement facilities of the UNICEF Supply Division are available also to other organizations and agencies.

M.2.6. World Food Programme (WFP)

In the event of an emergency WFP may, depending on the needs:

- Provide advice and assistance to the government, other concerned agencies and local authorities in assessing possible requirements for emergency food aid, and in planning and managing appropriate food aid interventions.
- Provide food aid to meet emergency food needs, subject to the availability of resources and the assessed need for international food aid.
- Help to mobilize and ensure co-ordination in the planning and delivery of food assistance from all sources and any necessary logistics support and other complementary inputs.

Through the computerized International Food Aid Information System (INTERFAIS), WFP monitors food aid flows, including emergency food aid, and makes detailed data available to the international community concerning requirements, donors' allocations, delivery schedules, etc. as an aid to planning and co-ordination. Information is also included on port conditions and overland transport possibilities.

Although WFP provides substantial quantities of food and is the source for almost all multilateral food aid, it is neither responsible for, nor able to meet, all emergency food needs. The majority of international food aid is provided bilaterally. WFP's role is in ensuring the co-ordination and orderly scheduling of food aid shipments from all sources; seeking ways to expedite deliveries; mobilizing and providing logistic support; and advocating appropriate policies and procedures for the use of food aid, can be at least as important as that of food aid supplier. WFP also assists donors, upon request, to procure, transport and/or monitor the distribution of certain bilateral food aid consignments.

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New working arrangements between WFP and UNHCR were agreed in 1991. In refugee situations WFP collaborates with and assists UNHCR and the government in assessing any food aid needs and mobilizing/providing a specific range of commodities and the resources to deliver and distribute them. WFP is responsible for mobilizing basic food commodities (cereals, pulses, beans or other protein-rich food, edible oil or fat, salt) plus sugar and blended foods, together with the cash resources for 100% external transport and in-country transport, storage and handling (ITSH) and associated costs related to those commodities. UNHCR is responsible for mobilizing any other required commodities and related cash resources.

Provision of food aid commodities

Commodities may be provided from the emergency resources available to WFP (see below) subject to specific criteria and a request being presented by the government. When approved, commodities are provided as a grant delivered to

the ports of entry, i.e., in the case of developing countries delivery is sometimes arranged to defined extended delivery points within the country. Lead times for the delivery of donated food aid commodities are, however, long - typically 3-5 months, sometimes even longer. The ability to deliver commodities rapidly to meet initial relief needs is usually dependent on the availability of suitable stocks in country which may be borrowed, or purchased. The vast majority of food requirements following sudden disasters are met by borrowing.

The types and quantities of commodities which WFP might supply in any situation depend on the assessed needs and the commodities and cash resources available to WFP at the time. However, WFP seeks to ensure provision of the necessary basic commodities required to provide a balanced nutritionally adequate ration, at calorie levels which have been agreed to be sufficient. WFP allocations for general feeding/food distribution operations in emergencies typically include a suitable cereal, an edible oil or fat, and a protein-rich food such as pulses. Where necessary, WFP may also provide some commodities for supplementary feeding programmes.

In addition to supplying certain quantities from the resources available to it, WFP may help to mobilize and ensure coordination of the delivery of international emergency food aid from all sources, and non-food inputs which are essential for the proper implementation of the planned food assistance programmes (especially logistic equipment) and for the utilization of the food by beneficiaries, e.g., grinders, utensils, and/or cooking fuel.

Assistance to in-country logistics

WFP co-operates in the detailed assessment of logistic systems and capacities and, where necessary in a major emergency in a poor country, may provide technical and material assistance, and assistance for the training of warehouse and other personnel. It may, where needed, help/intervene with the governments of transit countries to facilitate and expedite the passage of relief goods to emergency-affected landlocked countries.

