

**Evaluation of the Office
of the
United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator**

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SUMMARY

Disasters are a harsh reality of life, especially in developing countries. International disaster relief assistance seeks to mitigate this destruction, but it has too often been haphazard, un-coordinated, and not always conducted as a managerial and developmental as well as humanitarian task. The Office of the UN Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO) was established in 1971 to help deal with these problems. The Joint Inspection Unit evaluated UNDRO's programme with emphasis on the 1976-80 period in which its staff and activities have been substantially strengthened (Chapter I).

UNDRO's mandate, established after several years of debate, is to mobilize, direct and co-ordinate international relief efforts and promote disaster prevention, planning and preparedness. Implementation of this mandate, however, has been hampered by its imprecise nature and UNDRO's inability to establish a leadership role, and by problems in determining UNDRO's functions in "other" disasters; the proper mix of relief co-ordination, preparedness and prevention work; the extent of an "operational" role; and the appropriate initiation and termination of its relief efforts (Chapter II).

UNDRO has had difficulty in implementing its programme during the 1976-80 period (Chapter III). Involvement in relief co-ordination has been only modest and other co-ordination activities have not evolved as planned. Despite many missions, neither a coherent technical co-operation programme nor major projects have been developed. Most planned research activities have been delayed or never undertaken, and information dissemination and sponsorship of meetings have been limited.

There are internal operating problems as well (Chapter IV). Major staff turnover and vacancy problems exist; management procedures, analysis, and controls are lacking; available staff are not fully used because of a tightly-centralized style of management; and staffing assumptions, travel patterns, communications functions, and Trust Fund arrangements need revision.

Co-ordinative relationships have been rather uncertain (Chapter V). Other UN system organizations have not accepted UNDRO's leadership and few significant joint activities have taken place. Disaster-prone countries would like more direct contacts and innovation from UNDRO, while donor countries have been increasingly critical of its performance. Voluntary organizations want more UNDRO leadership in several areas, and links with the disaster research community and the media have been limited.

The Inspectors conclude (Chapter VI) that UNDRO has encountered many difficulties in its eight-year history and has not proven very effective as a focal point or in fulfilling its stated programme objectives. There is still need for such an organization, however, and UNDRO can be made more effective by:

(a) confining its role to "sudden" natural disasters to sharpen performance, with an emphasis on "information-sharing" and catalytic leadership to stress the importance of disaster preparedness and prevention;

(b) eliminating the UNDRO Trust Fund in favour of tighter staffing patterns and closer technical co-operation work with UNDP;

(c) reporting to the UNDP Governing Council through the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation;

(d) a series of actions to provide better management of UNDRO operations, including reduced staffing.

The Inspectors also offer a proposal for improved co-ordination of all types of disasters, in which UNDRO would serve as the information-sharing secretariat for an inter-agency Emergency Assistance Committee of ACC, whose members would be drawn from the UN system bodies particularly concerned with disasters.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Disasters are a harsh reality of human life in terms of the number of people killed or affected and material damage. Although available statistics are incomplete, it is estimated that from 1965-75 disasters occurred at a worldwide rate of about once a week, killing more than 3.5 million people and affecting more than 400 million. These disasters caused material damage in the tens of billions of dollars, and necessitated almost \$5.3 billion for disaster assistance within the affected countries and \$1.6 billion of assistance from the international community.
2. There are no precise, agreed definitions of what constitutes a "disaster", but in general it involves an extreme phenomenon inflicting damage and death upon a vulnerable human group. Such disasters may be of four broad types: "sudden natural" (such as floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions or fires); "creeping" or "long-term natural" (such as droughts and epidemics); "deliberate man-made" (such as international or civil wars and disturbances); and "accidental".
3. When a disaster exceeds the resources available to handle it within a country, and an appeal for outside aid is made, it generates "international relief assistance". In general, a disaster also involves a long or short "impact phase" when the disaster strikes, an "emergency phase" during which life-saving measures are taken, a "rehabilitation phase" in which the basic elements of medical care, food, clothing, shelter and community services are provided, and a "reconstruction phase" of return to normality with opportunities for improvement and adjustment.
4. Disaster work involves not only disaster relief- the provision of assistance to disaster-stricken areas - but also disaster preparedness (measures to deal effectively with future disaster situations which cannot be avoided) and disaster prevention (actions designed to prevent natural phenomena from causing disaster or related emergency situations). These three elements form, or should form, an inter-related set of actions to counter the effects of disasters.
5. In general, the impact of disasters falls largely on those countries which are least able to bear it - the developing countries. While up to 75 per cent of the global monetary disaster losses occur in developed countries, it has been estimated that 95 per cent of disaster-related deaths occur in the developing countries. The proportional economic burden is also much higher in the developing countries because of the disruptive impact of disasters on already hard-pressed economic and social development efforts. Available statistics indicate that, in many disaster-prone developing countries, disaster losses more than cancel out any real economic growth and amount to many times the value of foreign development assistance provided.
6. Although the number of natural disasters has remained relatively stable since World War II, international disaster relief assistance has grown very rapidly. During the past decade, there has been growing concern about the effectiveness of this assistance. The hundreds of donor governments and international and voluntary organizations involved in international relief have often provided a chaotic "nonsystem" of independent responses to disaster needs, resulting in waste, omissions, duplication and inefficiency in the delivery of relief supplies, equipment and personnel. Although disaster responses admittedly require flexibility, relief efforts have too often been short-term and ad hoc with poor co-ordination, haphazard administration, and little interest in evaluating completed relief operations to improve relief preparedness and performance in the future. There is also concern that relief efforts only restore or distort the poverty of the vulnerable groups in developing countries, rather than contributing to positive longer-term reconstruction and development.

7. Political and "image" factors can also seriously hamper relief. Donor governments can have political and public relations interests in responding to various disaster needs. Relief organizations can be subject to pressures and funding and programme rivalries which can lead them to seek highly visible and competing relief roles, and host countries can impede or divert or exploit relief efforts and supplies, delay acknowledging a disaster, or deny that any disaster has occurred. Finally, there is concern that the severity of disasters is increasing, because of rapid population growth and weakened development programmes, possible longterm weather and climatic changes, and increased environmental or technological disasters.

8. International relief assistance is thus a complex and challenging process which can be viewed as combining three major tasks. First, it has traditionally involved a humanitarian effort (increasingly accepted as an international responsibility) to alleviate the suffering of disaster victims. Second, it involves a managerial effort to take practical steps to improve the effectiveness of relief assistance and apply modern technology. Third, since international relief assistance is almost always directed to developing countries, it involves a development task of planning, preparedness, and prevention as an integral component of national development. It was for these reasons that UNDRO was established in 1971.

9. The Joint Inspection Unit has evaluated UNDRO's programme following interest expressed in the Fifth Committee and elsewhere about UNDRO's problems, with particular emphasis on the period since UNDRO was "strengthened" in 1976. The Inspectors reviewed and analyzed UNDRO programme budgets and medium-term plans, the Secretary-General's annual reports, and other information on UNDRO operations. Extensive interviews were conducted with UNDRO staff at all levels, and with representatives of donor and disaster-prone governments, voluntary organizations, and UN system organizations, and some field visits were made. The Inspectors greatly appreciate the co-operation and ideas provided by all concerned.

10. The JIU evaluation concentrates on UNDRO: its mandate, programme operations, and specific co-ordinative relationships. It thus does not examine the broader issues of responsibilities within the UN system for humanitarian assistance in non-natural disasters, as initially discussed at the July 1980 meeting of ECOSOC. The Inspectors recognize that UNDRO's activities are only one aspect of this important broader topic, which is referred to again in the concluding section of Chapter VI of this report.

II. MANDATE

A. Origins

11. The history of relief assistance efforts by the community of nations goes back to 1927, when the International Relief Union (IRU) was established under the aegis of the League of Nations. Its principal aims were to furnish first aid and to assemble funds, resources and assistance; to co-ordinate the efforts made by relief organizations; and to encourage the study of preventive measures. The IRU never became an effective organization, and was liquidated in 1968.
12. After World War II, several relief agencies were established under the United Nations: the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) which ceased activities in 1947, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the International Refugee Organization (IRO) and its successor the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). UN emergency operations in Korea, the Congo and the Indian sub-continent also led to the provision of assistance to displaced civilians. WHO and FAO/WFP have long been active in disaster relief. And UNDP and its predecessor organizations, and UNESCO and WMO, have undertaken disaster preparedness and reconstruction projects since the late nineteen-fifties.
13. In the immediate post-war period, natural disasters were considered as being within the competence of the League of Red Cross Societies and other voluntary agencies, and none of the UN relief agencies received a specific mandate to handle them. But it came to be recognized that the United Nations system, and the United Nations itself, had a role to play. An Economic and Social Council resolution 1049(XXXVII) of August 1964 requested the Secretary-General to study possible types, amounts, and procedures of assistance which the United Nations might provide, including the establishment of a voluntary fund, and to consider arrangements for co-ordinating international assistance. In a 1965 report (A/5845) to the General Assembly, he observed that the UN system had extensive aid available for post-disaster rehabilitation and reconstruction, but very few resources to help meet disaster relief emergency needs. He did not consider a voluntary fund feasible, but suggested that the Working Capital Fund be used to provide up to \$20,000 per disaster and \$100,000 annually for emergency aid.
14. In another 1965 report to ECOSOC (E/4036) on the co-ordination aspect, the Secretary-General observed that aid donors were aware of co-ordination needs, but also wished to maintain the individual identity of their contributions and operational flexibility to respond rapidly to initial disaster emergency needs. He felt that national pre-disaster plans and co-ordinating machinery within disaster-prone countries were "overwhelmingly the most important factor in the structure of co-ordination". As regards co-ordination within the UN system, he considered that the specialized nature of the services offered by the different organizations minimized problems of duplication, and that in the field a focal point was maintained by the Resident Representative.
15. By resolution 2034(XX) of December 1965, the General Assembly approved the proposals in these two reports and authorized withdrawals from the Working Capital Fund as proposed. In a 1968 report (E/4544), however, the Secretary-General noted that only \$139,000 of withdrawals had been authorized from the \$300,000 available in the three-year period. He explained that the facility was not widely known and could not be used to assist governments in pre-disaster planning. He recommended that the Working Capital Fund arrangement be extended for three

years, and that the conditions of assistance be broadened. General Assembly resolution 2435 (XXIII) of December 1968 emphasized the importance of pre-disaster planning by States, approved the Secretary-General's recommendations including up to \$10,000 per country for pre-disaster planning purposes, and requested him to consider "the strengthening of staff arrangements within the United Nations Secretariat for dealing with natural disasters, including the establishment of a co-ordinating group ...".

16. In October 1970, the Secretary-General designated the Office of Inter-Agency Affairs to be the focal point for the co-ordination of relief from the UN system and to maintain close co-operation with governments and voluntary agencies during emergency operations. However, concurrent relief operations in Peru and East Pakistan indicated a need for further improvement, and in December 1970 the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General to report on the capacity of the organizations of the system to contribute assistance in connection with disasters; the areas where this assistance might be increased or made more effective; and the best means of strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to handle natural disasters, including organizational arrangements for a permanent office in the Secretariat.

17. A report entitled "Assistance in Cases of Natural Disaster" (E/4994), was accordingly submitted to ECOSOC in 1971. It identified four areas for international assistance; (a) disaster prevention, control and prediction, (b) planning and preparedness, (c) organization of relief during emergencies, and (d) rehabilitation and reconstruction. The report observed that a permanent office would be indispensable to assist governments in planning and preparation, promote scientific studies, organize relief, collect and disseminate information, co-ordinate among the United Nations organizations and make "such arrangements for co-ordination as donor governments and voluntary organizations might wish". The office would maintain full information on international action in particular disasters, support and supplement the work of other United Nations organizations, and cooperate with the League of Red Cross Societies "which must continue to assume primary responsibility for the organization of international relief at the first stage".

18. The report suggested that the office should have as a minimum three Professional officers and three General Service staff, with the possibility of calling in short-term high-level advisers. One senior officer would be in overall charge and arrange relief assistance, a second would be an expert in planning and preparedness, and the third would handle a "computer type inventory operation" with information on disaster-prone countries and potential sources of assistance. The report did not state whether the new office should be in New York or Geneva, but the Secretary-General clearly preferred the direction of the office to be at Headquarters. The creation of a new high-level post did not seem necessary, "since the Assistant Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs was in a position to take on what was in fact largely an extension of his existing responsibilities". The new office was to be "one element - though a very important and central element - in a system of international co-operation", which would cost about \$205,000 a year, plus the Working Capital Fund arrangements, and \$25,000 annually to assist governments in planning and preparedness.

