E. COORDINATION IN THE FIELD

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E.1. Coordination techniques and trouble shooting

An UNDAC team needs more than a mandate. It must provide something that others want and need including information, facilities, skills, equipment, credibility, and other amenities - ideally a combination of all these things set in an attracting setting that includes establishing a place to meet, an On-Site Coordination Centre (OSOCC) or coordination centre, with others who also come there.

Practicing certain skills of coordination will help facilitate the coordination process. Following are techniques that are useful in achieving coordination and common coordination barriers likely to be encountered.

E.1.1. Techniques

Promote an understanding of collaborating organizations

The UNDAC team must first get to know the players. Only by understanding the mandates of various organizations, their intentions, and their capacities (resources both material and personnel), can the team involve them appropriately and have reasonable expectations of their performance variations. The UNDAC team should, as soon as feasible, meet and interview the representatives of the various humanitarian agencies active in the emergency situation. The interview should follow a standard procedure and the results made available in a reference file at the coordination centre. In principle, a person should be able to walk into the centre and have, easily accessible, a copy of descriptive information on all operating agencies and the particulars of their operations. Such files will need to be regularly updated. In a longer term operation it will be important to develop a "who does what where" for use in briefing new arrivals and visitors.

Make the linkages

When meeting the organizations, it will be important to identify with whom, in particular, the organization should liaise. This may be determined by any number of variables such as sector, geographical area of operation, government or opposition coordinating agent, etc. Team members should ensure that the linkage has been made. In many cases this will involve contacting the parties, organizing a meeting, escorting one of the parties and facilitating the introductions of the organizational representatives.

Some important and helpful linkages may already be operating. The emergency relief community is, relatively, small and the likelihood of people knowing each other or having worked with one another in a previous emergency is quite high. These pre-existing relationships can greatly aid the linkage process. Of course, the opposite may also be true where an unsatisfactory prior relationship will impede the current effort.

Promote transparency

When an organization's actions are transparent, it is possible to see how and why decisions are being made. The reluctance to transparency resides in various fears - fears of disapproval; that ideas will be stolen or resources monopolized; or that freedom of action or the ability to change course will be circumscribed. By promoting transparency without negative consequences the coordination centre may be able to reduce the natural tendency to hide organizational decision-making processes. And, of course, transparency begins at home. Thus, the UNDAC team must model transparency in its own processes. One way to do this is to periodically evaluate how the coordination process is going and how it might be improved. Clarifying how the team can do its job better and then making those changes will improve operations at the same time that transparency is increased.

Start with the needs of others

In promoting coordination it is tempting to say, "as OCHA we need this information to be able to coordinate". Thus, the need for coordination resides in OCHA not in the coordinatees. This is the wrong approach. The team should first ask how they can help the agencies. By starting at and meeting some of the agencies' needs, the team is committing to service first and earning significant credibility. As part of the effort of identifying the needs of others it will become clearer not only what coordination should seek to accomplish but also how organizations may be induced to participate. Adopt a marketing approach where you try to find out their needs and meet them, as opposed to selling them what you have to offer.

Clarify coordination parameters and activities

Taking a little bit of the mystery out of coordination will go a long way in ensuring that it happens. Coordination will be avoided if organizations feel that it will be just a waste of time in endless meetings or that the coordination effort will result in a veto of their plans and activities. The best way to clarify

the coordination parameters is to have frank and open discussions on the goals expected to be reached through the coordination efforts and the needs of the various organizations, including OCHA, for coordination.

Write it down

Some of the results of the coordination process, both from large group and bi-lateral discussions will be concrete enough to be developed into a document. Such items might include a preparedness plan or plan of operations. Certainly all such agreements will require updating and, even in the best of cases, represent an intention to act or an agreement, in principle, subject to change as situations change. Regardless, writing conclusions/agreements down provides a record for follow-up and accountability.

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Keep the ball rolling

Momentum in coordination is essential to maintain interest and commitment. One way to do this is to ensure rapid reporting of new or updated information. Decisions made in the coordination process must be documented in the form of minutes or aide de memoir(s) and distributed. Even more important is to ensure follow-up and follow-through on decisions. Failure to implement conclusions will cause cynicism about the process to develop and ultimately destroy the team's credibility. Part of keeping momentum is keeping people in touch with one another and keeping channels of communication open. This may involve going out of your way to make the right connections.

Respect people's time and schedules

Don't let the coordination meetings get to be just another meeting. Ensure that the meetings need to occur and that there is vital and important work to be done. Don't be afraid to cancel a standing meeting if the agenda is not compelling enough. Publish an agenda for the meeting and stick to the schedule. Try to begin and end meetings on time. Practice good meeting facilitation skills. Ensure that everyone has a chance to say what is on their mind and that a small group or individuals don't dominate the conversation.

Attack small problems before they grow

A small problem, be it a misunderstanding, a hurt feeling, or a perception of insensitivity may grow and fester resulting in a much bigger barrier to communication. Therefore, as part of your role in facilitating productive relationships you may need to engage in active conflict management or relationship confidence building, usually outside the formal coordination process. Starting small is generally a good idea in any situation as you build confidence in the coordination process.

Provide useful information and services

In part this will occur if you practice the technique of asking others what they need. Even so, some types of information will always be useful to almost everyone. If the team is the repository of useful information, people will want

to come to it. Maps, for instance, always seem to be in short supply. If you maintain accurate maps, updated on the basis of operation information, people will beat a path to your door. Further, the coordination centre should be a good place to get a copy made; get a weather report; check-out what might be going on somewhere; get a security update; or just see a smiling and congenial coordinator willing to take a few moments to listen.