In a major food emergency, WFP may, on an exceptional basis:

- Provide certain material logistic support for ITSH operations, e.g. transport units, storage and handling equipment and expertise, where absolutely essential for the implementation of the planned food aid programmes.
- Help - either directly or through contacts with other competent organizations - to set up and manage major transport and logistics units, especially to arrange transport of food aid commodities from ports to regional depots.

This is largely dependent on appropriate cash or in-kind contributions being made available for the particular purpose by donors.

Resources

WFP administers the International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR) which, in principle, comprises the equivalent of at least 500,000 tonnes of cereals annually but is often exceeded and manages a separate set of resources pledged by donors for assistance to protracted refugee and displaced persons operations. In addition, annual allocations are set aside from WFP's general resources: US\$15 000 000 for "emergency" assistance plus US\$30 million for protracted assistance.

A cash account, known as Immediate Response Account (IRA), was established in 1992 as an integral part of the IEFR for the purchase and delivery of food to enable the fastest possible response to new emergency situations prior to the arrival of foodstuffs through customary channels. The purchases are made locally, where feasible, but otherwise regionally or internationally, as determined most cost-effective and compatible with timely arrival. A cash fund of US\$ 30 000 000, unencumbered by restrictions, is contributed voluntarily by the donors over and above commodity pledges to IEFR and related transport and other costs.

The resources consist mainly of food commodities pledged by donor governments. Cash resources are limited and are reserved for local purchases to meet immediate needs in the aftermath of sudden disasters, and for transport costs. In cases of extreme need, the Executive Director may authorize the release of some cash from WFP's general resources as seed money to finance essential logistics assistance in anticipation of receipt of special-purpose contributions from donors.

Authority at country level

M The WFP Director of Operations may agree with the government on the acceleration/adaptation of ongoing WFP-assisted development projects to meet emergency needs, subject to certain criteria (notably that there is no increase in the WFP commitment). He/she may also purchase up to US\$50,000 worth of commodities locally to meet immediate needs where these are urgent and cannot be met in any other way. Other forms of assistance, including the borrowing and exchanging of commodities, require advance approval of WFP headquarters.

M.2.7. World Health Organization (WHO)

The World Health Organization (WHO) believes that the principal objective of humanitarian work is to reduce avoidable loss of life, disease and disability. In any crisis, WHO, as the UN Specialised Technical Agency for health matters, has the following responsibilities:

- Ensuring that:
 - Health needs are properly assessed and monitored, and are reflected

in requests for international assistance, e.g., in UN Appeals.

- Health partners convene around an integrated humanitarian strategy.
- Humanitarian Assistance applies the best health practices, reflects the Country's health priorities, and respects its capacities.
 - Providing services to the partners:
 - Informing on the Country's epidemiological profile, e.g., risk of epidemics, pre-emergency health coverage; identifying priority threats and factors of risk, and ensuring that they are monitored.
 - Supporting health coordination between national and international partners, and providing health inputs into general humanitarian coordination.
 - Identifying critical gaps in the public health aspects of response that need rapid filling, either by the combined effort of all stakeholders or by WHO itself, as provider of last resort.
 - Mobilising national and international expertise and/or supplies to meet specific health threats.
 - Ensuring that national health partners are fully integrated in the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

These responsibilities apply in any type of crises - sudden or protracted, natural, man-made and technological disasters as well as epidemics. In some cases, e.g., epidemics, WHO is the Lead Agency of emergency operations. Also, in crises where the Lead role is with another agency, WHO retains a responsibility for international health coordination.

Disaster preparation and prevention

WHO is also concerned that national health systems (including buildings, etc.) are able to withstand the impact of natural and man-made threats. Thus, WHO promotes disaster-risk awareness, planning for preparedness and prevention, and national and international capacity building for emergency management. In this regard, WHO organizes international, regional and country training on emergency health management and collaborates with institutions engaged in the public health aspect of disasters. Subject to advance availability of funds, WHO may procure services or supplies on behalf of governments, UN agencies or NGOs in official relations with WHO. Long-term presence in most countries gives WHO a comparative advantage in understanding the context where crises take place and their real impact on the people's health, and in facilitating dialogue with the national health authorities. Likewise, WHO's long-term view of the country's health priorities facilitates synergies between immediate relief, rehabilitation and sustainable recovery.