B. Mandate and Problems

19. On 14 December 1971, after much discussion in ECOSOC, the General Assembly adopted resolution 2816(XXVI) entitled "Assistance in cases of natural disaster and other disaster situations". This called upon the Secretary-General to appoint a Disaster Co-ordinator to report directly to him and act on his behalf. Mr. Faruk N. Berkol was appointed as the first, and to date only, Co-ordinator in January 1972. The Office of the Co-ordinator (UNDRO) was essentially given two broad

functions (the full resolution is reproduced as Annex VII of this report):

Relief co-ordination: to mobilize, direct and co-ordinate external aid provided to disaster-stricken countries, and

Prevention, pre-disaster planning and preparedness: to reduce the extent to which natural phenomena result in disasters, or to eliminate the threat altogether through preventive measures; and to promote measures of preparedness in disaster-prone countries.

20. The resolution recommended that the Co-ordinator be at a level comparable to that of an Under-Secretary-General, that his Office be a "distinct", "adequate" and "permanent" element within the UN Secretariat and located at Geneva, that it be augmented as necessary by short-term secondment of personnel for individual emergencies, and that contact be maintained with Member States and system agencies concerning available aid and advice to countries in pre-disaster planning and preparedness. The resolution also invited potential donor and recipient governments to take specific actions to make disaster efforts more effective, and all UN system and other involved organizations to co-operate with UNDRO.

21. Full and effective implementation of UNDRO's mandate has been inhibited, however, by the imprecise nature of UNDRO's relief co-ordination, disaster preparedness and prevention responsibilities. Resolution 2816 assigned ten functions to the Co-ordinator in respect of natural and "other disaster situations", but the staff and financial resources authorized for the Co-ordinator under that resolution appeared incommensurate with the range and complexity of tasks he was to perform. Thus, from the very outset, UNDRO's multiple and discrete functions and limited resources did not lead to the development of a distinct and strong UNDRO role or a coherent and clearly focussed programme of action which would have conferred high visibility on the new office and enabled it to make an immediate positive impact within the international relief community. The fact that UNDRO made a groping start blurred its image from the onset, and weakened its standing with other relief agencies and consequently its ability to coordinate UN system responses to natural disasters.

22. In 1974, General Assembly resolution 3243(XXIX) (see Annex VIII) noted that a shortage of resources relative to the many disaster situations occurring had "seriously impaired the effectiveness" of UNDRO relief and other functions. The resolution called on the Secretary-General to provide sufficient resources to strengthen UNDRO capacity to provide an efficient and effective world-wide disaster relief mobilization and co-ordination service. The additional costs of this strengthening were to be provided by voluntary contributions during 1975-77, with subsequent financing to be reviewed in the light of experience.

23. Although the intent of resolution 3243 was to upgrade the relief co-ordination capability of the office, it did not de-emphasize UNDRO's other functions, nor did it attempt to delineate the central role that UNDRO was expected to perform. Indeed, the measures provided for in that resolution implied that the main problem facing the Co-ordinator was not one of a vague mandate but one of inadequate staff and funds, and only in 1980 was the mandate issue addressed by the Secretary-General's report on UNDRO (A/35/228 of 16 May 1980). However, since UNDRO does not, in actual fact, mobilize, direct and co-ordinate the relief activities of the UN system, governments, or voluntary organizations, the prevailing trend of opinion is to prune its co-ordination functions to the minimum and to emphasize its information-sharing role.

24. There is also a divergence of views on UNDRO's role in disaster preparedness and prevention, beyond the simple provision of advisory services upon re-

quest. While some countries believe that UNDR0 should be an executing agent with operational responsibilities, others resist this trend. On the whole, however, FCOSOC and the General Assembly fully recognize, and have not attempted to erode, the operational role of UNDP and the specialized agencies in respect of disaster preparedness and especially prevention projects, thus leading to an ambiguous sharing of responsibilities.

25. Experience with the UNDR0 mandate over the past eight years has also disclosed at least four specific problem areas. The first of these is "other" disasters. The title and preambular paragraphs of resolution 2816 refer not only to natural disasters but also to "other emergency situations" and "other disaster situations", without defining these "other" disasters. The mandate thus appears to give UNDR0 co-ordinative responsibility for all types of disasters. In fact, however, the Office has confined its work almost entirely to "sudden" natural disasters, leaving responsibility for "man-made" disasters to UNHCR, UNICEF and specially-appointed UN system co-ordinators, and "creeping" disasters such as droughts and epidemics to FAO, WFP, UNDP and WHO. There has been little involvement with "accidental" disasters.

26. The one major exception to this pattern is the heavy UNDR0 involvement in the Ethiopian drought situation. Since 1973 UNDR0 has conducted 14 missions to Ethiopia and made a series of fund-raising appeals, the most recent one following an inter-agency mission requested by the Secretary-General and led by the Co-ordinator in July 1980. In late 1980 the Co-ordinator led another inter-agency mission to the surrounding countries of Djibouti, Somalia, Uganda and the Sudan. This regional disaster also involves substantial activity by FAO, WFP, UNHCR, and UNDP, and thus illustrates some of the complex jurisdictional issues which "other" disaster situations can involve when UNDR0 moves beyond its normal "sudden" natural disaster field of activity (see Chapter V.B).

27. UNDR0 has attempted to clarify its responsibilities in a series of memoranda of understanding with other UN system organizations (again, see Chapter V.B), and the 1980 Secretary-General's report discusses several "non-natural" disaster areas in which UNDR0 might involve itself in the future. The report cites the 1978 Memorandum of Understanding between UNHCR and UNDR0, which essentially gives UNDR0 responsibility for co-ordination of relief assistance in all situations (and for all refugees) other than those involving deliberate man-made disasters (war, civil strife, and genocide). It states that UNDR0 has reached agreements with all UN system specialized agencies (except ICAO) on accidental disaster responsibility (such as maritime, industrial or nuclear). The report also notes that some Governments have recently expressed interest in having more information on conditions in countries experiencing creeping or endemic disasters or recovering from periods of civil strife, and suggests that UNDR0 could serve as an information "focal point" for such disasters without increasing its Geneva staff.

28. The second area of difficulty with the UNDR0 mandate concerns the appropriate mix of UNDR0's disaster relief, preparedness and prevention work. Resolution 2816 states that UNDR0 should "mobilize, direct and co-ordinate" relief activities, but also that it should "promote", "assist", and otherwise involve itself in disaster prevention, preparedness, and pre-disaster planning.

29. The proper balance has been a subject of considerable debate, particularly among the countries which finance UNDR0's operations through the voluntary Trust Fund. One group (citing the "managerial" approach to international disaster efforts referred to in Chapter I) has argued that UNDR0 should not undertake ambitious projects in the longer-range areas of disaster prevention and preparedness until its immediate functions of relief co-ordination are thoroughly structured

and organized with maximum effectiveness. Resolution 3243 of 1974, in line with this attitude, emphasized that the additional voluntary resources provided should be concentrated on strengthening co-ordination capability. A second group, however, (following the "development" approach) has argued that disaster relief cannot afford to be merely a stop-gap, palliative measure offered to stricken countries, but must emphasize disaster preparedness and prevention within an overall development strategy, as the most logical, beneficial and cost-effective way to cope with disasters in the long run.

30. Since 1976, UNDRO has established a "60-30-10" per cent concept as the appropriate ratio among its respective relief co-ordination, preparedness, and prevention functions. In practice, this allocation is rather vague, since the three functions often overlap, UNDRO staff work back and forth between the three areas without a clear allocation of their time, and the implementation of UNDRO programme elements under these three headings has been very uneven (see Chapter III and Annex III). Perhaps for these reasons the "60-30-10" formula has never been formally challenged by Member States or donor governments. UNDRO is, however, making a slight and gradual shift towards more long-term disaster prevention work: the 1980-83 Medium-Term Plan states that in 1982-83 resources for prevention work will increase from 10 to 15 per cent.

31. A third area of mandate concern has been the extent of an UNDRO "operational" role as opposed to the co-ordinative and catalytic role originally envisioned. Resolution 2816, in addition to its call upon the Co-ordinator to "mobilize, direct and co-ordinate", also included the need to "establish and maintain co-operation", "promote", "assist", and "acquire and disseminate information" with regard to other disaster activities. It also endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal for an "adequate permanent office", and resolution 3243 of 1974 called for "sufficient staff, equipment and facilities to strengthen" UNDRO's capacity to provide "an efficient and effective world-wide service of mobilizing and co-ordinating disaster relief ...".

32. Over the years, however, as UNDRO has grown from the original proposal of a small six-person staff and \$330,000 annual budget to the present 50 staff posts and approximately \$3.6 million annual budget, concerns have periodically been expressed by Member States that the Office is moving towards an operational role. In the relief co-ordination area, reservations have been voiced about the scale and intent of UNDRO's relief activities, and also about UNDRO's fund allocations to disaster-stricken countries, which it was feared could lead to a large central United Nations disaster relief fund. UNDRO has responded to these concerns, most recently in the Secretary-General's 1980 report, with assurances that it will not become an organization with large numbers of field personnel and relief stocks, and that in its relief co-ordination role it does not intend to direct donor actions or to move from an informational role to a direct operational role.

33. In the disaster preparedness and prevention areas, however, UNDRO is presently attempting to clarify its operational role as a project funding and executing agency beyond the "promote", "assist", and "interest" functions laid out in resolution 2816. The Secretary-General's 1980 report suggests that UNDRO itself should undertake "pure" disaster preparedness projects and act as a funding agent or a catalyst for broader preparedness projects, using funds from the technical assistance sub-account and earmarked voluntary funds. The report also notes that the General Assembly resolutions reaffirming the vital importance of assistance to disaster-prone countries and creating the technical assistance sub-account in the UNDRO Trust Fund indicate a shift from the original idea of promoting studies of disaster prevention and preparedness to a concept of providing services. At the same time, the report notes, it is still unclear whether Member States want UNDRO's disaster prevention role to be merely catalytic or a more active one.

34. The fourth area of difficulty concerns the start and completion of UNDRO's relief activities. Resolution 2816 states that "UNDRO relief co-ordination work is "in response to a request ... from a stricken State" and that UNDRO can "assist" a Government in on-site disaster assessment. In a variety of cases, however, governments have chosen not to request UNDRO assistance following a disaster, or the government and/or Resident Representative have rejected offers to send an UNDRO representative to the stricken country for a number of reasons, including national sovereignty or because they doubt UNDRO's role and competence. A 1972 UN Legal Counsel opinion concluded that UNDRO involvement in a disaster without a specific governmental request (either to UNDRO or to another UN system organization) could well amount to interference in a State's internal affairs, and that even following such a request, the dispatch of an UNDRO representative to the country should be a matter of judgement based on all available information. In practice, UNDRO becomes involved in disasters upon request from Governments. The matter is of sufficient continuing concern, however, that the Secretary-General's 1980 report states that where a government refuses or is reluctant to have an UNDRO representative in-country, the Co-ordinator should send a mission to the country solely to clarify any misconceptions concerning UNDRO's desire to be of service.

35. The termination of UNDRO relief efforts is perhaps even more difficult. Resolution 2816 states that UNDRO should "phase out" its relief operations as the stricken country moves into the rehabilitation and reconstruction stage, but that the Co-ordinator should continue to "interest himself" in the rehabilitation and reconstruction activities of UN agencies in the light of his relief responsibilities. This presents at least two major problems. Although the critical "emergency" phase of relief operations is usually only for the first several days after a sudden natural disaster occurs, continued requests by the stricken Government for assistance or by donors for further information can make it difficult for UNDRO to disengage itself, sometimes for months, and can tie up staff resources which might be better used elsewhere. Second, the weak "interest" role given UNDRO beyond the immediate relief phase makes it hard for it to use the heightened post-disaster consciousness to emphasize the need for preparedness and prevention activities as an essential part of rehabilitation and reconstruction.

III. PROGRAMME RESULTS, 1976-1980

36. The Inspectors analyzed the programme budgets of the "strengthened" UNDRO for the 1976-81 period. Annex III provides an overview of these objectives and related outputs, and the programme element and sub-element topics are understore in the following text for ease of reference. Because UNDRO had only partially implemented many of its activities and had produced little basic performance data or internal assessment, it was difficult to ascertain specific results (or even outputs) for many elements. A brief assessment of overall results, however, is attempted in Chapter VI.A.

A. Relief Co-ordination

37. The current Medium-Term plan (1980-83) states that the objective of UNDRO relief co-ordination activity is "to ensure that the combined resources of the United Nations system and the international community are brought to bear to provide adequate, appropriate and timely relief to the survivors of disaster". UNDRO is intended to mobilize, direct and co-ordinate relief assistance, not by duplicating or restricting the relief efforts of others, but by serving as a focal point or "clearing house" for rapid and effective relief arrangements between donor and disaster-stricken countries which avoid duplication and unwanted aid.