Build on strengths

It is important to ask people to do things they can do. Too often people agree to a task that they can't or won't perform under the threat of consensus or just part of wanting to be a team player. Therefore, ask people to do things they can easily accomplish, especially at first. And don't be afraid to ask them over and over, whether they are sure they want to take on the task. Once your relationship is strong you may be able to ask them to engage in more difficult tasks.

No surprises

Nobody likes to go to a meeting and be embarrassed because they don't know something they should or that other people know. Therefore, the UNDAC team will need to meet and brief people outside of the formal meeting process to keep them updated on current or fast changing events, shifts in resources or important visitors.

Hand over functions to others

It's an old cliché, but try to work yourself out of a job. If a coordination centre is going to need to function for a long time period, it will be best if as many functions as possible are handled either by the other agencies or by local staff of the centre. If someone else can and is willing to do your job, give them the chance. In almost every situation there is more to do than can be done. Giving jobs to others can only help in freeing you up to take on another task.

Thank people and acknowledge their contribution

Rewarding participation is an important technique in building commitment to the coordination process. When organizations have done good work, changed their program or otherwise gone out of their way to put other's needs ahead of their own they need to be thanked and acknowledged, publicly. Few things will inspire more participation in coordination than the feeling of being a valued contributor.

Use the informal time

There is a minimum amount of "down-time" during an UNDAC mission but there are always opportunities to interact with the response community during off-duty periods like meals or after-hours socializing. Don't miss the chance to build effective relationships at these times. Sharing information on hobbies, favourite sports teams, family, etc. all contribute to building the personal regard that will encourage people to want to associate with the coordination process.

Propinquity

The UNDAC team has a unique opportunity to affect the coordination process when choosing and establishing the site for the coordination centre. Several of the functions initially taken care of by the team will very soon, or simultaneously, be filled by other UN-entities. For example United Nations Joint Logistics Centre (UNJLC) and United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) for logistics and air transport, Humanitarian Information Centre (HIC) for information management, United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UN DSS) for security, etc. These organizations provide services the humanitarian community will want to stay close to.

The team should ensure that these entities establish themselves inside, or as close as possible to, the coordination centre. This will provide the humanitarian community with a "one-stop-shop" and they will come to you for services and information in a natural way - a situation where it will be easier for you to achieve your tasks.

Other UN agencies may even want to establish their own offices in close proximity to the centre – a location that may develop in to a UN compound for the longer term operation where all the key partners and/or agencies work out of the same place. This will be a great advantage for the coordination process as people will have easy access to each other and there will be more opportunities for informal networking.

Cluster coordination

In the early days of an emergency the relief work is often characterized by chaos, duplication of work and lack of overview. Implicit in the UNDAC team's mandate, is to establish structures to avoid this. One way of achieving this is to split the different areas in to logical sectors of humanitarian activity and organize the relief organizations in clusters according to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) approval of 2005. See also Chapter B.5.3. for further details.

The specific routines for cluster coordination in a particular natural disaster should be decided on a headquarter level and the UNDAC team may be the responsible entity to put the routines in to effect. If this is not done, it will be left to the team in cooperation with the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) to assess the opportunities and initiate cluster coordination of the relief work.

One UN agency or capable non-governmental organization (NGO) should be asked to take charge of its respective cluster, e.g., World Health Organization (WHO) for health, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for water/sanitation, and the World Food Programme (WFP) for food, etc. The responsible agency/ organization will then act as lead agency and be responsible for the coordination within the cluster, leaving the UNDAC team to oversee the overall coordination process.

If the team has established such structures at an early stage of the emergency, it will be easier to work oneself out of a job.

E.1.2. Coordination barriers

Recognizing and naming/identifying barriers to coordination is the first step in overcoming them. Some common barriers to coordination include:

- The perception that coordination will limit autonomy and that the freedom to make decisions and run programmes as desired will be circumscribed.
- Too many decision-makers or too many organizations involved which will complicate the process and make consensus, or at least agreement, too difficult to achieve.
- Different expectations or beliefs about what is important, a priority, or the "right" thing to do in a given situation.
- Lack of resources to devote to coordination or coordination seen as a low priority given limited time and resources.
- Limited "field-based" decision-making authority such that no decisions can be made without HQ approval thus resulting in delays or having an agreement overturned.
- Staff turnover where new staff lacks a commitment to coordination or are unaware of coordination agreements.
- Unilateral actions that ignore established coordination mechanisms of the coordination body whether by donors or member organizations.
- Ineffectual or inappropriate coordination leadership, for example, when the coordination body exercises autocratic leadership and imposes decisions on others without a transparent process of involvement.
- A coordination process that is not working well, has unclear objectives, and is seen to waste time without obvious benefits to those participating in it.

E.2. Structure and establishment of an OSOCC

E.2.1. Introduction

In accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution 57/150 of 16 December 2002 on "Improving the effectiveness and coordination of international Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) assistance" establishing an On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC) is one of the functions an UNDAC team will frequently be asked to perform. The size and functions of the OSOCC will vary in each emergency. However, its basic structure is described below. The UNDAC team should modify this to suit the requirements of the situation.