WHO gathers analyses and disseminates health information on populations and countries at-risk and affected by crisis, for advance planning of humanitarian operations. The WHO website, www.who.int/hac carries disaster-related information and advice and is regularly updated.

Possible WHO inputs

- Teams for rapid health assessment, epidemiological surveillance and public health coordination.
- Emergency Field Operations Handbook specifically written with health workers in mind.
- Emergency medical supplies to combat serious and immediate threats to public health.
- Different sets of guidelines for best medical and public health practices in emergencies.
- Specialised staff and consultants to assist in various aspects of emergency health management: for prevention, preparedness, relief, rehabilitation and recovery.
- Guidelines for drug donations and purchases by sister agencies or other organizations.
- A specific software program (SUMA) for the coordination of health relief supplies.

Resources

WHO has offices in 149 countries, staffed with international and national personnel. Each country office is mandated to take immediate action in a crisis by a) assessing and monitoring the health situation, b) convening and supporting coordination for health action, c) identifying and filling public health critical gaps, and d) strengthening and repairing local and national health systems and building capacities. Should the needs initiated by the crisis exceed in-country capacities, the Head of the office is instructed to request emergency assistance from WHO Regional Office and/or HQ in Geneva.

WHO Headquarters and Regional Offices may give assistance through regular programme mechanisms and from limited special disaster accounts. WHO HQ has a fund from which allocations may be approved in anticipation of subsequent receipt of donor contributions.

WHO may directly approach potential donors but does not normally launch emergency appeals. It usually co-ordinates assessment in the health sector and proposes elements for inclusion in any UN/OCHA appeal which, subject to the necessary funds being contributed, WHO then implements.

M.3. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is a partner in relief work that will be prevalent in all aspects of relief work and is, therefore, an integral part of the environment within which an UNDAC team will work. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is composed of three elements:

- The National Red Cross/Crescent Societies.
- The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The National Society

The national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies embody the work and principles of the international Red Cross and Red Crescent movement. There is only one National Society in a country - either a Red Cross or a Red Crescent. National Societies act as auxiliaries to the public authorities of their own countries in the humanitarian field and provide a range of services including disaster relief, health and social programmes.

During wartime, National Societies assist the affected civilian population and support the army medical services where appropriate.

The unique network of national societies - which cover almost every country in the world - is the Movement's principal strength. Cooperation between National Societies gives the Movement greater potential to develop capacities and assist those most in need. At a local level, the network, which especially rests on the many trained volunteers in local communities, enables the Movement to reach individual communities.

National Society programmes and services are tailored to each country's needs and address both immediate and long-term needs and include:

- Community-based health.
- First aid training and activities.
- Control and prevention of diseases.
- HIV/AIDS prevention.
- Water and sanitation.
- Emergency shelter, non-food items, food, and medicine.
- Disaster preparedness.
- Blood donor recruitment, collection and supply.
- Restoring Family Links (RFL) contact for victims of disaster and conflict.
- Youth activities.

Together, the National Societies have about 100 million volunteers and 300,000 employees, who provide assistance to some 233 million beneficiaries each year.

The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is the world's largest humanitarian organization, providing assistance without discrimination as to nationality, race, religious belief, class or political opinions. Founded in 1919, IFRC membership comprises 183 national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, a Secretariat in Geneva and more than 60 delegations strategically located to support activities around the world. The Red Crescent is used in many Islamic countries while the Red Cross is generally used by all other national societies. In 2005 another emblem, the Red Crystal, was adopted with

the same status as the other emblems recognised by the Geneva Conventions. The Red Crystal will be used by national societies that do not wish to use the Red Cross or the Red Crescent, and will also be used in times of emergency when either of the other emblems could be inappropriate because of divisions within a country or region.