38. Overall, however, UNDRO's involvement since 1972 in international disaster relief activities has been rather limited (see Annex V). Even for the period of "strengthened" UNDRO operations, UNDRO has only participated in about 46 per cent of the disasters which occurred and had major involvement (situation reports plus funds allocation plus field assessment missions and perhaps channeling of voluntary contributions) in only 10 per cent. The average annual pattern for this 1976 to mid-1980 period was that UNDRO was involved in 22 of 48 disasters around the world. In five of these cases, however, UNDRO only issued telexed situation reports and in another five it merely granted emergency funds (now up to \$30,000 per disaster). In a further five cases UNDRO had "major" involvement, and in the remaining seven it had some intermediate combination of disaster activities.

39. UNDRO also represents only a very small direct component of the large volume of international disaster relief assistance. Since the data is limited only to those disaster operations involving UNDRO and donations actually reported to UNDRO, the totals shown below are probably considerably understated.

1978-1979 relief assistance reported to UNDRO

	<u>US \$</u>	<u>Per cent of total</u>
UNDRO emergency relief grants	488,212	.3
Donations through UNDRO	1,239,318	.7
United Nations system	36,539,602	20.8
Governments	91,962,550	52.3
Inter-governmental organizations	9,237,405	5.2
Other (non-governmental organizations, private, public)	36,513,152	20.7
	<hr/> 175,980,239 <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> 100.0 <hr/> <hr/>

40. UNDR0's "information-sharing" and "focal point" role during disasters is regarded by many as perhaps its single most significant function, utilizing, since 1976, a co-ordination centre with sophisticated communications equipment and a well-equipped operations room. UNDR0 seeks a maximum of sound information on the nature and extent of a disaster and the relief requirements in order to analyze and disseminate it rapidly to prospective donors through telexed situation reports, and to stimulate collation of assistance offers to ensure a co-ordinated and effective relief response.

41. UNDR0 does not maintain an overall log of co-ordination centre use, but available data and UNDR0 staff comments indicate that it is rarely used as the dynamic "nerve centre" envisaged in UNDR0 programme budgets and reports. For many disasters, co-ordination requirements are handled by one UNDR0 officer working from his own office. Perhaps once or twice a year, up to three Co-ordination Officers and three General Service staff may be engaged for several weeks in co-ordinating a major disaster or simultaneous disasters, but otherwise the centre is empty for long periods of time except for the two General Service staff members who handle UNDR0's communications work and as a stop for UNDR0 visitors. Its planned use for meetings of Geneva-based organizations and government missions during disasters has also been very infrequent.

42. UNDR0 has not yet developed systematized operating procedures to realize the co-ordination centre's information-sharing potential. The centre's computer capability is used only as an elaborate mechanical and clerical tool to send situation reports rapidly to multiple addressees, maintain addressee lists, and record disaster contributions. Its many intended analytical and immediate information uses have not been developed (see Chapter IV.E). In late 1979, three years after operations began, an extensive internal analysis of centre operations was finally begun which proposed staffing patterns and responsibilities for various disaster situations, an organized staff training and testing programme to ensure preparedness, and specific formats, procedures and analytical processes to maximize centre efficiency. As of September 1980, however, this study had not been completed or acted upon, and the centre continues to operate during disasters in an ad hoc fashion.

43. The volume of UNDR0 situation reports on disasters has increased considerably in recent years. In 45 per cent of these disasters, however, UNDR0 issued only one or two simple and short telex messages, and in another 30 per cent only three or four such messages. UNDR0 has not developed a standard format for situation reports, and UNDR0's assessments often rely considerably on the assessments of several governments and voluntary organizations who have their own co-ordination centres, world-wide networks, and more detailed disaster situation reporting. More seriously, the Inspectors noted that even when UNDR0 sent a much longer series of situation reports (up to 16) they still identified only a part of the total contributions which UNDR0 recorded over the months after a disaster ended. UNDR0 has sought to improve this disappointing recognition of its focal point, information-sharing role through repeated requests to donors in recent Secretary-General annual reports to be sure to inform it of their relief plans and actions. UNDR0 officials believe there has been some improvement in this regard in the last few years, but the extent of any such improvement is hard to determine.

44. Two other aspects of UNDR0 relief co-ordination operations have been tried and then fallen into disuse. Under International Air Transport Association (IATA) resolution 200, member airlines may transport relief supplies or personnel free of charge or at reduced rates. Through 1976, an UNDR0 staff member was successful in arranging some \$1.5 million of such transport cost savings for donors. Despite emphasis in the 1978-79 programme budget, however, further savings have been minimal, costs savings figures have been eliminated

from the annual report, and a planned special study on transport methods was not made. Some relief officials believe that concerted efforts could still produce substantial cost savings, but UNDRO officials said that requests for UNDRO procurements have declined and airlines are increasingly reluctant to grant reduced rates.

45. Second, UNDRO, as part of a broader programme to improve UN communications capacity, purchased two portable, high-frequency radio sets for \$90,000 in 1975 for immediate disaster relief and emergency use in the field. The transceivers have only been used once (unsuccessfully) in 1976, and have since been in storage. UNDRO has discussed selling them to the UN Field Service, but no sale has taken place. UNDRO has also made a "continuous review" of the possible use of transportable earth station satellite equipment, but implementation has been steadily deferred because of the high projected development and field testing costs.

46. General Assembly resolution 2816 allows the Co-ordinator to accept contributions to procure urgently needed supplies and meet transportation needs. Although the 1978-81 Medium-Term Plan stated that a clear indication of UNDRO's effectiveness has been the increasing tendency of donors to entrust contributions to the Co-ordinator and let him select priority requirements, and although annual reports through 1979 highlighted these contributions as "relief directly mobilized" by UNDRO, relief contributions channelled through UNDRO have declined in recent years. Through mid-1980, UNDRO had received about \$24 million for 46 disasters, but most of this was contributed for a single disaster - floods in Bangladesh in 1974. Otherwise, overall contributions have dropped from about \$1.7 million annually in 1973-76 to \$430,000 annually from 1977 to mid-1980, which represents only a tiny proportion of total disaster relief aid (see paragraph 39 and Annex V).

47. In addition, also under resolution 2816, \$200,000 has been available from the UN regular budget each year for allocation of funds for immediate use following disasters, with a maximum of \$20,000 per disaster which is normally used for local purchase of selected relief items. Although UNDRO has often emphasized that the allocations are modest and essentially symbolic, there has been steady pressure over the years to increase the allocations to compensate for inflation. A new UNDRO Trust Fund sub-account for emergency relief assistance was established in 1975 to supplement the regular budget funds with a targeted \$400,000 in voluntary contributions for 1976-77. By 1979, however, only \$18,000 had been contributed to this sub-account, and the General Assembly raised the regular budget allocation to a \$30,000 maximum per disaster and \$360,000 per year for 1980-81. As of mid-1980, UNDRO had made a total of 114 emergency fund allocations for \$1.8 million with an average of \$15,700 per allocation - again, a very modest proportion of annual overall relief assistance (see paragraph 39 and Annex V). However, UNDRO has never made an overall analysis of the effectiveness with which either the voluntary contributions or regular budget funds have been used.

48. The final relief co-ordination activity during disasters is that of sending UNDRO staff to the field to provide governments and Resident Representatives with expert assistance in on-site disaster assessment and co-ordination. UNDRO has programmed approximately 15 two-man disaster assessment missions a year for 1976-81, but the number of such missions over the years has averaged about 9 (see Annex V). When missions for the long-term Ethiopian drought (14) and "follow-up" missions sent one month or more after a disaster occurred (16) are excluded, the average number of disaster emergency missions has been only about 5 a year. Almost all the missions (85 per cent) involved one UNDRO staff member, with simultaneous disaster missions occurring only occasionally. 1980 experience illustrates the extremes: in August alone a record of four one-man disaster

missions were mounted, but in the preceding seven months of the year there were only three follow-up and two Ethiopia drought missions, with no emergency disaster missions at all. Although the possibilities of augmenting UNDR0 staff from rosters of expert specialized agency or voluntary organizations' staff were specifically endorsed by resolution 2816 and in programme documents, and although use of national and other experts has often been discussed at donors' meetings, such arrangements have been tried only infrequently - although apparently with some success.

49. Analysis also shows that the small original UNDR0 staff of 1972-75 had almost two-thirds as many disaster missions (29) as the "strengthened" UNDR0 staff from 1976-79 (43), although the latter staff was three times as large. More significantly, during 1972-75 all disaster missions but one were undertaken by P.5 staff and above. From 1976 to mid-80, however, after UNDR0 total staff posts had more than tripled and P.5s and above had doubled, more than three-quarters of the missions were undertaken - almost all alone - by P.4 staff or below, and more than half by P.3s or P.2s. This seriously contradicts the basic rationale of having high-graded staff in UNDR0 to perform complex co-ordination tasks of all types, including emergency field assessments, as stated in the 1975 Panel of Consultants' report and in UNDR0 programme budgets. The problem is accentuated because UNDR0 has no training programme or established procedures for staff assigned to such missions. In several cases junior staff members were sent out alone on assessment missions within three months after joining UNDR0 - in one case after only 23 days.

50. The Inspectors visited some countries to which UNDR0 had recently sent disaster missions, and they also discussed UNDR0 performance with officials involved in such missions in other countries. The officials' assessments varied from high praise to scepticism about the value of the missions, with much emphasis laid on the expertise and personal skills of the individual staff member sent. It also appears that the UNDR0 staff member is often only one element of a large local co-ordination group of donor government, voluntary agency and UN system representatives already in place, plus other expert disaster assessment, logistics and emergency teams sent in from outside to assist the host Government.

51. When not engaged directly in disaster relief, UNDR0 staff have other relief co-ordination functions. The first of these is maintaining a 24-hour alert (through a duty officer system), monitoring, and keeping records of contributions to past disasters. UNDR0 staff monitor all types of reported or possible disaster situations, maintain contacts with others concerned with disaster matters, and review news and other reports. These functions are conducted in a fairly flexible and informal way and, although proper monitoring implies both analysis and reporting functions, the Inspectors found no significant documentation in UNDR0 on the nature, extent, and results of this work.

52. A second relief co-ordination function between disasters is that of establishing and improving pre-disaster arrangements with donors and potential donor sources, as required by resolution 2816. Originally, as stated in the 1976-79 Medium-Term plan, UNDR0 hoped by 1976 to have agreements with over 100 donor governments or organizations on standardized types of relief supplies rapidly available, channels of communication, and particular areas of donor interest, and an elaboration of practical and rapid transportation procedures. In 1977 it contacted individual donors requesting data as a basis for clear working procedures, computerized information, special studies, and the development of contingency planning, but the response was incomplete and disappointing, and UNDR0 was unable to proceed.

53. In 1976 UNDR0 also held a first meeting of major donor governments and UN system agencies. The 1977 and 1978 donors' meetings were reduced in scope to include essentially only the major donor countries plus a few recipient countries. Apparently for economy reasons, UNDR0 cancelled a 1979 donors' meeting in favour of visits to individual countries and programmed only one meeting for 1980-81 (held in March 1980). In addition the Co-ordinator has a technical advisory panel of outside experts but its meetings have also been reduced in number for stated economy reasons.

54. Since 1975, UNDR0 has maintained a programme of about ten annual visits to donor countries, including six in the first half of 1980 and another four to UN system organizations. An analysis of the visits, however, indicates that some donor countries have been visited frequently, others sporadically, and others hardly at all. The 1977 intent to establish extensive data and contingency planning on donor supplies, arrangements, contacts, and transport has not yet been achieved, and the purpose of these contacts with donors appears to have changed. In response to a question in CPC in 1978 on why so many visits were needed, the UNDR0 representative stated that annual contacts with donor countries should be made so that the programme would not suffer from a lack of the voluntary contributions which provided more than half of its resources.

55. A third co-ordination function between disasters has been the development and maintenance of a data bank. Since this work began in 1974, the intention has been to improve the speed and efficiency of UNDR0 relief operations by developing and continually updating status information on about 50 disaster-prone countries and 100 donor sources, all eventually to be computerized. Progress, however, has been slow. Considerable material has been gathered on disaster-prone countries, but it is still incomplete. The files are maintained by one senior reference clerk who also has other tasks. The data bank is used by UNDR0 staff, but rarely by outsiders. The 1980-83 Medium-Term Plan still states that the data will be computerized for immediate retrieval, but there are doubts that the information is in a proper format or appropriate for computerization, particularly since much of it is only updated at annual or multi-year intervals.

56. The importance of effective in-country relief co-ordination activities has already been noted, and UNDR0 has also attempted to create in-country relief committees headed by Resident Representatives and to train Resident Representatives. These efforts are discussed in Chapter V.A.

57. Last but not least among UNDR0 relief co-ordination functions between disasters is case and evaluation reports. The 1975 Panel of Consultants' report recommended systematic UNDR0 evaluation of its relief co-ordination efforts, prompt "after-action" reports to donors following emergencies, and that a Deputy Division Chief be given planning, evaluation and procedural guidance responsibilities. Although mentioned often in subsequent programme documents (the 1980-83 Medium-Term Plan states that UNDR0 will undertake systematic evaluation of each disaster), however, little has actually been done in these areas. Nine "case reports" have been published on disasters that occurred between 1976 and 1979. Since these reports are largely historical and financial summaries meant for public consumption rather than analytical documents, there is some question among UNDR0 staff (and other organizations which occasionally prepare similar reports) whether they are really worth doing.