An OSOCC has three main objectives:

1. To provide a system for coordinating and directing the activities

of an international relief effort at the site of a disaster/emergency; this is especially the case in an earthquake scenario to coordinate the activities of international USAR teams.

2. To provide a framework/platform for cooperation and coordination among the international humanitarian entities at a disaster/ emergency site.

3. To act as a link between such entities and the affected country's authorities.

General

An OSOCC is designed to facilitate the coordination of the international relief community in a disaster/emergency. The OSOCC concept was originally developed by the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) and the then United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA), later OCHA, to assist affected countries in coordinating international search and rescue teams in the aftermath of a catastrophic earthquake.

However, the emergency management principles behind the OSOCC's scope, structure and procedures make the OSOCC a valid tool in any sudden-onset disaster involving international relief resources.

The OSOCC system is designed as a rapid response tool. To be effective, it should be initiated in the immediate aftermath of a disaster/emergency and before, or simultaneously with, the arrival of international relief resources.

It is expected that an OSOCC in some form would be operational during the relief phase of an emergency until the national/local authorities and/or the traditional UN structure can cope with the coordination of international resources or until the international relief resources meeting emergency requirements have been withdrawn.

Each international relief team present at the disaster site should feel a responsibility to contribute to the effective functioning of the OSOCC and the efficient coordination of its operation with those of local and national relief resources as well as with other international teams.

In many disasters, UN agencies/offices and NGOs providing common services deploy simultaneously with the UNDAC team, e.g., UNJLC, HIC, UN DSS, Télécom Sans Frontières (TSF), and MapAction. These entities have substantive expertise and the UNDAC team should seek out the possibility of cooperating closely with them. They will often be best suited to fill functional elements one normally will find in an OSOCC.

In disasters over a widespread area there might be a need to establish one or several sub-OSOCC(s). The structure of these will follow the same set up as the main OSOCC.

OSOCC guidelines

The OSOCC Guidelines have been developed by OCHA, as INSARAG Secretariat, in cooperation with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the UNDAC team and experts from international urban search and rescue teams. They provide guidance to the UNDAC team and to other organizations that are the first to arrive at the site of a disaster to establish a coordination structure. The coordination structure should be designed to assist national and local authorities with the coordination and facilitation of the work of international responders.

The Guidelines describe the functioning of the Reception Departure Centre (RCD) and the OSOCC, explain their responsibilities and suggest a work method. The proposed work method includes references to templates for processing information and recommends workflow procedures with other components within or outside the OSOCC. It is essential that all staff members of the OSOCC, including external liaison persons, have a clear understanding of the responsibilities of each of the OSOCC's functional elements and their expected interaction.

A copy of the OSOCC Guidelines may be found in the UNDAC mission software together with numerous forms and tables intended to facilitate the work of the OSOCC and RCD

E.2.2. OSOCC structure
The illustration below shows the functions of the OSOCC and their interaction with other entities.
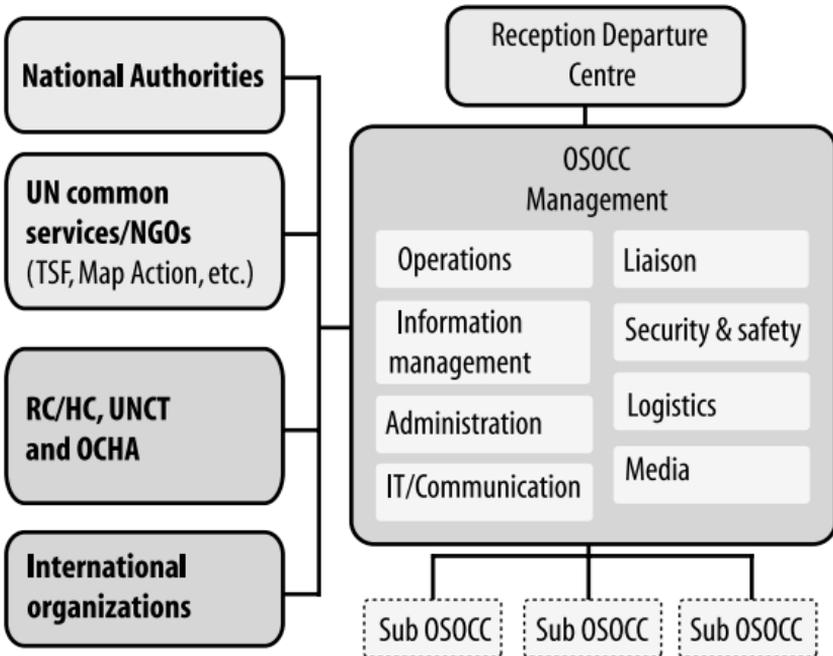
Reception Departure Centre (RDC)

In many cases there will be a need to establish a Reception Departure Centre (RDC) as a part of the OSOCC. This centre will be located at the arrival point of international relief teams in order to facilitate the arrival and further deployment to the disaster area.

Especially in earthquakes with a sudden and, possibly, large influx of USAR teams an RDC is a necessity. In accordance with the INSARAG Guidelines the first arriving USAR teams are responsible for setting up and staffing the RDC until the UNDAC team arrives and is operational.

When the search and rescue phase is terminating, the RDC turns into a Departure Centre reversing the tasks it had with arriving USAR teams. Guidelines for the RDC are included in the OSOCC Guidelines.

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An RDC may be structured into three functional elements. Staffing for these should come from the UNDAC team with additional support from liaison officers from incoming teams.

