Regional Conference on Disaster Relief and Management: International Cooperation & Role of ICT

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Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)

- **Primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination of humanitarian assistance**
  - Established June 1992 UN GA Res. 46/182
  - Involves all key UN & non-UN humanitarian partners (ERC OCHA chair)
  - IASC Sub-Working Group on Emergency Telecommunications (WGET)
Building a Stronger, More Predictable Humanitarian Response System
Three pillars of reform:

(1) **CLUSTER APPROACH**

Adequate capacity & predictable leadership in all sectors

(2) **HUMANITARIAN FINANCING**

Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)

Adequate, timely and flexible financing

(3) **HUMANITARIAN COORDINATORS**

Effective leadership and coordination in humanitarian emergencies
Cluster concept with 9 Clusters
- Nutrition
- Water and Sanitation
- Health
- Camp Coordination and Management
- Emergency Shelter
- Protection
- Early Recovery
- Logistics
- Emergency Telecommunications: Lead Agencies OCHA, WFP and UNICEF
Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC)

Well defined roles and responsibilities for providing common telecommunications infrastructures

Field, regional and HQ activities allows for systematic and global gap analysis

Framework for NGO/Private sector operational collaboration

Rapid response with predictable service deliverables and timeframes

Pre-positioned resources (staff, equipment, standby capacities)

Provision of standard, interoperable ICT platforms & procedures to avoid duplication and ensure cost effective services

Smooth transition to post-emergency reconstruction
ETC Mandate

- Establish & maintain capacity to respond to:
  - Three large-scale emergencies per year
  - Two of which are simultaneous
  - Large-scale means 500,000+ affected populations with five operational locations

- **OCHA:** Overall coordination
- **WFP:** Provision of security communications
- **UNICEF:** Provision of data communications

Members: UN agencies, NGOs, RCRC, Private sector, Govt,..
To provide common security telecommunications backbone for the humanitarians:

- Setting up the common security communications network covering the UN operational area
- Implement Standard Radio call signs
- Rollout standards for HF and VHF communications
- Provide guidance on HF and VHF frequency usage (i.e. sharing available frequencies)
- Rollout SOPs for Security communication
- Coordinate user Training on Security comms to UN and NGOs
- Provide common security vehicle tracking System
To provide Data Communication services in emergency areas. This is achieved in 3 phases:

**Phase I** - Web-based email access from a single point of presence to communicate essential data and security information

**Phase II** - Internet “hot-spot” connected to light-weight satellite terminals; e-mail, FAX and printer services

**Phase III** - Provides a reliable Wide Area Network link for Internet access and corporate applications. Local inter-agency connectivity through the implementation of a Metropolitan Area Network
ICT a key requirement for the successful humanitarian relief operations. Robust and reliable data communications are essential from the onset to provide:

- **Email**
- **File Transfer**
- **ERP Access** – Access to corporate applications (Enterprise Resource Planning) for finance, supply, human resources and programme planning
- **Intranet** – Corporate Intranet for information sharing
- **Internet** – Public Internet for information gathering and sharing
- **Video** – Video conferencing and/or broadcasting of vital news and events have become increasingly important
Data Communications in an Emergency Pre-ETC

Multiple connections to various global networks, large investments, staffing and maintenance costs
Interagency Data Communications
ETC model

One connection back to one global network,
wireless data connections provide local distribution
ETC Strategy

Preparedness & Planning

Emergency Response

Post Emergency Evaluation
ETC Model Advantages

- Reduced telecommunications infrastructure at emergency locations
- Reduced costs
- More rapid and predictable response
- One dedicated Inter-Agency support team
- Better Preparedness and Training
- Global standards and SOPs
- Greater oversight and accountability
- Improved coordination
On Behalf of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster

Thank You

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