58. More seriously, despite recent donor enquiries about evaluation and general recognition that evaluation is the weakest major link in international relief operations, UNDR0 has done little, if any, evaluation of its relief co-ordination work. A few useful evaluative reports were prepared in 1976 and 1977, but subsequently only various mission reports have been prepared on the 101 disasters in which UNDR0 has been involved from 1976 through mid-1980.

These reports have no standard format and often contain very little analysis. Additionally, since UNDRO's re-organization into one programme division with geographic sections in 1978, specific responsibilities for evaluation have become unclear. The Inspectors believe that UNDRO's failure to establish systematic internal evaluation procedures has contributed significantly to the many problems discussed in this section (see Chapter IV.C).

B. Preparedness and Prevention

59. UNDRO's 1980-83 Medium-Term Plan objective for preparedness is "to take such measures as may be necessary and practicable to minimize loss of life and damage, and to organize and facilitate timely and effective rescue, relief and rehabilitation in cases of disaster". The prevention objective is "to promote the study, prevention, control and prediction of natural disasters, including the collection and dissemination of information concerning technological developments". The following material discusses these activities under the general topics of technical co-operation and research and reports.

60. Between 1973 and 1975, UNDRO had available a total of \$130,000 for technical co-operation activities with governments and financed about 30 man-months of consultant missions to 12 countries to assist in the formulation of national pre-disaster plans and preparedness measures. In addition, two joint UNDRO/UNDP/ECLA missions, financed by UNDP, visited 7 Andean countries in September-October 1974 and others of the Central American Isthmus in May-June 1975. The missions formulated two regional projects in preparedness and prevention which were not implemented, apparently because of UNDP's financial crisis of the mid-1970s.

61. Following the strengthening of UNDRO and the establishment of the Trust Fund sub-account for technical assistance, the Office had available some \$650,000 during 1976-77. The programme budget for this period anticipated eight to nine governmental requests for technical assistance, but the number of consultant missions funded in 1976-77 was actually double that target and benefited a total of 17 countries. These missions were generally focussed on disaster preparedness arrangements, although in some cases the consultants also recommended building preventive measures into long-term physical plans. A specific disaster prevention mission visited the Philippines and, with UNDRO staff, developed a vulnerability analysis methodology, but the Philippines Government has not yet applied it. A similar mission visited five Central American countries and studied the design of 16 projects from the standpoint of vulnerability to natural disasters. UNDRO had also proposed to backstop a new international training and preparedness centre in Turkey during 1976-77, but the project did not materialize.

62. In 1978-79 UNDRO anticipated a further 8 to 10 requests for aid from governments and planned to send its own staff on field missions or to backstop and evaluate missions by experts. In fact, however, UNDRO's technical co-operation activities fell to almost nothing during the biennium. Only one consultant mission was funded by UNDRO; three missions to Nepal were financed from bilateral sources; and a 1979 mission to the Philippines was funded by UNDP. Some UNDRO staff members attribute this sudden loss of momentum partly to the elimination of the former Preparedness and Prevention Division in the 1978 re-organization, and partly to the dwindling contributions for technical assistance after 1977. Contributions were \$622,000 in 1976-77, but fell to \$316,000 in 1978-79 and only \$28,000 for the first eight months of 1980 (see Annex II).

63. While consultants' missions dwindled, the number of UNDRO staff field missions for technical co-operation activities rose from only 4 between 1972-77 to 26 during 1978-79. The duration of these missions ranged from one to two weeks. Only

about 5 of the missions, carried out jointly with other organizations, might actually qualify as technical assistance in pre-disaster planning and preparedness. The rest were either "exploratory" visits seeking to determine the preparedness requirements of disaster-prone countries and stimulate government requests for UNDRO technical assistance, or were simply follow-up missions to earlier consultant visits.

64. With only about \$340,000 available for technical co-operation at the beginning of the 1980-81 biennium, UNDRO expected to receive in the disaster preparedness area "20-20 requests for aid from governments, leading to UNDRO preparatory missions, expert missions with UNDRO backstopping, follow-up actions and liaison with other technical co-operation donors". Disaster prevention activities would be conditional on the availability of funds and would be carried out by 'missions to regions or countries to assist in physical planning and prevention aspects of development project planning by international organizations'. By mid-1980, UNDRO had sent out three consultant and three staff exploratory or follow-up preparedness missions, but had not yet participated in a multi-agency development planning mission.

65. Overall, between 1973 and mid-1980, UNDRO financed approximately 30 expert advisory missions and 25 staff field missions to about 10 developing countries. It would appear that at least three countries have set up civil defence organizations as a result of UNDRO's technical assistance. However, with the possible exception of a rescue boat project still under implementation in Bangladesh no other major preparedness or prevention project incorporating training and equipment components has yet emerged after six years of UNDRO effort. Many disaster-prone countries still lack national pre-disaster plans or preparedness organizations or both and the impact of UNDRO's action on an overall scale on their general state of disaster preparedness and preventive measures is hardly discernible. UNDRO officials believe that frequent government and staff turnover in recipient countries have contributed to the lack of action on UNDRO's technical advice.

66. UNDRO's technical co-operation activities have been described in the Secretary-General's 1980 report as "usually only the foundation stones upon which a solid preparedness organization can be built. That building requires money". And money has not been forthcoming from potential sources, both bilateral and multilateral. The difficulty of securing funds for implementing projects formulated or recommended by UNDRO technical missions, coupled with a sharp drop in contributions to the sub-account for technical co-operation, has prompted serious questions about the future of UNDRO's technical co-operation activities.

67. The financing of these activities was discussed by ECOSOC and the General Assembly in 1978, and by the Governing Council of UNDP in 1979. It was concluded that, in addition to continued contributions to the sub-account and possible bilateral financing, UNDP should consider including disaster preparedness and prevention in its country and regional programmes, with UNDRO acting as an executing agency when appropriate. It was noted that UNDP was already funding over \$32 million of regional and national preparedness and prevention projects. Some UNDRO officials believe that while most of these projects have clear developmental benefits, they can only have a limited impact on disaster preparedness, and that only UNDRO is most suited to advise on and promote more specific preparedness measures.

68. Apart from a few joint or expert advisory missions, however, no major UNDP-financed project has as yet been executed by UNDRO. UNDRO does not seem to have developed good project proposals that would include clear developmental benefits and attract governments' political support and UNDP funding.

69. Another problem has been the absence of a clear and far-sighted UNDRO programme of technical co-operation. As a result, UNDRO's activities have been rather erratic and haphazard. Some UNDRO staff members attribute this to the inadequacies and uncertainties of funds. In 1978, at the request of the US Government, UNDRO prepared a report which was intended as a comprehensive programme of technical co-operation. It underscored the variety and importance of preparedness and prevention activities assisted by the UN system, identified UNDRO as the appropriate focal point, and outlined a series of country projects. Annual costs were estimated at \$25 million, to be financed from a special UNDP-managed trust fund. Some donors criticized the programme as too ambitious, however, so the trust fund was not established and the scheme fell through.

70. UNDRO also did not develop a technical co-operation policy until March 1978. That policy, as stated in an UNDRO memorandum, is to "provide technical assistance and co-operation, so far as the means available allow, to countries which are not only classed as disaster-prone but are also (in order of priority) (a) LDCs [Least Developed Countries] and MSAs [Most Seriously Affected Countries]; (b) MSAs, and (c) LDCs, according to the official UN classification ... Only when requests from these countries have been satisfied will those from other disaster-prone countries be considered". The policy further provides that country disaster prevention projects should whenever possible be included in the UNDP country programme. However, there is little provision for co-operation and co-ordination with other UN system organizations and bilateral donor agencies active in disaster preparedness and prevention. The result has been to isolate UNDRO's activities from the accumulated technical experience and expertise of these organizations.

71. Another major difficulty with this policy is that it excludes from UNDRO's technical co-operation activities the whole of Latin America, with the exception of Haiti, and a substantial portion of Asia and the Pacific, which is very prone to disasters. Of the 19 countries in Africa and the Middle East which are classified as LDC/MSA, only six have so far received an UNDRO technical co-operation mission, and only about three can be considered as disaster-prone. Moreover, the majority of the least developed and seriously affected African countries are subject to creeping rather than sudden natural disasters. Furthermore, UNDRO has not assembled, organized or analyzed data on LDCs and MSAs to determine problem areas, priority needs, and the volume and type of external assistance flowing to these countries, nor developed a plan with target dates for implementation.

72. Finally, UNDRO's technical co-operation missions are guided only by a one-page job description in lieu of a project document based on the rules and procedures in force in the UN system. While the job description outlines the immediate objectives and tasks of the missions, it does not discuss long-term developmental benefits, the role and responsibility of the host government, nor the way in which UNDRO's assistance would fit into the government's programmes and relate to other bilateral and multi-lateral projects. There is no work plan and no specific provision for follow-up by UNDRO or the government. The lack of a project document format for UNDRO consultant missions similar to that used for UNDP-funded projects makes it difficult to ascertain whether these missions respond to high priority government needs and the degree of governments' commitment to follow-up action on the missions' recommendations.

73. UNDRO has also had little success with its fellowship programmes. To date, it has provided only two fellowships: a one-month study tour in cyclone forecasting and warning in India, and another for a six-month training programme in France in all aspects of disaster preparedness.

74. The second major component of UNDRO preparedness and prevention activities is research and publications. The most significant and complex preparedness research activity has been UNDRO's efforts to develop an international convention on disaster relief. First considered in 1975, the project evolved in 1976 and 1977 as a joint reporting effort with the League of Red Cross Societies on obstacles to relief delivery and possible measures to expedite international relief assistance. A questionnaire was sent to UN Member States in 1978 to gain information which might lead to the removal of obstacles and perhaps an international accord. Despite several appeals, by mid-1980 only 16 donor and 26 potential recipient countries had responded. UNDRO officials still hope to have a draft agreement for the General Assembly in 1981, perhaps with the assistance of a consultant.

75. Other preparedness research projects have made slow progress:

(a) A study to provide practical guidelines for the design of emergency shelters, financed by donor governments and begun in 1976, was delayed for several years by disputes over study content and consultant participation but is now scheduled for completion by 1981.

(b) During 1976-79 UNDRO proposed studies on the use of satellite communications in disaster relief, forecasting and prediction, and related training, but despite much discussion no specific activities have yet emerged.

(c) Since 1974 and particularly in 1978-79, UNDRO has considered preparing model legislation on disaster-related activities such as the organization of relief, land use policies and building codes, but because of a lack of staff the project has been administratively subsumed into the international convention project (see preceding paragraph).

(d) UNDRO reports since 1976 have noted the need to develop widely-accepted standard nomenclature of relief supplies to facilitate disaster operations. In late 1980, only a General Service staff member was working on the study with the Red Cross and other organizations to meet the original December 1980 deadline for publication of a trilingual nomenclature list.

(e) The 1980-81 programme budget proposed two or three studies during the biennium on particular aspects of disaster preparedness, such as for the physically handicapped and other specially vulnerable groups, which UNDRO officials said may now be included in the "state of the art" study on disaster preparedness (see below).

76. The most important UNDRO disaster prevention research project, the formulation of an international disaster prevention strategy, is also incomplete, although the idea was first proposed by UNDRO in 1974 and given "strong support" by the General Assembly in 1974 and 1975 because of the recognized devastating economic, social and structural impacts of natural disasters in disaster-prone countries. A "state of the art" study was to produce qualitative inputs to the strategy through analysis of existing knowledge and gaps. A "world survey of disaster damage" was to provide quantitative data through questionnaires on the economic impact of natural disasters in developing countries. UNDRO would then formulate the initial strategy for review by a panel of experts, submit it to ECOSOC and the General Assembly in 1978, then disseminate, apply and periodically update it.

77. Since 1974, eight "state of the art" volumes have been prepared by consultants and completed by UNDRO staff, with two more in preparation in 1980 and three more commissioned. The studies have received a wide distribution and

favourable reception, but an overall perspective on the "state of the art" has not been developed and there is concern that the "current knowledge" in the earlier volumes may be becoming outdated. The world survey has been stalled because of a disappointing response to the questionnaires sent out in 1975, and because funding, provided in the early stages by UNEP, was discontinued. The 1980-81 UNDRO programme budget specifies work towards the completion, acceptance and implementation of the strategy, but the March 1980 programme performance report concluded that the world survey and the strategy itself would have to be re-formulated. UNDRO officials said that without further funds the project cannot be completed.

78. UNDRO has had some success with a UNEP-financed consultant study of disaster implications for human settlements. Three volumes of guidelines for disaster prevention were published in 1976 and widely distributed as check-lists to help officials in disaster-prone countries assess the disaster risks of projects. A fourth volume was proposed to UNEP in 1976, but UNEP has still not acted on the request and the series has thus not been completed.