Reception Departure Centre manager

- Supervise setup and operation of the RDC.
- Liaise with responsible authorities and provide information about the purpose and capacity of the RDC, e.g., to assist airport authorities with the administration of arriving international USAR teams in order to ensure their rapid and most appropriate assignment in the disaster-affected area.
- Establish a sequence of stations to allow the rapid processing of arriving USAR teams. The stations include immigration, customs, registration, briefing, logistics and transport to the site.
- Supervise the activities of RDC staff throughout the operation.
- Ensure an information flow from the RDC to responsible national authorities and that the OSOCC is established and functioning.

Reception Departure Centre logistics coordinator

- Facilitate logistics support for arriving international USAR teams in cooperation with national authorities. This task includes determining logistics requirements of arriving USAR teams, making necessary logistics arrangements with national authorities and briefing newly arrived USAR teams accordingly.
- If the RDC is requested by the OSOCC or national authorities to assist with the tracking of international contributions, the RDC logistics officer would be assigned this responsibility.

Reception Departure Centre administration

- Ensure the physical set-up of the RDC, including the establishment of stations for rapid processing of arriving USAR teams.
- Ensure the set-up and operation of any electronic equipment

that is required to carry out its task, including computers, email, internet connectivity and communication within the RDC.

• Collect information about arriving relief teams at dedicated Reception Stations.

• Establish a system for filing and backing-up of electronic documents on a regular basis.

• Register contact information of national and international counterparts, create mailing lists and share this information with the OSOCC and other stakeholders.

OSOCC structure

The OSOCC may be structured into nine functional elements. Not all elements are needed in every emergency. Depending on the magnitude of the disaster/emergency and staff resources available, some functions may require more than one person, while several other functions may be managed simultaneously by one person.

OSOCC Manager

• Identify a suitable venue in cooperation with Local Emergency Management Authority (LEMA) and supervise set-up.

• Ensure close cooperation with LEMA during all phases of the operation.

• Ensure overall functioning of the OSOCC.

• Ensure effective external and internal information exchange, e.g., reporting, meeting schedules, handouts.

• Prepare an exit and handover strategy.

OSOCC Operations

• Track capacity, assignments and availability of international resources.

• In cooperation with LEMA, plan and evaluate assessments, assign and track international resources, follow up on mission results.

• Ensure most effective use of international resources.

• May be composed of liaison persons from international USAR teams, but a facilitator should be appointed to ensure effective cooperation with LEMA and within the element.

OSOCC Information management

• Manage emergency related information.

• Collate incoming information.

• Initiate information monitoring system.

• Establish a system for dissemination and sharing of information within the humanitarian community.

• Ensure that sectoral experts evaluate and analyze collated information.

• Initiate measures to clarify missing, ambiguous or wrong information.

• Draft situation reports.

OSOCC Logistics coordinator

- Ensure logistic support for the OSOCC.
- Liaise with national and international logistics entities.
- Facilitate logistics support to international actors.
- Arrange and keep a record of logistical arrangements, e.g., transport, fuel.

OSOCC Liaison coordinator

- Ensure systematic information exchange with national and international counterparts.
- Make recommendations on exchange of liaison persons with national and international counterparts to the OSOCC management.
- Ensure that external liaison persons in the OSOCC are briefed and used appropriately.

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OSOCC Media officer

- Develop and maintain a media management plan by identifying an overall media policy, identifying relevant media, organizing press conferences, and issuing press releases.
- Prepare and update media information kits for distribution including OSOCC purpose and responsibility, situation and activities, and operations statistics.
- Monitor and analyze national and international media and make recommendations to the OSOCC management.

OSOCC Security officer

- Liaise with UN Designated Official or UN Field Security Coordination Officer (FSCO).
- Establish and practice a rapid notification system for safety and security issues for OSOCC staff and international actors.
- Develop and practice an evacuation plan for the OSOCC.
- Provide safety/ security updates for the OSOCC and international actors, including weather reports, if needed.

OSOCC Administration

- Manage the OSOCC filing system.
- Manage the contacts database, including mailing lists and invitations to events.
- Manage a reporting and meeting schedule.
- Establish and operate Front Desk.
- Manage the OSOCC duty roster.

OSOCC IT/Communications

- Establish and maintain OSOCC external communications within the affected region, e.g., LEMA, RC/HC and with international counterparts, e.g., OCHA, Virtual OSOCC.

- Establish and maintain OSOCC internal communications.
- Assist OSOCC Administration with configuration of UNDAC mission software and backup of electronic documents.

OSOCC Support

In many cases, support in the form of technical and human resources is necessary for the OSOCC to function effectively. When needed, these resources should, in so far as possible, be provided by OCHA's external resource partners (see Chapter D.7.1 – International Humanitarian Partnership) in the form of a support module with the necessary equipment. The main areas of support are IT, telecommunications, transport, and accommodations.

Several of the persons deploying as UNDAC support staff have long experience from previous disasters and UNDAC deployments. They should be integrated in to the team and may, in many cases, take responsibility for one or several of the OSOCC functional elements.

OSOCC Staffing

Staffing for the OSOCC will come from the UNDAC team and/or OCHA. Other sources of staffing may include UN agencies, USAR teams, and NGOs.

Each international relief team should identify an individual from its team to act as a liaison with the OSOCC to ensure that all teams contribute to the coordination of the disaster response.