The Federation's mission is to improve the situation of the most vulnerable people - those who are at greatest risk from situations that threaten their survival or their capacity to live with an acceptable level of social and economic security and human dignity.

The Federation coordinates and directs international assistance to victims of natural and technological disasters, to refugees, and in health emergencies. It combines its relief activities with development work to strengthen the capacities of National Societies, and through them, individual people.

The uniqueness of the network and cooperation of National Societies gives the Federation greater potential to develop capacities and assist those most in need as well as enabling communities to take part in the design, implementation and monitoring of programmes.

IFRC Disaster Response Tools

In a fast moving multifaceted, complex and increasingly demanding disaster environment the Federation has for many years sought to strengthen and utilize a strong disaster management competency to respond appropriately in a quick and effective way to disasters.

To this effect, the Federation has a range of international disaster response tools at its disposal. These tools are deployed to disasters for the support of the affected National Society and its response. Among these are:

M *Emergency Appeal*

An appeal that may be posted within hours of a disaster and which will usually be updated as more information is available and more detailed plans of action are created. The aim is to raise funds to enable the response to disasters.

Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF)

The DREF is a fund used to make the necessary financial resources available for starting up operations. It is used in major operations (until funding is made available through the Emergency Appeal) as well as in minor emergencies where no Emergency Appeal is envisaged.

Disaster Management Information System (DMIS)

DMIS is a Red Cross/Red Crescent extranet for disaster management and information sharing. Among other things, it covers monitoring and mapping of potential disasters, posting of emergency response reports directly from the field, baseline data on different countries, information and guidelines, and a toolbox

with formats, updated contact lists, statistics, etc.

Field Assessment and Coordination Team (FACT)

The FACT may be deployed rapidly for up to 6 weeks to support the National Society of an affected country in its response to disasters. The team consists of trained and experienced staff from the National Societies and the Federation Secretariat (Geneva and the field). In the team there are a variety of experiences and expertise, e.g., emergency management and coordination, relief, logistics, health, nutrition, public health and epidemiology, water and sanitation, finance, administration, psychological support, restoring family links as well as many language capabilities. The main tasks are coordination of the International Federation operation, assessment (and especially assessment consolidation, analysis, and sharing) and creation of a plan for the operation, including establishing and starting the implementation of the sectoral programmes. The FACT is also tasked to cooperate and coordinate with non-Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement actors (including the UN and especially the UNDAC team) whenever possible and in line with the mandate and the Fundamental Principles of the Movement.

The FACT team works with counterparts from the local National Society, the Regional Disaster Response Teams (RDRT), members of the Federation regional and country delegations, the Participating National Societies helping the local National Society as well as the ICRC. During the end of the mission, the FACT member's roles are taken over by the host National Society, the delegation, and the delegates who have been recruited for the operation.

Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT)

RDRTs are a cost-effective regional disaster response support system that is entirely staffed by members of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The system is designed to activate trained Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers in responding to disasters occurring in their own regions. The RDRTs are involved in assessments together with the National Society of the affected country and, in addition to covering the core relief functions of food, water, health and shelter, RDRTs can also support interventions in food security, nutrition, construction, media and other specialized areas. When both FACT and RDRT are operating in the same operation the teams are merged into one FACT/RDRT and complement each others responsibilities.

Emergency Response Units (ERU)

The ERUs are rapid disaster response tools that consist of standardised and pre-packed modules of equipment as well as pre-trained staff. The ERUs must be self-sufficient for one month and may be deployed for up to 4 months. They are sponsored by National Societies who also provide the equipment, store it and maintain it as well providing the necessary staff and ensure their readiness and competency through training.

The ERUs provide crucial services to affected people in a disaster and bridge a gap in services when local facilities have been overwhelmed by needs or have been destroyed. Minimum standards regarding equipment and training ensure a dependable and predictable level of quality and compatibility of the units and their delivery.