79. Other planned research activities have never got underway. They include: a comprehensive study on the economic and social impact of "water disasters" (floods, severe storms, and tropical cyclones; participation with UNESCO in publishing its "Annual Summary of Information on Natural Disasters" and its possible expansion to cover all types of disasters; and a study of the use of mortgage and insurance schemes as an effective way of promoting disaster prevention, now to be completed by December 1981 if financing can be found.

80. UNDRO established a reference library in 1976, intending to produce and update a reference catalogue and provide information to all types of users as an important element in its mandate to promote the study of disaster related topics and the dissemination of information on technological developments. These objectives have not been attained. Staffed with only one General Service staff member who was not a documentalist (and who retired in July 1980 and has not been replaced), the library has accumulated many documents. But it has no supervisor, no systematic organizational structure, no catalogue (beyond index cards), and is rarely used by UNDRO staff members. More seriously, while other smaller disaster units actively exchange information with the research community, and proposals are being developed for world-wide disaster research information networks, UNDRO is not serving as a research catalyst: outside enquiries are rarely received, and UNDRO has no clear procedure for responding to those that do arrive.

81. UNDRO's major public information output is a periodic newsletter. Originally conceived of in 1975 as a research journal, the activity actually began modestly as a newsletter and a monthly bulletin in 1976-77. In its current form, the 8-12 page bimonthly UNDRO News has a distribution of 5,000 copies in English and provides information on UNDRO activities, special topics, disasters and meetings. Attractive in format and certainly useful to promote awareness of UNDRO, the News, however, is only one of about a dozen regular disaster journals and newsletters published world-wide.

82. UNDRO has other public information activities, such as occasional press briefings and releases, various promotional documents, and tours of UNDRO facilities by visitors. A newly proposed promotional effort, not included in the 1980-81 programme budget, is a half-hour colour film on UNDRO for television. The UN Department of Public Information has agreed to pay half the \$120,000 cost, but donors to the Trust Fund have not shown much enthusiasm for providing the remainder.

83. Finally, UNDRO staff participate in disaster-related meetings and seminars, programmed in recent years as the intent to "sponsor, arrange, participate in or

contribute papers" to about four such meetings a year. UNDRO has participated in many such meetings and UN system inter-governmental and governing body meetings (see Chapter IV.D. on travel). The purposes of such trips are to promote concern with and study of the disaster field, present UNDRO in its co-ordination role, and to keep UNDRO informed of and involved in disaster activities. It is difficult to discern an orderly pattern in the attendance at these meetings, but it does appear that UNDRO has managed or sponsored very few such meetings itself, in most cases just attending, delivering speeches, or serving as a less active co-sponsor. UNDRO does co-sponsor, with UNESCO, a joint International Advisory Committee on Earthquake Risk which has met three times since 1977 as a forum on earthquake research efforts. It also is currently participating in inter-agency advisory, ad hoc working groups on Volcanic Emergencies and on Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation.

IV. MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

84. In the course of the JIU evaluation a considerable number of operations problems were pointed out by top UNDRO officials, UNDRO staff, Member Government officials, and other officials in the disaster field. The following sections summarize the Inspectors' findings on personnel, organization and staffing, management, travel, communications and equipment, and funding matters.

A. Personnel

85. UNDRO's personnel situation has been marked by major turnover and vacancy problems. In the eight years from early 1972 to early 1980, UNDRO had 112 staff members for an average 30 posts, or a new person in each post, on average, almost every two years. In recent years, the staff turnover rate (separations during the year divided by staff on hand at the start of the year) has been almost double the UN system average, and the vacancy rate (staff months worked divided by staff months budgeted) has also been high:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Turnover Rate (per cent)</u>		<u>UNDRO Vacancy Rate (per cent)</u>
	<u>UNDRO</u>	<u>UN system</u>	
1976	33	16	24
1977	33	13	10
1978	28	13	20
1979	9	11	23

86. Although staff turnover declined in 1979, it had jumped back to at least 25 per cent for professional staff during 1980: by September, 5 of the 20 professional staff on hand at the start of the year had separated, including the D-2 Director and the D-1 Branch Chief. UNDRO was also operating in September with only 36 of 50 staff posts filled, suggesting a continuing vacancy rate of at least 25 per cent. The turnover and vacancy problems over the past five years have been more severe amongst professional staff and above than amongst General Service staff.

87. These problems are very disruptive of operations, greatly hampering staff continuity, stability, teamwork and the development of expertise. Further personnel problems exist as well. Some professional positions have remained vacant for two years or more, reflecting recruitment difficulties which UNDRO management and the UN Personnel Division tend to blame on each other. UNDRO gives almost all staff members initial contracts of only six months or a year followed by annual contracts, rather than longer-term or probationary contracts. The few permanent professional staff members are those who had this status on arrival in UNDRO. This policy may have been appropriate in 1976-77 when two-thirds of UNDRO staff posts were supported by unpredictable voluntary contributions but it has continued into 1980-81 when almost three-quarters of the posts are funded by the UN regular budget. The "annual review" inherent in continual contract renewals has created considerable insecurity among the staff.

88. Promotions have also been sparse: from 1972 through September 1980 there had been only seven promotions amongst professional staff (plus two D-level promotions upon entry): an average of one per year. General Service promotions have been only slightly more frequent, and in both categories there were considerable struggles within UNDRO and through recourse procedures before some of the promotions were granted. Although it has been alleged that sickness problems are also serious, the overall sick leave pattern and amount in UNDRO appears comparable to other parts of the UN.

89. The Inspectors noted also that UNDR0 has not always followed the rules and procedures for personnel management. On several occasions, staff were recruited against temporary posts or as consultants with later assignment to established posts. Budget control procedures were not always followed on staff costs: the account codes used seemed to have been determined on occasion by the availability of funds rather than the purpose of the expenditure. Some Performance Evaluation Reports seem to have been used improperly to reflect personality conflicts rather than a true assessment of staff members' work.

B. Organization and staffing

90. In 1978, UNDR0 re-organized its structure, combining the Relief Co-ordination and the Prevention and Planning divisions into a single branch (see Annex IV). Although no formal feasibility study preceded the reorganization, which had a disruptive effect on UNDR0 operations for some time, it was explained as providing geographic specialization and greater operational flexibility and efficiency. This justification appears somewhat weak, however, because the former structure also provided for geographic specialization and because the re-organization merely replaced two divisions with two sections each by one branch with four sections. Several UNDR0 staff members and officials outside UNDR0 felt that re-organization back towards the old structure is urgently needed, but the Inspectors do not believe that this is of paramount importance. What is critically needed is a clear system of management, as discussed below and in section C. following.

91. There were also many opinions, primarily from outside UNDR0, as to where it should best be located. Many people favoured moving it to New York where it could be more involved with the UN Headquarters Secretariat and UNDP. Others argued for keeping it in Geneva, the traditional centre of humanitarian assistance and near most of the specialized UN agencies and major voluntary organization headquarters. The Inspectors believe that while both locations offer advantages, the problems involved in moving UNDR0 to New York tip the balance in favour of remaining in Geneva.

92. The Inspectors believe, however, that four years after the "strengthening" of UNDR0 took place, a review of staff numbers and grades is in order, and that a reduction in UNDR0's 50 staff posts, by as much as half, is justified. Even at this level, UNDR0 would still be a relatively large organization in the disaster field, particularly since comparable units have operational responsibilities for disasters while UNDR0's function is primarily to co-ordinate. A reduced staff level would also be more in line with the 17 new staff which the UNDR0 Panel of Consultants recommended be added to UNDR0's 14 existing staff in 1975. The Panel's analysis of staffing needs formed the basis for UNDR0's relief coordination work in the 1976-77 programme budget, but UNDR0 also added new prevention and preparedness and administrative support staff which raised the planned post total of 31 to the present level of 50 (see Annexes IV and I).

93. A smaller but more effective UNDR0 staff can be achieved in part by focusing on those crucial co-ordinative and catalytic services which UNDR0 can perform well (as discussed in Chapter VI). It can also be achieved, however, by comparing UNDR0's present operations to the "strengthening" plans of 1975, and through the adoption of new management policies and practices, as follows.

(a) The Panel of Consultants considered in 1975 that UNDR0 required 12 professional staff and 5 General Service staff for relief co-ordination, but experience has shown that 1 professional and 2 General Service staff handle many of UNDR0's modest co-ordination involvements in Geneva, and the maximum co-ordination centre staffing for infrequent multiple disasters has been about 3 professional and 3 General Service staff.

(b) The Panel envisaged 13 2-to-4-man 15-day disaster assessment missions a year (20 staff months), but in fact there have been only about 9 1-man, 12-day missions annually, even when "follow-up" and the many Ethiopia drought missions are included (about 4 staff months).

(c) Staff monitoring, liaison, and contribution recording activities in the sometimes quite lengthy periods between disasters have produced little tangible analysis, reporting or data base material, indicating that these functions are quite secondary.

(d) UNDRO has developed a heavy administrative support structure in which the majority of the staff posts (29 of 50) are in support of, or are above, the one operating branch Chief and his three geographic sections (see Annex IV).

(e) The UNDRO structure also contains a high proportion of senior staff posts (1 USG, 1 D-2, 3 D-1's, 1 Senior "L", 5 P-5's) for a unit of 50 posts, and no less than 3 supervisory layers between the Co-ordinator and his operating officers in the geographic sections (or 5 layers in all), even though the 1975 Panel justified (a lesser number of) the high grades so that all D-1 and below staff could fill in flexibly at all operational positions as circumstances required.

(f) The Liaison Office at New York, although headed by a D-1, has been given only general representational duties rather than a specific programme of briefings, donor relations, and relief and technical co-operation liaison, and could be better utilized or redeployed.

(g) UNDRO has 16 secretarial posts to assist 25 P-staff and above and 8 senior-level GS staff and has in the past even requested more, although this ratio seems high to begin with for a small unit, particularly since the professional staff and above spend large amounts of time travelling.

(h) Although a "waiting" organization such as UNDRO should make maximum use of temporary and seconded staff and consultants to meet peak and special needs and fluctuating requirements (as emphasized in resolution 2816 and subsequently), UNDRO's combined expenditures for such assistance have amounted to only about 6 per cent of total personnel costs.

(i) UNDRO has added scientific specialists to its staff as co-ordination officers (a volcanologist, a hydrologist, a meteorologist, a human settlements man, and perhaps in future a D-1 scientific adviser and a satellite remote sensing specialist), although outside observers note that in so doing UNDRO duplicates personnel skills available from other UN agencies and, because of the specialists' understandable disciplinary interests, detracts from their concentration on UNDRO's direct disaster functions.

(j) In UNDRO's current single operating branch, functions are blurred and everyone does everything in the name of flexibility, with a resultant lack of accountability and management analysis which hampers efficient resource use (see section C. following).

(k) UNDRO's travel activities, particularly for attendance at seminars and meetings, visits to donor countries, and "preparatory" and "follow-up" technical co-operation missions have involved extensive activity with limited or vague benefits, a situation which a more disciplined travel policy could correct (see section D. following).

(l) 10 staff posts (plus a notional Field Service post) are assigned to the co-ordination centre, data bank, publications, reference library, and mail and registry units, which could be redeployed much more efficiently to fulfill UNDRO's information-sharing role (see section E. following).

(m) UNDRO has had a 20 per cent vacancy rate or above in every year but one since the "strengthening" (see paragraph 85) and thus has steadily operated with about 40 or less of its 50 posts.

(n) Finally, a number of staff members told the Inspectors that they were often underemployed, and suggested that only a portion of the total staff is being fully utilized.

C. Management

94. At least since the 1976 "strengthening", UNDRO's management has been a tightly centralized system, with little delegation of authority and responsibility beyond the Co-ordinator and one or two senior staff members. In consequence, the small top group is often over-extended, and the rest of the staff are often under-employed.

95. In addition, the 1978 re-organization appears to have led, in the name of flexibility, to a situation in which almost any officer in the Relief Co-ordination, Preparedness and Prevention Branch can be allocated ad hoc responsibility for such matters as relief co-ordination, technical co-operation, research, donor relations, and monitoring and analysis. Thus the lines of responsibility have become blurred.

96. A further striking feature of the management situation is the lack of internal management data and operational procedures. Little systematic data has been accumulated beyond routine financial data and that required for UN programming purposes: most of the performance data in this report (see Annexes) was pieced together by the JIU from UNDRO, UN and external records and sources, or prepared by UNDRO for the first time at the JIU's request. There is also a lack of standard operational procedures and organized training for such important functions as co-ordination centre operations, disaster assessment missions, technical co-operation project preparation, and internal reporting on field missions. A general Relief Co-ordination Handbook was prepared in 1977, but has been little used recently and has not been updated. UNDRO also lacks effective control procedures over such important expenditure items as travel and communications (see Sections D. and E. following).