The number of staff needed to fulfil OSOCC functions will depend on the volume and complexity of activities at the OSOCC and RDC, as well as on the number of work periods per day that the OSOCC will be functioning. The workload may require a 24-hour-per-day commitment. Therefore, when considering the number of individuals needed from relief teams to provide additional staff for the OSOCC, a minimum of two work shifts to cover 24 hours should be established. This could mean at least a doubling of the number of individuals filling different OSOCC functions.

Staffing of the OSOCC should be complemented with additional staff as they become available, e.g., when qualified personnel arrive at the disaster site. The agreement and willingness to commit personnel and equipment to an OSOCC may be a significant undertaking for a relief team. Planning for this possibility may involve additional training for relief team members and the procurement of additional equipment. It is crucial that, as more international relief teams arrive, they are willing to support the personnel and equipment needs of the OSOCC.

OSOCC equipment

OSOCC requirements for equipment will vary depending on the disaster situation and the level at which the OSOCC will operate. Normally an UNDAC support module will be deployed together with the UNDAC team carrying the essential equipment needed for the establishment of an OSOCC. In addition, the UNDAC Team Leader should also carry some equipment. (See also Chapter D – Mobilization and Mission.)

From time to time it will be necessary for international relief teams to assist in equipping and supplying an OSOCC from their team's own equipment and supplies. The first relief team to arrive (which may set up the OSOCC and the RDC) may have to share some of its resources to enable the OSOCC to function.

Expansion of the OSOCC

An OSOCC should be established with enough flexibility to adjust to the magnitude and complexity of a disaster. As the OSOCC becomes fully engaged in coordination, its role and activities may be expanded to meet the requirements dictated by the situation, the authorities and/or the UN.

There will be occasions when the OSOCC may need to expand in a specific area(s) within its functional or structural responsibilities to meet additional operational demands requested of it by the authorities, the RC/HC, and/or the international relief resources present on site. The OSOCC, together with these other stakeholders, will develop an operational plan of action, upgrade its communications and assessments, and introduce systems and procedures to sustain a prolonged commitment.

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To meet these specific needs, the OSOCC will require additional resources and specialized staff to manage the special requirements of the emergency situation. These requirements may be related to sectoral response such as medical needs, sanitation and shelter or to the expanded support of an emergency operation in such areas as logistics and communications.

The expansion of OSOCC functions should be made within the basic structure of the OSOCC so as not to upset its general operational procedures or lines of command. This level of expansion is normally only applicable to a complex emergency and will not be discussed in detail in this handbook.

E.2.3. Common mistakes during the set-up of the OSOCC

Planning for the OSOCC

OSOCC Manager is not clearly appointed. One person (not the UNDAC Team Leader) has to be appointed manager of the OSOCC before the OSOCC is established. His/her task is to plan for the OSOCC setup and to supervise/support activities of OSOCC staff in organizing their work.

The planning phase for the OSOCC set-up is skipped. It is essential to spend enough time for the planning of the OSOCC set-up. The roles, tasks and expected results of the work of its members and interaction between its members have to be clearly defined. It has to be clear to all OSOCC members how the OSOCC will function, who plays what role, and what its output will be.

OSOCC members have no clearly appointed tasks. Every OSOCC staff member has to know very clearly his/her tasks and what the expected result of his/her work should be (see E.3). Each OSOCC member also has to have a clear understanding of the tasks of other members and how each person's activities relate to others.

Setup of OSOCC

Information management cell is exposed to public interaction. The Information Management cell of the OSOCC has to be in a quiet place, which is not accessible to the public. In the Information Management cell, all information from Reception Departure Centres, cluster/sectors, assessment missions, and any other sources are compiled and analyzed and put into the necessary format for dissemination (databases, sitreps, charts, e-mails, fact-sheets). The Information Management Cell is the core element of the OSOCC.

UNDAC Support Module staff are not integrated in the OSOCC. They should be included in the design and management of the OSOCC and assigned concrete tasks according to their background, e.g., assessment, information management, and logistics, even beyond the physical establishment of the OSOCC.

Lacking crowd management

The OSOCC should establish some sort of crowd management, e.g., reception desk at the entrance or outside the centre under a tarpaulin to avoid uncontrolled public interaction.

Relation with national/local authorities

Contact with national/local authorities is established too late. Local civil/military authorities, who are involved in the relief operation, have to be contacted by the UNDAC Team Leader as soon as possible. They should be briefed on the role of the UNDAC/OSOCC and arrangements for mutual information exchange and liaison at all levels should be made.

Relation with international relief actors

Humanitarian actors learn too late about the existence/role of the OSOCC. It is important to inform relief actors early and arrange informal meetings. To contact relief actors it is sometimes useful to use national entities, e.g., customs, military, warehouses, etc. to make those actors aware of OSOCC assets and activities, e.g., daily meeting and contact details.

Liaison officers

Liaison officers are not integrated in the OSOCC structure. Liaison officers, who are made available by national/local authorities or other humanitarian actors, have to be formally integrated into the OSOCC structure. This requires a firm agreement on their use with their sending organization. Liaison officers have to be assigned concrete tasks within the context of the OSOCC activities.

Information update

Information is not updated and maintained. Information on planned activities (assessment missions), OSOCC staffing (liaison persons, volunteers, translators), contact persons in government and relief agencies, locations, scheduled meetings, etc. is not systematically updated/maintained in the OSOCC. Therefore, OSOCC staff might not be updated on the current status of the operation.