The ERUs consist of:

- **Logistics** - facilitate the reception of relief items as well as other ERUs.
- **IT/Telecommunication** - facilitate the communications between the various Red Cross and Red Crescent partners.
- **Water treatment and supply line** - treatment and storage of potable water to Sphere and WHO standards supplying up to 600,000 litres / day for 40,000 beneficiaries.
- **Water distribution and trucking** - storage and distribution system for drinking water to remote areas, providing up to 75,000 litres/day.
- **Mass sanitation** - basic sanitation and environmental health interventions (hygiene promotion) for up to 40,000 beneficiaries, latrine construction, solid waste disposal, and burial of dead bodies.
- **Specialized water** - provides safe drinking water and basic sanitation for health facilities and up to 15,000 beneficiaries. Treats and provides 120,000 litres/day.
- **Basic health care** - provides immediate basic essential curative, preventive and community health care for up to 30,000 beneficiaries.
- **Referral hospital** - district-level hospital providing surgical and medical care for a population area of up to 250,000 beneficiaries.
- **Relief** - identify relief needs, selects target beneficiaries and registers these, carries out rapid relief distribution, tracks distributions and reports, and monitors and evaluates.

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The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

The ICRC is the founder body of the Red Cross movement and the promoter of the Geneva Conventions and their additional Protocols, both parts concerning the treatment of wounded and sick military personnel, prisoners of war, and civilian populations in internal and international conflicts. It is an independent and private institution, and is neutral and politically, ideologically, and religiously impartial.

The Committee itself is composed of a maximum of 25 members all of whom are, by statute, Swiss citizens.

The organization, which has its headquarters in Geneva, acts in cases of conflict - internal or international - to:

- Ensure that the Geneva Conventions are observed by parties to the conflict.

- Assure/provide protection, medical care and material relief assistance to victims of the conflict.
- Organize tracing services to identify and re-establish communications between family members who have become separated, as well as tracing and visiting prisoners, e.g., prisoners of war or “security detainees”.

The ICRC cooperates with the National Societies but exercises its particular functions and usually mounts its own operations separately. It establishes its own offices (delegations and sub-delegations) and assigns its own personnel (who will be Swiss ICRC delegates or delegates from other national Societies - there will always be Swiss ICRC delegates in any delegation and usually in the core functions). Medical teams from other national Societies may be assigned in the field under the auspices and directions of the ICRC. The ICRC raises funds by international appeals.

M.4. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

In the context of this handbook, a non-governmental organization (NGO) is an organization that works - in any capacity - in relief assistance. NGOs may be divided into two main categories, namely the international NGOs, i.e., those working in the international field, even though they may not be an international organization in the strictest sense of the term, and local NGOs, i.e., those working within their own country.

NGOs are, in principle, autonomous and are relatively independent of governments and are financed by private individuals or groups as well as governments. NGOs have started receiving more and more funding from governments (usually their own governments) or inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), e.g., the European Union.

The NGO community is increasingly important in the humanitarian world. The period from around 1980 till the beginning of the nineties has rightly been called the decade of the NGOs. In the years after World War II, the amount of international NGOs began to soar (from 832 in 1951 to 9398 in 1981). These NGOs include all aspects of relief work. In the eighties the number of international NGOs has nearly doubled to 16208 in 1990. Of these about 500 are involved directly with humanitarian work.

NGOs work in all areas of the humanitarian field and provide the greatest international capacity to implement relief on the ground. Therefore, it is important to inter-relate with them as there is valuable information and help to be found (and given). It is usually the case that one or more NGOs have operations in the area of the emergency before, during and after the impact and will, therefore, have unique information and experience with the affected communities. NGOs also tend to specialise in one or two fields, or to target their

efforts towards one vulnerable population group. They usually offer skilled staff, rapid deployment capacity (if they are not already in the area), operational flexibility, and resources that might not otherwise be available in an emergency. The number of local NGOs has also accelerated in the past years. These can be an essential partner in disaster response because they are known locally and they themselves know the area, the culture, the population, etc. In many cases they work together with international NGOs, the UN and others. They are assets that must be utilised.