97. In addition, UNDRO has not developed an effective internal planning, monitoring and evaluation system, though the 1975 Panel of Consultants emphasized this important responsibility, donor Governments to the Trust Fund have urged it, and the programme budgets regularly refer to it. In 1976, several Member States in ECOSOC took the unusual step of requesting the submission of a three-year (1977-79) work programme in addition to normal programme documents, in order to establish clear priorities, tight performance scheduling, and careful resource allocation for the "strengthened" UNDRO. This programme (A/31/88/Add.2), however, appears to have had little impact. In practice, UNDRO's only regular analytical activity is its mission reports, which vary greatly in format, length, quality and analytical content. Internal planning, monitoring and performance assessment are done only on an informal and "as necessary" basis.

98. The tightly-centralized style of UNDRO management has also found expression in a number of aspects of personnel management. There has been very few staff meetings to discuss problems or on-going work. Major decisions such as the 1978 re-organization or staff reassignments seem to have been announced to the staff without notice, discussion or preparation. Useful information like reports on technical advisory panel meetings or visits by the Co-ordinator to donor countries has not been circulated. Little guidance has been given to staff on the specific performance expected of them, and little credit for work well done, and there has been little encouragement, solicitation, open discussion or implementation of staff ideas. These practices have created considerable morale problems amongst many of the staff, which have further hampered effective work.

99. These managerial factors have had a number of results. The over-extension of the small top group has meant that it has had insufficient time to organize staff work effectively, direct and carefully assess operations, establish priorities and, above all, develop UNDR0 policy and look ahead to the future. The lower echelons, on the other hand, have not been fully utilized; their tasks are allocated in an ad hoc manner and flow back and forth without clear patterns, procedures, and coherence. Officers have not always been able to see matters through to completion, and long-term matters such as research, data base development, and the technical co-operation programme have suffered in consequence.

100. Because UNDR0 does not have an orderly internal management system and performance data, its extrnal reporting has been weak and subject to criticism by ACABQ and Member States. Medium-term plans and programme budgets lack continuity, and therefore drop and add elements without explanation. They are unclear as to progress achieved, relative priorities, activities which could be terminated, and joint activities with other parts of the system. The 1980-83 Medium-Term Plan does contain some impact and measurement material, but the overall programming pattern has not been impressive (see Annex III). The Secretary-General's annual reports have also been narrow in scope, generally consisting of detailed discussions of individual disaster activities, some financial data, and a brief general discussion (often on UNDR0's financial problems). Occasionally, as in the 1976 and 1980 reports, more analytical material has been presented, but the reports have yet to approach the "objective assessment" of UNDR0 performance and world-wide disaster problems and needs which Member States have requested.

D. Travel

101. UNDR0 travel, although only about 4 per cent of total expenditures, is still substantial for a small unit and increased markedly in early 1980, including that of the Co-ordinator and his Division/Branch Chief.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Travel Expenditures</u>	<u>of which, Co-ordinator, Division/Branch Chief*</u>
	US\$	US\$
1976-77	204,736	50,576
1978-79	242,900	68,779
1980 (six months)	81,429*	31,016
	<u>529,065</u>	<u>150,371</u>

*Travel authorizations

102. In addition, the patterns of UNDR0 travel have changed from those originally expected. The 1975 Panel of Consultants estimated that annual travel costs for relief co-ordination should be at least \$97,000, with about 92 per cent for travel to disaster sites and 8per cent for special disaster meetings, consultations with donor and disaster-prone countries and training seminars. The cost of travel, of course, has since risen considerably and the Panel did not analyze disaster prevention and preparedness travel needs. Annex VI indicates, however, that from 1976 to mid-1980 only 27 per cent of the almost 400 trips had been to disaster-prone countries for disaster assessment or technical cooperation missions. The disaster assessment missions have been far below the 40-some annual disaster trips the Panel estimated, with a sharp decline since 1976. Technical co-operation travel has been marked by a substantial shift from the earlier long-term consultant missions to short "preparatory" or "follow-up" missions by UNDR0 staff.

103. The majority of UNDRO trips - 73 per cent - have been for attendance at seminars and meetings, and "liaison" or "representational" travel to donor countries and organizations. UNDRO has explained such missions as necessary to establish and maintain contacts, arrange disaster activities, and make UNDRO better known. The Inspectors note, however, that the results of the donor and organization visits have fallen short of original expectations (Chapter III.A), involvement in meetings has much more often been modest participation than sponsorship and leadership (Chapter III.B), and that mission reports on both these types of travel are usually cursory and unclear or simply not in the files. They conclude that UNDRO's overall travel pattern should be directed away from the heavy current emphasis on meetings and donor visits towards increased missions to disaster-prone developing countries.

104. The Inspectors also believe that the many trips and increasing travel expenditures indicate the need for a tighter general travel policy. Additional resources could be freed for other purposes if greater use were made of the New York liaison officer, telephone contacts, on-site officials who can represent UNDRO, limits on the number of staff attending UN and other meetings, and careful combinations of trips. In particular, a critical appraisal of the costs and benefits of each prospective trip could help to establish priorities, control travel costs and confine all missions to essential purposes.

E. Communications and Equipment

105. UNDRO currently has separate, under-developed and under-utilized units responsible for its co-ordination centre, data bank, reference library, and publications/information functions, as discussed in Chapter III. It also has a mail and registry unit with extensive, well-organized files which are seldom used for analytical purposes. These five units, which together involve 11 UNDRO staff posts, have apparently not been developed and integrated because of long-term difficulties in recruiting a systems analyst and completing a detailed study of co-ordination centre operations.

106. At present, these units scarcely begin to fulfil their potential as an informational "nerve centre" at the core of UNDRO operations, or UNDRO's mandated responsibilities to acquire, share, and disseminate information. The Inspectors believe that a careful reassessment of the staffing, functions and relationships of the units could produce a streamlined and far more effective single unit, within UNDRO's operating Branch and under the supervision of an information specialist. Such a system could also be used to link UNDRO with other data bases and information systems, perhaps computerized, in the disaster field.

107. In addition, a co-ordinative (and a UN system) agency should be an essential information "focal point" on its field world-wide, in terms of the basic situation, existing problems, actions taken, new ideas and approaches, results achieved, and further actions needed. After the failure of its initial ambitious attempts in this area in the mid-1970s, UNDRO has made little further effort to develop even modest data on the world-wide disaster situation and assess progress made. A well-organized information unit could be the base for a renewed UNDRO effort to collect, analyze, and disseminate such data.

108. Other communications and equipment problems exist. The unused radio sets (Chapter III.A) should be disposed of. The remaining Field Service post to operate these radios (two others were converted to UNDRO secretarial posts) is maintained, the Inspectors were told, to compensate for the extra cost burden

which UNDR0 places on Field Service communications activities. The Inspectors believe this loose "notional" arrangement should be replaced by a straightforward cost estimate. In addition, UNDR0 often uses its own telex to send non-emergency messages at commercial rates rather than normal UN communications channels, thus adding to its already high communications costs (recently about \$114,000 per biennium). Finally, the need for the extensive equipment in the co-ordination centre, which cost about \$160,000 to install and requires about \$27,000 annually to maintain, should be carefully reviewed against actual usage (and any future re-organization as suggested above). Plans to expend a further \$40,000 to air-condition the co-ordination centre should also be reconsidered, in light of the transfer of the two General Service staff who have occupied the centre to another office.

F. Trust Fund

109. The Trust Fund was established in 1974 to strengthen UNDR0 (Annex VIII), and sub-accounts for emergency relief assistance and technical co-operation were added in 1975 (Resolutions 3440 and 3532). These funds were established provisionally, and considerable debate accompanied the 1977 and 1979 decisions to extend them and to transfer about half of UNDR0's posts and some costs to the UN regular budget. Since 1974, contributions and expenditures under the "strengthening" account have largely retained their size despite the transfers, while the technical co-operation sub-account contributions have fallen off sharply and the emergency relief sub-account has never really developed (see Annexes I and II). The Secretary-General's 1980 report has recommended that the Trust Fund be extended, and that a further adequate transfer of costs from voluntary funding to the regular budget should be made in the 1982-1983 programme budget, but a number of donors view the Trust Fund's future as uncertain. By August 1980, only \$242,000 of the \$1,841,000 revised expenditure target for 1980-1981 for "strengthening" had been contributed and only \$28,000 of the \$900,000 expenditure target for technical co-operation activities.

110. Lack of advance programming of Trust Fund resources makes assessment of UNDR0 funding needs and spending patterns difficult. UNDR0 has felt that the uncertainty of Trust Fund contributions allows it to prepare only rough estimates of voluntary fund availabilities, with more specific annual Cost Plans prepared only after the budget itself has been approved. Financial summaries have been prepared only occasionally (as in the Secretary-General's 1980 report following specific donor government requests) or for irregular periods of time: the overall financial summaries in Annexes I and II are the first time such summaries have been prepared. UNDR0 cost categories also involve a labyrinth of account codes, with more than 50 for travel alone since 1975. The various funding rationales are also not always clear - for instance, travel has gradually been placed mostly in the regular budget, but communications costs are almost entirely extra-budgetary.

111. Various officials expressed concern, with which the Inspectors concur, that the Trust Funds are not as tightly programmed, managed, reviewed or reported on as are regular budget funds. If the Trust Fund should continue, the Inspectors believe UNDR0 must provide more clear and frequent programming, reporting and analysis on Trust Fund needs, status, use and apportionment within its total programme.

V. CO-ORDINATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

112. The international disaster field in which UNDRO seeks to carry out its co-ordinative and "focal-point" relationships is crowded with literally hundreds of governments and organizations. These can be divided into four broad groups: the UN system; donor and disaster-prone governments; voluntary organizations; and the international disaster research community and the media. It should be noted that very few of these organizations are considered primarily as "relief organizations": the donor governments, international organizations and voluntary organizations are involved in disaster relief along with development assistance work, and the disaster-stricken countries and the media tend to give priority to disasters primarily at the time that they occur.

A. UNDP

113. Of all UNDRO's relationships, probably none is more important than that with UNDP, which UNDRO reports have referred to as "the eyes and ears of UNDRO". International disaster relief co-ordination is critically dependent on effective assessment, co-ordination, and communication within the disaster-stricken country itself. The world-wide network of UNDP Resident Representatives/Resident Co-ordinators serves as official "on the spot" representatives of the Co-ordinator during disasters. With or without the assistance of an UNDRO staff mission, they are responsible for assisting Governments (if so requested) to make accurate assessments of emergency aid required from abroad, helping to orchestrate assistance from other UN system organizations in-country, and utilizing UNDP emergency fund allocations and often UNDRO's own fund allocation (both recently raised to \$30,000) for immediate local purchase or transport of selected relief items.

114. UNDRO has also attempted to create in-country relief committees headed by Resident Representatives for relief co-ordination, assistance to governments, preparation of comprehensive local disaster contingency plans, and establishment of local disaster co-ordination and information centres. Despite staff followup missions, the "relief committee" idea has progressed slowly. Recently, UNDRO has placed greater emphasis on encouraging Resident Representatives to take the initiative in assessing preparedness needs, working with governments, and forming working groups of UN system representatives and others in-country to carry on pre-disaster planning as a continuing operation.

115. UNDRO has attempted to support these considerable disaster responsibilities of the Resident Representatives through the issuance of guidelines (most recently re-issued in January 1980), training sessions for Resident Representatives (a series of four regional seminars was held in 1976-78 but a second series has been cancelled for lack of funds), and periodic staff contacts. However, many problems exist. Disaster relief is a sensitive area to many governments, and disaster preparedness does not often have high priority. UN system disaster preparedness advice can create frictions which hamper the day-to-day working relationships of representatives with the Government. Disaster co-ordination and preparedness is only one of many responsibilities of Resident Representatives, and their actual performance in this respect has been quite uneven. Although resolution 2816 specifies the "key role" which Resident Representatives could play, UNDRO's limited training and guidance efforts do not appear always to have reached them.

116. In the area of technical co-operation for disaster preparedness and prevention, the question of UNDRO versus UNDP responsibility remains unresolved, as discussed in Chapters II.B and III.B. Arguments have been made for UNDRO as the "focal point" as the experienced disaster agency, but UNDP's overall development perspectives and responsibilities, its worldwide technical co-operation network, and its much greater contacts, influence, and resources are also acknowledged.

In the event, UNDRO's efforts to obtain UNDP funding have met with little success, with some attributing this to UNDP's unwillingness to give disaster work a high development priority and others criticising UNDRO for not proposing well-designed projects supported by host governments.