E.3. Coordination functions checklist

The table below presents a set of possible activities to guide the design and implementation of the coordination strategy of an UNDAC team establishing an OSOCC. It is unlikely that all the functions would be applicable to a particular emergency situation. The checklist is meant to serve as a starting point as the team decides its priorities. The tasks have been categorized to be congruent with the OSOCC structure but are intended to be useful in situations where an OSOCC or coordination centre has not been established and/or there is limited participation by partners like UNJLC, UNHAS, etc.

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Function: UNDAC Team Leader
Task: As official OCHA representative, he/she should make contacts at highest possible level with national authorities, the UN RC/HC and relief agencies, to ensure acceptance and support for the UNDAC team.
Checklist: • Establish contact with the RC/HC, UN DMT, and national authorities. • Prepare and give brief on UNDAC team, ToR, and agree on procedures for cooperation with RC/HC, national authorities, UN agencies, and NGOs. • In cooperation with the RC/HC, design a scope of activities for the team and set priorities for relief activities. • Design, implement, monitor, revise and set priorities for the team's overall Plan of Action.
Expected result: Effective support by all counterparts.

Function: Management

Task:
Should develop a task plan for the team and supervise the work of team members. In cooperation with the UNDAC Team Leader, the management cell should facilitate the organization of resources to enhance the effectiveness
of the team.

Checklist:
- Assign individuals to the functions and main areas of responsibility.
- Establish contact with other relief agencies.
- Conduct internal meetings and briefings.
- Provide the necessary leadership, advice and guidance to guarantee a smooth, efficient emergency operation.
- Conduct coordination meetings with the authorities and representatives of international relief resources as appropriate.
- Liaise closely with the authorities.

Expected result**:**
Ensures that staff is most effectively used and that the team produces the expected outputs.

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Function: Operations

Task:
Maintain an overview of ongoing relief activities and develop an integrated plan for coordination in cooperation with national authorities and international relief actors. Works in close cooperation with the Information management cell.

Checklist:
- In the immediate response phase, identify priority areas for deploying resources, direct relief providers to high need areas, track progress, and adjust the response as needed.
- Serve as secretariat for the coordination body and provide internal briefings on ongoing operations.
- Facilitate/coordinate an assessment of national and international organization roles, resources, capability, and comparative strengths, identify gaps, overlaps, and bottlenecks by cluster/area/programme.
- Monitor and facilitate inter-agency coordination efforts within clusters.
- Facilitate consultation/communication between relief-providers and national authorities.
- Monitor and evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness, and impact of operations and recommend follow-up.

Expected result:
Integrated plan for coordination and relief activities.

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Function: Information management

Task:
Compile and analyze the information input from outside sources (RDC, assessment reports, situation reports, media, etc.) and convert it into appropriate output format for dissemination to stakeholders, e.g., sitreps, databases, charts, etc. The Information Management officer works in close cooperation with all other functions of the team.

Checklist:

- Collect, collate, analyse, and disseminate information on all activities of NGOs, donors, media, UN agencies, and other international and national relief actors.
- Agree on what information is required from the team, in what form and how often it should be presented.
- Prepare situation reports.
- Develop and maintain a central registry of organizations include information on capacity and operations.
- Coordinate the development and implementation of joint assessments surveys, questionnaires and other information gathering activities.
- Facilitate preparation of flash and consolidated appeals; work to fill resource shortfalls.

Expected result:
Provision of timely output of analyzed information in appropriate format.

Function: Logistics

Task:
Provide logistics support to the team and establish links with local/national logistics entities and in other relief organizations.

Checklist:

- Ensure adequate working space and accommodations for the UNDAC team.
- Ensure adequate transportation to meet the needs of the UNDAC team.
- Establish a tracking system of all vehicles.
- Establish a service and maintenance schedule.
- Ensure access to workshop for service.
- Ensure/establish/maintain the necessary technical needs (e.g. electricity, lighting etc.) to run and sustain an OSOCC.
- Oversee logistical support for the team.
- Assess damage to logistical infrastructure.
- Establish route availability and security.
- Identify local logistic resources such as transport, fuel, and services and secure, as required.
- Identify capability gaps in equipment and facilities.
- Ensure the provision of common services such as fuel airfield handling, vehicle maintenance, light air operations, and airfield management.
- Coordinate vital common services such as airlift, medevac, and airhead operations.
- Facilitate the set up of logistics coordination group.
- Ascertain, if necessary establish, and publish procedures for customs clearance, local documentation, and taxes.
- Facilitate cooperation and sharing of facilities, supplies, equipment.
- With local authorities, monitor and prioritize incoming relief shipments to ensure vital consignments are expeditiously handled.

Expected result:
Logistics support for the UNDAC team and formal links to all logistics entities of the relief operation.

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Function: Liaison

Task:
Establish formal information exchange between the UNDAC team and respective organizations and participate in related meetings.

Checklist:
- Communicate regularly with USAR teams, NGOs, donors, media, UN agencies and other international relief providers and provide them with information needed to implement their programmes.
- Facilitate regular individual and group meetings on request for planning, coordination and information exchange.
- Serve as focal point for all newly arriving organizations and facilitate their registration and recognition by national/local authorities.
- Support donor visitation and fact-finding missions.
- Assist in the development of project proposals and facilitate expanded NGO presence; support NGOs in delivering assistance.
- Help build local capacity through facilitating international/national partnerships.
- Liaise with international military contingents in the area to assist humanitarian operations.