Corporate sector

In both natural disasters and complex emergencies there has been an increased influx of response from the international corporate business community, either on their own initiative or as hired contractors. These actors represent a challenge for the coordination of disaster response as they are not integrated in any overall coordination process through established channels. Efforts are being made at a global level to establish networks and standards for disaster response from the corporate sector.

M.5. The USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART)

The U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) may deploy a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) as a method of providing rapid response assistance for large-scale, urgent disasters, and/or when an extended response is necessary. A DART consists of specialists trained in a variety of disaster relief skills and assists the USAID Mission or U.S. Embassy with management of the U.S. Government (USG) response to the disaster.

A DART provides an operational USAID presence capable of carrying out sustained response activities that may include the following:

- Providing technical assistance to the U.S. Ambassador in formulating and executing an appropriate USG response to the disaster.
- Developing and implementing USAID's response strategy.
- Continuing to assess and report on the disaster situation and recommend follow-up actions, including suggested funding levels.
- Coordinating the movement and consignment of relief commodities.
- Analyzing existing capacity of the infrastructure and relief agencies to ensure an appropriate, efficient response.
- Reviewing and recommending approval for (or approving, when delegated the authority) relief program proposals.
- Assisting in the coordination of the USG's relief efforts with the affected country, other donors and relief agencies and, when present, other USG entities, including the U.S. military.
- Monitoring and evaluating OFDA-funded relief activities.

DARTs coordinate their activities with the affected country, private voluntary organizations (PVOs), NGOs, international organizations (IOs), UN relief agencies, and other assisting countries. When U.S. military assets are involved with the disaster response, the DART will work closely with military officials to ensure a coordinated USG response.

M.6. The European Union (EU)

The European Union (EU), with their 25 Member States and the Commission, is a major humanitarian aid donor at a global level. The Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) is the service of the European Commission responsible for this activity. Since 1992, ECHO has funded humanitarian aid in more than 85 countries. Its grants cover emergency aid, food aid and aid to refugees and displaced persons worth a total of more than EU € 500 000 000 per year.

The EU's mandate to ECHO is to provide emergency assistance and relief to the victims of natural disasters or armed conflict outside the European Union. ECHO's task is to ensure goods and services get to crisis zones fast. Goods may include essential supplies, specific foodstuffs, medical equipment, medicines and fuel. Services may include medical teams, water purification teams and logistical support.

ECHO has many field offices world-wide with personnel that can rapidly deploy to a disaster area to assess the need for ECHO supported projects. ECHO does not deliver humanitarian aid directly but goods and services reach disaster areas through implementing partners.

The Community Civil Protection Mechanism

The Community Civil Protection Mechanism was established in 2001 to facilitate the mobilisation of support and assistance from member states in the event of major emergencies within the union. The heart of the Mechanism is the Commission's Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC). The MIC receives alerts and requests for assistance directly from a disaster-stricken country. On receipt of a request for aid, the MIC immediately informs the national civil protection authorities. It will often appoint coordination and assessment experts that travel to the scene to identify the civil protection needs and help ensure the efficient delivery and distribution of assistance.

For disasters outside the Union, the MIC usually sends an EU assessment and coordination team. This team is made up of two or three people from member states who have expertise in dealing with emergencies. Its role is to ensure a smooth exchange of information between all European teams, an optimal sharing of the work between the different teams present on site as well as appropriate cooperation with the UN and other partners present on the ground.

When the UNDAC team has established an On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC), the EU MIC will coordinate its activities as a part of the OSOCC.

M.7. The International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP)

For information regarding the International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP) and the Asia-Pacific Humanitarian Partnership (APHP), see section D.7. of Chapter D – Mobilization and Mission.