117. While UNDRO is still seeking an appropriate technical co-operation role, however, the UNDP Governing Council decided in 1980 to clarify UNDP's role in natural disasters (DP/432 of 22 January 1980). Although it cited and acknowledged UNDRO's responsibilities for disaster co-ordination, the Council primarily reviewed UNDP's extensive past activities in the disaster area, established limits of \$1 million per disaster and \$2 million per year per country from the Programme Reserve for longer-term post-disaster technical assistance only, supported Resident Representative efforts to encourage government contingency planning, and raised the UNDP emergency allocation limit from \$20,000 to \$30,000 per disaster.

B. Other UN System Organizations

118. The UN system in which UNDRO is intended to operate as a co-ordinative focal point for disasters is also a crowded one which provides a substantial portion of international relief assistance (see para. 39). In addition to UNDP's functions, UNHCR handles the refugee problems of "man-made" disasters, UNICEF the disaster needs of children and young mothers; FAO agricultural relief and recovery matters; WFP emergency food assistance; and WHO the public health aspects of disasters. WMO, UNESCO, and ITU all have significant research and technical co-operation efforts in the disaster field, with UNESCO currently considering a special fund to further its natural disaster work. UNEP has designated natural disasters as a priority programme area, and IAEA, ICAO, ILO, IMCO and UPU also have roles in disaster relief, preparedness and reconstruction. (The World Bank and other regional or international organizations, such as the European Economic Community, the Organization of American States, and the regional economic development banks also have roles in various aspects of disaster relief, preparedness and prevention).

119. The UN system is capable of filling a very central role in disaster matters: while some observers expect a continued dominance of bilateral actions by donor governments (see next section), others believe that UN system co-ordinative mechanisms will become more and more important. The system has developed considerable experience in disaster situations, maintains a worldwide network of field representatives, and possesses the full range of technical expertise to handle disaster needs from disaster emergency to reconstruction in all economic and social sectors. These administrative and technical resources have been strengthened in the last ten years by the establishment of disaster relief units in half-a-dozen of the agencies and heightened emphasis on disaster functions in the others.

120. There are, however, substantial barriers to UNDRO's co-ordinative efforts. The major UN system organizations involved in disasters are much larger and better-funded, have been functioning longer, have carved out clearer areas of expertise and operational roles, and have their own programmes, clientele and interests. UNDRO has operated with caution, confining itself largely to a role in "sudden" natural disasters, with major and long-term disasters either assigned to another "lead" agency or to a special co-ordinator. For instance, while UNDRO has tended to take the leadership in the long-term Ethiopian drought situation (and was asked by the Secretary-General in late 1980 to lead an inter-agency mission to surrounding countries), the drought relief operation in West Africa was initially led by FAO and then by the UN Sahelian Office (UNSO), which was then transferred to UNDP. The major current Kampuchea disaster relief operation is being led by a special UN system co-ordinator, UNICEF and the International Red Cross. Even in the East

African area, UNDRO's leadership responsibilities are clouded by the responsibilities of FAO, WFP and UNHCR, and by the fact that UNSO, re-titled as the UN Sudano-Sahelian Office in 1979, is also responsible for assisting, on behalf of UNEP, the rehabilitation and development efforts of the countries of that area, including Ethiopia and almost all the countries visited by the UNDRO-led mission in late 1980.

121. UNDRO has attempted to clarify working relationships through a series of 13 Memoranda of Understanding with 13 UN system and 2 other international organizations signed between 1976 and 1979. These agreements delineate areas of responsibility to avoid duplication of effort. The most recent one, a multi-agency agreement on environmental aspects, is intended as a basis for thematic programming and action in disaster preparedness and prevention. There have been criticisms within the system of these Memoranda, however, as "paper exercises" which do not lead on to specific and significant activities. The results to date support this conclusion. UNEP provided UNDRO with funding support for several years but it has not continued. A joint committee is being sponsored with UNESCO, and UNDRO has engaged in various joint missions and meetings. However, more specific and significant activities have not developed in the system's disaster research, technical co-operation, or relief co-ordination and pre-disaster planning efforts. In addition, UNDRO has sponsored little broader inter-agency discussion: a few informal relief or programming meetings were arranged before 1976 and the first UNDRO "donors' meeting" of 1976 was attended by the major UN system agencies. But no such inter-agency meetings have been held since that time.

122. The agency officials whom the Inspectors interviewed were rather non-committal about UNDRO. UNDRO's information on disaster emergencies was felt to be useful but not essential, in view of other sources such as the agencies' own field representatives. Relationships were described as cordial and contacts as adequate, although the officials noted the lack of specific joint activities and some confusion as to which UNDRO staff members were responsible for liaison. There was some discussion of the need for UNDRO to sharpen its management practices and to demonstrate its competence and leadership in a few specific work areas. And while the information-sharing and co-ordinating role of UNDRO was encouraged, there was a wide variety of views about its desirable relief, preparedness, and prevention roles, together with some concern that the recent hiring by UNDRO of several technical specialists duplicates skills already available in the specialized agencies and may lead to an "operational" UNDRO which causes frictions.

C. Governments

123. The focus on international relief assistance and methods of co-ordination, and the use of the term "recipient" governments, has tended in the past to obscure the critical role played by disaster-stricken governments. In fact, the majority of the material assistance and the preponderance of human effort in disaster relief comes from the local community: it has been estimated that such "local" self-help assistance amounts to about three times the total provided internationally. The government of the disaster-stricken country, along with local military, voluntary, police, and civil defence units, also bears the primary responsibility for administration of relief operations and for disaster preparedness. The patterns and techniques vary, as do Governments' success in carrying out such operations. It is clear, however, that increasing the capacity of the 40 to 50 disaster-prone developing countries to help themselves in the disaster field is the key to long-term effectiveness in combating disaster damage.

124. Foreign or "donor" governments provide the majority of external disaster relief assistance (see para. 39), particularly when it is recognized that their large bilateral contributions are supplemented by considerable contributions through UN system agencies or voluntary organizations. Donor governments vary in

their assistance patterns, but there are at least 50 "donor countries" involved in international disaster relief assistance, with perhaps 10 who almost always contribute aid for a major disaster. This latter group was among those responsible for creating UNDR0 in order to overcome the lack of donor co-ordination. It includes the primary contributors to UNDR0's voluntary Trust Fund and, with some developing countries, has been the primary supporter of UNDR0's activities. In recent years, about half-a-dozen of these governments have established or revised their own permanent disaster units, including extensive communication and reporting networks which UNDR0 often relies on in its relief activities.

125. UNDR0's direct co-ordinative relationships with disaster-prone governments have been primarily confined to technical consultant or preparatory staff missions for preparedness and prevention projects, with considerable and growing reliance on UNDP Resident Representatives for more regular and broad-scope contact. UNDR0's problems in participating in relief operations in some countries and sending staff disaster assessment missions to others, as well as its difficulties in launching meaningful technical co-operation projects, have been discussed in Chapters II and III.

126. UNDR0's contacts with donor governments have been more extensive, particularly through missions and periodic "donor meetings". However, the mission contacts have been concentrated on a limited number of countries, progress in elaborating pre-disaster arrangements has been slow, and donor meetings have primarily involved only those countries contributing to the UNDR0 Trust Fund (as also discussed in Chapters II and III). In addition, UNDR0 has had continuing difficulty, as most recently noted in the 1980 Secretary-General's report, in obtaining information from governments on their relief assistance actions and plans, and on their disaster preparedness and prevention assistance activities as well.

127. The officials of several disaster-prone countries interviewed by the Inspectors were generally appreciative of UNDR0's efforts on their behalf. The views reflected the differing emphases among countries which welcome a very active and extensive UNDR0 involvement in their disaster situations and those which want only a limited UNDR0 role. Emphasis was placed on the need for UNDR0 to improve its efforts to encourage more simple, rapid and flexible aid to meet immediate emergency relief and transportation needs within a country after a disaster rather than massive, slow and expensive commodity supplies. It was observed that UNDR0 could learn from the specific, localized disaster relief methods and approaches used in various developing countries, rather than taking a preconceived approach. It was also stated that UNDR0 needs to have more direct and regular contacts with developing countries on disaster matters, particularly through much more activity in training courses and study tours for officials of disaster-prone developing countries and through dissemination of information on disaster mitigation, preparedness, and prevention.

128. The donor country officials whom the Inspectors interviewed, and particularly those contributing to the Trust Fund, were the most critical of UNDR0's performance. The extreme breadth and difficulty of the basic co-ordination mandate were cited, and many competing views were offered on the relative priority of relief co-ordination versus preparedness and prevention. There was a strong common view that UNDR0's relatively large staff had attempted much but accomplished little, and emphasis on the need for UNDR0 to take a firm, pragmatic management approach to a few selected services which it could perform well. In particular, the need for an active and effective information-sharing and communication system was cited, since it was felt that UNDR0's co-ordinative efforts had too often been a marginal effort which did not really address the problems UNDR0 was set up to mitigate. The officials also cited the need for more basic data gathering and assessment, better fund management and reporting, more use of expert consultants

and seconded personnel rather than more permanent staff and scientific specialists, a more "open" management style to better utilize and develop existing staff members, and better organization and clarification of UNDRO's responsibilities for donor relations and liaison.

129. Finally, many officials felt the need for a governing body to oversee UNDRO operations, since UNDRO matters are often lost amongst the many issues before ECOSOC and the General Assembly. At the 1980 "donors' meeting" representatives also expressed concern at the narrowing of the meeting's attendance to governments contributing to the Trust Fund and a few developing countries, urged the need for formal, periodic review of UNDRO's programme and performance, and noted the possibilities of including developing-country disaster specialists in the meetings. UNDRO officials argued, however, that the existing meetings are not institutionalized and are held at the Co-ordinator's initiative, that expanding attendance would be costly, and that creating a new UNDRO governing body might involve legal complications.

D. Voluntary Organizations

130. There are several hundred religious and secular voluntary organizations which are active in international disaster relief. Because of their "grass-roots" organizations and operations in many countries, they are able to go into action very quickly and flexibly when a sudden disaster strikes, and may often have the best information about the emergency situation and needs. Voluntary agencies provide additional channels for relief aid and distribution of supplies (see para. 39), but perhaps their major contribution is trained manpower to assist the relief efforts of the disaster-stricken government.

131. Co-ordination amongst so many voluntary agencies has often been a problem. The largest and most influential organization (mentioned specifically in resolution 2816) is the League of Red Cross Societies (LORCS), based in Geneva, and the some 125 national societies around the world. Since 1972 the League and four other major voluntary organizations based in Geneva have maintained a "Steering Committee" to improve co-ordination at the international level, share information from their extensive communications networks during disaster situations, promote pre-disaster planning, and prepare practical studies in the disaster field.

132. Links between the voluntary and UN system organizations have not always been good, and UNDRO has attempted to develop co-ordination relationships at least with the largest Geneva-based groups. Officials from several of the voluntary organizations repeated many of the comments made by donor governments about the breadth and difficulty of UNDRO's mandate and the need for a more tightly-focused and managed set of UNDRO services. They pointed out that voluntary organizations need a UN system "focal point" with authority, influence and leverage to promote concern with disaster matters by governments and facilitate their own efforts. UNDRO's disaster information was felt to be particularly useful to small organizations, but it was hoped that UNDRO could also take the lead as a clearing-house for technical information, as well as sponsoring periodic meetings between UN system and voluntary organizations on disaster relief problems. Finally, it was felt that UNDRO needs to do more disaster preparedness work with disaster-prone countries and Resident Representatives in the field.

E. International Disaster Research Community and the Media

133. In the past decade there has been a great deal of activity in disaster research around the world: new institutions; periodicals and newsletters; studies, books and reports; and many new proposed (and tested) approaches, techniques and methods. UNDRO programme documents have acknowledged this "wealth of information",

but despite its mandate to "promote the study" and "acquire and disseminate information" on disaster matters, UNDRO has had little contact or activity with this expanding research community, as evidenced by the limited development of its research library and data bank (see Chapter III). Many observers cited the potential of UNDRO to serve as a "focal point" to stimulate development and exchange of disaster problem definitions, research efforts, and results, as UN agencies do in many other sectors, but UNDRO has not established the necessary linkages.

134. A final component of the international disaster field is the media. The media are often the first to report a disaster. They can greatly stimulate public awareness of a disaster and thereby bring about much-increased contributions. They can break down the various political barriers to needed emergency action and provide the subsequent evaluation of relief effectiveness which the relief organizations often omit. On the other hand, the media can distort understanding of the actual disaster situation, hinder field operations, and raise political barriers and censorship because of fears of biased or unfavourable reporting. UNDRO has recently sought to expand somewhat its limited public relations programme, in order both to better publicize international disaster actions and to make UNDRO better known.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Conclusions

135. For the past eight and one-half years UNDRO has attempted to fulfill its functions as a United Nations system focal point to mobilize, direct and co-ordinate external aid to disaster-stricken countries and to promote and assist in disaster prevention and preparedness. All these activities are directed towards the fundamental reason for UNDRO's existence: the more effective relief of human suffering.