Expected result:
Systematic information exchange between the UNDAC team and respective organizations.

Function: Media

Task:
Handle all media interaction and prepare media fact sheet about UNDAC activities as well as an update of statistics for distribution to media.

Checklist:
- In cooperation with the UNDAC Team Leader, RC/HC, and manager establish guidelines for contacts with the media.
- Serve as focal point for the media.
- Identify and maintain contact with relevant media to promote advocacy for the relief operation.
- In cooperation with the information management function, prepare relevant information for the media.

Expected result:
A constructive relationship with national/local and international media.

Function: Security
Task: Monitor the security situation and establish regular information exchange with the UN Designated Official (DO) for security and security officers from other relief actors. Update UNDAC team staff and relief actors on the security information. Develop a security plan for the UNDAC team (including evacuation plan, if necessary).

Checklist:
    • In cooperation with UN DSS, establish a security plan for staff and update as required.
    • Monitor the security situation and UN security phases.
    • Communicate security procedures to all affected parties.
    • Assist and ensure preparedness plans and measures.
    • Facilitate security implementation procedures.
    • If necessary, facilitate evacuation.

Expected result: Security plan and periodic update on the security information.

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Function: Administration

Task:
Organize the internal work-flow of the UNDAC team and ensure that all staff is constantly updated on the current information, e.g., activities, personnel, contacts, meetings, etc. When establishing an OSOCC, he/she should establish a reception desk, name-tags, etc. for effective crowd management.

Checklist:
- Set up an administration cell.
- Plan administrative requirements.
- Document and file incoming and outgoing messages.
- Introduce administrative systems and procedures, including logging and filing.
- Manage financial support for UNDAC activities.
- Procure and manage interpretation services.
- Organize UNDAC staffing patterns and status.
- Procure maps, boards, stationery and other support materials necessary for the UNDAC team.
- Arrange for administrative support personnel and equipment, as appropriate.
- Establish a mail reception/distribution/information focal point for relief agencies.

Expected result:
Internal organization of the UNDAC team.

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Function: IT/communications

Task:
Establish and maintain technical communication links through e-mail, sat-phone and manage all technical internal communication issues (VHF radios), maintain contact list and communications plan of UNDAC team and relief actors.

Checklist:
- Provide necessary telecommunications equipment not currently available and, if necessary, transport to the country.
- Provide, set-up and maintain telecommunications equipment for an OSOCC and R/DC.
- Establish and maintain a LAN with sufficient number of computers.
- Establish international communications.
- Maintain a log of incoming and outgoing communications.
- Develop and implement an UNDAC communications plan.
- Monitor, analyze and assess all communications traffic.
- Ensure compatibility/unity of security communications system with other UN agencies, NGOs, and implementing partners.
- Provide updates on GPS positioning for key locations or missions.
- Provide ongoing training and technical assistance on the installation, operations and maintenance of telecommunications equipment.

Expected result:
Physical set-up of internal and external communication and maintenance of contacts list andcommunications plan.

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Annex

Site selection for OSOCC and UN-compound/accommodation camp

OSOCC site selection

When choosing a site for an OSOCC, several important points must be kept in mind. First, the general location of the OSOCC should be in close proximity to the national government's emergency management coordinating unit as well as other agencies providing humanitarian assistance. Where this is located will depend, to some extent, on the type of disaster/emergency. In an earthquake, the centre is best situated close to the local emergency management on-site, but in a flood situation, over a widespread area, it might be best to stay in the capital close to the RC/HC and national authority.

The physical location should maximize the possibilities of effectively utilizing communication equipment, e.g., on higher ground and not surrounded by hills or other natural obstructions. The site should slope and drain effectively. The site should facilitate proper security procedures including ease of access and evacuation, a perimeter easily guarded, and distance from actual or potential armed conflict.

The building housing the OSOCC should be structurally sound and not damaged during the emergency. Ideally there will be several separate rooms to use as offices. There should be a general area for receiving and registering visitors, preferably with some pleasant ambiance such as a coffee machine. There should also be a general situation room with tables and chairs sufficient for meeting of 12-15 people (larger, if possible). There should be some private offices where confidential discussions may take place. The building should be large enough to accommodate the co-location of staff from the national government and other agencies that wish to operate within the OSOCC structure.

Communication equipment should be in a secure communications room. Office equipment like copiers should be accessible but not in general meeting space areas.

In general it will be useful to think about traffic control in designing the physical layout of the OSOCC. Certain areas will need to be secure and not accessible to the public or even other responders. Some areas will be required for open meetings. The private and public areas should be well separated.

UN compound/ accommodation- camp

In large scale operations, a camp for accommodation and offices for UN agencies may be requested from the IHP. These camps provide facilities such as sleeping area, offices, kitchen, bathroom, showers, etc., and also all the infrastructure needed for running such a camp.

The UNDAC team might be tasked with finding and selecting the site for such a camp, and several considerations must be taken before making the final decision.

If possible, one should try to establish contact with the Team Leader of the camp-module before the module arrives in order to investigate the exact requirements of the camp that is planned.

A contract for the use of the site should be secured before the support module arrives. Once the team arrives, things can get very busy and the owners may have second thoughts when they see what's happening.

Site considerations

- **Area requirements –** When selecting a site for the camp there is a thumb-rule regarding minimum-requirements for the size of the area. One needs 1000 m² to get started. This area will later be used for common facilities, e.g., kitchen, bathrooms, storage, generators, etc. To that one adds 15 m² per accommodated person, 10 m² per office-space, and 15 m² per vehicle, i.e., a camp for 25 persons with 10 office-spaces and parking area for 10 vehicles will need 1575 m².

- **Security –** The area should be easily secured to keep out unwanted visitors. Also consider hazards within the compound, e.g., a wall at risk from collapse. In the post- emergency environment look for secondary hazards such as overhead power lines, gas pipelines, large trees or other unstable buildings.

- **Traffic flow –** How will vehicles enter and exit the compound? Minimize turning areas and allow for heavy trucks (especially during set up).

- **People flow –** Apart from the people living in the compound, who else will be visiting? Try and design the layout to allow visitors access to the office/work area of the compound without having to go through the accommodation area.

- **Tents –** Will be brought in for office space, accommodation, kitchen and dining, showers and ablutions. Estimate a tent being 10m x 8m (some may be smaller), allow an extra 1.5m - 2m on all sides for a fire break and passage between the tents. The dining tent and kitchen may be joined to make one 20m x 8m tent. Space should be allowed for at the rear of the kitchen for access to the refrigerator.

- **Flat grassed area –** The tents will be erected with little preparation of the site so the flatter the better. The tents may be erected on hard stand however this may produce some issues over securing them against strong wind or helicopter wash.

- **Gravel –** When building the camp on grass or earth the tents will need a base of gravel underneath in order to prevent decomposition of the soil and a foul smell in the camp. Locate a place nearby were this gravel can be procured and transported to the camp site. Check out what logistical arrangements have to be made for this before the module arrives.

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- **Drainage** – Tropical monsoons may dump huge amounts of water in a very short space of time. Allow for the site to be well drained – another reason why hard stand for tents may be a problem. Provision for drainage of showers and water points should also be considered.

- **Paths** – Gravel paths will be put in place between the tents. As an alternative, a boardwalk may be put in place but the module doesn't come equipped for this.

- **Hard stand** – The team will come with several vehicles. Other UN agencies will also have their vehicles. A hard stand for 30 vehicles should be provided within the compound. Visitor's vehicles should not be allowed in the compound.

- **Generators –** One or two large generators will be brought to the site. Position these as far away as possible from sleeping and working areas but allow for easy re-fuelling.

- **Toilets** – Either black bag (single use, take-it-away) or chemical toilets may be used. In either case a minimum of four toilets will be required (male, female, diarrhoea and nurse/cook). Disposal of waste should be considered. Hand washing facilities will be required next to the toilets.

- **Water supply** – A small water treatment facility comes with the unit and has a footprint of about 1.5m x 3m. A second unit (approx 2m x 4m - bladder) is also required to provide a head of water. This second unit will need to be above ground on the roof of a building or on scaffolding (the module does not necessarily come with something to raise the bladder off the ground). Ensure the above ground bladder will not create an earthquake hazard. Remember the weight involved (1m3 of water is 1 ton). Allow for truck access to top-up the water supply if no other source is available.

- **Helipad** – If possible, provide for a helipad with clear access and egress both on the ground and for take-off and landing. The helipad should be easily secured during operational periods. A helipad should be as far from tents as possible and at least 150-200m away. Where possible flight paths should avoid passing over the camp. Ideally the helipad will be on hard stand. The cordoned area should measure 40m x 80m (80m being preferred for approach and departure paths) and be lit. A windsock or other wind indicator, e.g., smoke should be considered.

- **Normality** – Consider the space you are using when things start returning to normal. Are you taking over a space that will be required, e.g., school grounds, sports arenas, public parks etc. – try and have a minimal impact to speed the return to normal conditions.

Camp construction

When the module and the team arrive they will listen to your considerations for camp layout and then adapt that to suit the limitation of the equipment they have and the site chosen. Establish a point of contact, preferably the IHP Team Leader and liaise with this person on a regular basis.

- **Time** – Camps are not erected overnight and for a camp for 80-90 UN staff you should allow for a minimum 3-4 days for construction.
- **Unloading** – In total, approximately 7 truck loads of equipment will be delivered and unloaded. Ideally, these should be unloaded on to hard stand immediately adjacent to the construction area. A forklift will be used and where this is used on the grassed area it can very quickly turn to mud and become quite rutted. Allow approximately 180m^2 for the unloaded equipment prior to camp construction. This does not include vehicles. The hardstand may be used for vehicle parking once camp construction is completed if this meets with security requirements.
- **Food** – Will be delivered in bulk and will easily fill a standard garage (over and above the space required for unloading). Ideally, there should be a secure area to lock up food and water, preferably the size of a two-car garage.

Other considerations

- The daily coordination meeting will have up to 100 people present – allow plenty of space for this. Think about heat and rain issues – 30 people on the floor of a hot tent in the pouring rain is not recommended (having told 60-70 others there is no room for them).
- The compound may have armed guards – can they shelter out of the sun and rain?
- Is there an evacuation plan for the compound? Under what conditions and who activates the plan?
- Know where you are – GPS the site and promote the address and GPS co-ordinates with the agencies that need to know.
- Name the areas of your site – if you have a mapping unit – get them to draw a site plan. This will be useful from a management point of view, e.g., who is in which tent, evacuation routes, etc.

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