136. UNDRO faces many problems. Externally, it has been hampered by continuing uncertainty over the degree of feasibility of disaster relief co-ordination; a broad and imprecise mandate subject to various interpretations; the lack of a specific governing body to give it direction; differing views as to its precise functions and their appropriate mix; some overlap of its functions and activities with those of governments, voluntary organizations and UN system organizations; and problems of co-ordination and co-operation with these groups (Chapters II and V).

137. Internally, despite the doubling of its staff from the six envisioned in the Secretary-General's 1971 report to a dozen in 1974 and the further fourfold increase to 49 posts after the 1975-76 "strengthening", UNDRO has encountered continuing difficulty in developing and implementing a programme of action. Ambitious programming has been followed by limited implementation and extended delays leading to only modest and partially-developed relief co-ordination functions, a technical co-operation programme that has produced few results despite considerable expenditure, and many research efforts which have not often moved far beyond the conceptual stage (Chapter III). UNDRO's operations have been further hampered by difficulties in staff recruitment and retention, an increasingly heavy bureaucratic structure, vague and incomplete processes of management information, assessment, reporting and control, and serious problems of staff morale (Chapter IV).

138. Because of these external and internal difficulties, UNDRO has not proven very effective as a focal point, co-ordinator and catalyst in the disaster field. It has neither exerted the hoped-for leadership and stimulus, nor has it become an information focal point for disaster data, research, and careful assessment of disaster problems, trends, and performance which would allow a more precise evaluation of progress achieved worldwide and the results and impact of UNDRO's own activities. In the areas to which UNDRO has given priority, progress towards its stated objectives appears to be disappointingly slow (Chapters II, III and Annex III). An international disaster prevention strategy does not yet exist; UNDRO's information-sharing services are only partly used; detailed disaster information and relief arrangements are not well-developed; it is not known whether or to what extent UNDRO has helped to reduce waste and inefficiency in relief administration; governments of disaster-prone countries are not yet well-organized to deal with disaster emergencies in a self-reliant fashion; relief committees of UN system field representatives have not evolved; disaster prevention techniques have not been applied; and increasing disaster research has not been linked to urgent disaster problems.

139. Some officials whom the Inspectors interviewed felt that UNDRO should simply be abolished (like its predecessor, the International Relief Union). The Inspectors believe, however, that there is a need for a sudden natural disaster focal-point organization, and they endorse the Co-ordinator's stated desire to take stock of the lessons learned from UNDRO's actions and policies over the past eight years. The preceding Chapters include criticisms, but these all point towards the following recommendations to strengthen UNDRO for the future.

B. Mandate

140. UNDR0's mandate (see Chapter II and Annex VII) presents two major problems which have plagued the Office since the beginning. One is the uncertainty about UNDR0's responsibility not only for natural disasters but also for "other disaster situations", which creates possibilities of conflict with what other UN organizations are doing and believe to be their responsibility. UNDR0's Memoranda of Understanding do not fully clarify these various responsibilities, particularly for long-term complex disasters (Chapter V.B), and in any case the Memoranda have hardly been tested in real situations.

141. The other principal problem in the mandate is UNDR0's responsibility "to mobilize, direct and co-ordinate" the relief activities of the various organizations of the UN system. Most organizations of the UN system have resisted this from the beginning because they felt that UNDR0 should not direct their activities; and "co-ordinate" has been a term not always understood or appreciated, and often not desired by them.

142. Whatever may have been the purpose, in the drafting of the mandate, of leaving open the possibility that UNDR0 might work on "other disaster situations", UNDR0 has in fact ended up without a clear role in "other disaster situations" and in not mobilizing, directing and co-ordinating the relief activities of the organizations of the UN system. It must be doubtful whether in any circumstances the outcome after eight years of UNDR0's existence would have been very different, but it can now clearly be seen that the mandate of 14 December 1971 was too wide.

143. RECOMMENDATION 1: The basic function of UNDR0 should be confined to "sudden" natural disasters. This would allow UNDR0 to focus its efforts and resources on that specific area and establish a reputation for efficient and reliable performance. So-called "creeping" natural disasters, such as droughts, epidemics and famines should not be included in its functions. With respect to relief activities in sudden natural disasters, UNDR0 should have the following principal functions:

(a) serve as the principal recipient and communicator within the United Nations system of information on disaster situations, what appear to be the primary needs, and what assistance is being provided, as reported to UNDR0 by UNDP Resident Representatives/Resident Co-ordinators and UN system, governmental and voluntary organizations, and make available information based upon what it had received so that decisions could be made by relief contributors.

(b) receive voluntary contributions for "earmarked" disaster relief assistance when contributors wish to channel such assistance through UNDR0.

(c) provide up to a specified amount from UN funds for immediate relief assistance.

(d) assist governments and Resident Representatives/Resident Co-ordinators, when appropriate, in relation to current disasters.

With respect to preparedness and prevention in relation to sudden natural disasters UNDR0 should:

(e) provide advice, information and assistance to governments on request on pre-disaster planning and preparedness in consultation with organizations of the UN system and others.

(f) serve as the executing agent for UNDP-funded projects on preparedness, which should emphasize the training of nationals in pre-disaster planning and relief management.

(g) serve as a catalyst (i.e. stimulator of action by others) and organizer of advice and information on disaster prevention when solicited by interested governments.

(h) promote greater recognition of the impact of disasters on economic development in the developing countries, and the importance of effective prevention and preparedness measures to further such development by mitigating disaster damage.

The modified mandate should also stress, as did resolution 2816, the continued strong need for full support of and co-operation with UNDR0 by donor and recipient countries if it is to succeed in its work.

C. Trust Fund

144. RECOMMENDATION 2: The Trust Fund has always been provisional, and it should be phased out (except as in paragraph 143(b) above). The "strengthening" account could finally be eliminated if proposals on reduced and more efficient staffing are enacted (section E below).

145. RECOMMENDATION 3: The technical assistance sub-account should also be eliminated in favour of working with governments and UNDP to develop specific, well-designed preparedness projects for UNDP funding. To accomplish this, UNDR0 and UNDP should work more closely together, especially through increased liaison and briefing work by the UNDR0 New York Liaison Office, efforts to ensure that every UNDP office in a disaster-prone country has an officer trained in disaster relief and pre-disaster planning (through a renewed UNDR0 training programme), and through procedures to ensure that disaster prevention measures are considered in governments' development planning.

D. Reporting Responsibilities

146. UNDR0 suffers seriously from the lack of a governing body to give it direction. The donor group meetings have no formal authority and are not representative of the membership of the UN as a whole. The Co-ordinator's annual reports and presentations to ECOSOC and the General Assembly lead all too often to ill-focused discussions in those over-worked bodies. The Inspectors conclude that UNDR0 needs - and has needed from the beginning - an inter-governmental governing body to give policy guidance to the Co-ordinator and to take appropriate decisions. One possibility would be to create a special body, but the Inspectors consider it desirable to avoid this.

147. RECOMMENDATION 4: A pattern similar to that of UNFPA should be followed, whereby UNDR0 would be under the general authority of the General Assembly as at present, but the UNDP Governing Council would be its governing body and would concern itself with the policies of UNDR0, its objectives and results, and its administrative, financial and other aspects. The Governing Council would submit an annual report on UNDR0 to the Economic and Social Council, and this would then go to the General Assembly with any observations of the Secretary-General.

148. While a number of officials felt that UNDR0's dependence on the world-wide network of Resident Representatives/Resident Co-ordinators and UNDP technical co-operation funding argues for placing UNDR0 within UNDP, the Inspectors note the potential problems in that UNDP's funding is voluntary and that UNDR0 might lose its identity within UNDP. UNDR0 reporting to the UNDP Governing Council and the measures recommended in section C above should be sufficient to strengthen UNDR0/UNDP linkages.

149. RECOMMENDATION 5: The Co-ordinator should report directly to the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation for day-to-day guidance. The following considerations support this recommendation:

(a) UNDRO's activities are primarily with developing, disaster-prone countries. Natural disasters impede economic and social development, but prevention, preparedness and well-organized relief can facilitate such development.

(b) The emphasis in the modified UNDRO mandate on development and preparedness and prevention relates directly to the broad functions of the Director-General.

(c) The Secretary-General already has too many organizations and special functions reporting directly to him, so that this reassignment would provide some minor relief.

150. General Assembly resolution 32/197 (Annex, paragraph 64), outlined the functions of the Director-General which included, inter alia, "ensuring within the United Nations the coherence, co-ordination and efficient management of all activities in the economic and social fields financed by the regular budget or by the extra-budgetary resources". In document A/33/410/Rev.1 the Secretary-General also expressed the view that the Director-General has a catalytic role "ensuring that all elements of the United Nations conform to the policy guidelines established by the General Assembly".

151. Thus the Inspectors believe that with an increased emphasis on the economic and development aspects of UNDRO's preparedness and prevention functions, there is support for the conclusion that the Director-General has an important role to play in relation to the co-ordination and direction of UNDRO. (These proposals would in combination also have the effect of making UNDRO more closely comparable, in its functions and inter-organizational relationships, to other similar organizations of the UN such as the UNFPA and the UNFAC).

E. Operations

152. The Inspectors also believe that much more effective management is required if UNDRO's performance is to improve. Despite - and perhaps because of - the large sudden increase in staff and funds in 1975-76, UNDRO seems to have lost momentum and control over its specific activities as envisioned in the 1975 Panel of Consultants' report and the special 1977-79 Work Programme. The solution, the Inspectors conclude, is not to be found in still more staff and funds.

153. RECOMMENDATION 6: The following steps should be taken to improve UNDRO operations.

(a) The next UNDRO programme budget (1982-83) should provide for the completion or elimination of the many long-delayed programme elements and activities of the past, re-assess those that remain in the light of recent experience, and establish priorities and specific performance targets for each (Chapter III and Annex III).

(b) UNDRO staffing needs and all senior post grades should be thoroughly re-assessed in the light of the factors already enumerated (paragraphs 92-93), so as to reduce UNDRO staff to a more manageable, task-oriented, co-ordination team (with perhaps half the present 50 posts). Administrative, supervisory, and support functions should be reduced to an absolute minimum in favour of direct functional staff, and active rosters of well-qualified consultants and personnel available for secondment should be developed to meet special and peak work needs.

(c) The five separate, under-developed information, communication and records units should be re-structured into an integrated system and operate as a focal-point information centre, with particular attention to possibilities for data-sharing with the information systems of other organizations and to completion in more pragmatic and useful fashion of the worldwide disaster data base attempted unsuccessfully in the mid-1970s (section IV.E).

(d) Clear tasks and responsibilities should be assigned to specific staff members and reviewed regularly to ensure that they are carried out. There is particular need for a planning, monitoring and evaluation officer and for a system of consistent internal assessment and evaluation of UNDR0 activities and operations (paragraphs 94, 95, 97, 99).

(e) Specific procedures and standard formats should be developed for such major functions as co-ordination centre operations, project proposals, and mission reporting, as well as systematic data on internal performance and progress, and procedures for managing and assessing the use of such major items of expenditure as travel and communications funds (paragraph 96 and sections IV.D, E and F).

(f) The annual report should contain less description of activities and more objective assessment, particularly through analysis of specific progress made and problems encountered in fulfilling the objectives established in the medium-term plan and programme budget (paragraph 100).

(g) Last but not least, UNDR0 needs much more delegation of authority, sharing of information, staff training, discussion and review of tasks and assignments, and regular staff meetings and consultation. (The JIU discusses the potentials of such a participative management approach for UN system use in a report currently being prepared on management services.) The present practice of short-term contracts should be revised towards two-year fixed-term and probationary contracts, and UN staff rules and regulations should be correctly applied. These changes could help considerably to alleviate UNDR0's serious personnel problems and to develop staff potential, improve staff continuity and retention, and achieve the teamwork needed to effectively carry out UNDR0's functions (paragraphs 85, 87-89, 94, 98).

154. The Inspectors believe that the UN Administrative Management Service (AMS), and, with respect to UNDR0 financial and management controls, the UN Internal Audit Service would provide useful outside assistance in developing some or all of this list of management improvements for implementation. Management consultants could also provide expertise for certain items. In any event, the Inspectors believe that action must be taken promptly in each of the above areas.

F. A Possible New Approach to UN System Disaster Co-ordination

155. Recent longer-term emergency situations in Kampuchea, East Africa and the Sahel have involved pressing human needs, hundreds of millions of dollars in contributions, and extensive participation by UN system organizations. They have also shown the urgent need for improved international relief co-ordination to deal with the many fund-raising, management, logistics, and policy problems which they generate.

156. The Inspectors have discussed above the problems specifically related to UNDR0. They also recognize that the broader issues involved in connexion with disasters of all types are being addressed in the wider context of the UN system, particularly in pursuance of the 1980 ECOSOC resolution (E/RES/1980/43) on international efforts to meet humanitarian needs in emergency situations. In this broader context, they venture to outline below a possible approach which might be thought deserving of further study.

157. A unified approach to development is now recognized to give best results, and a similar approach to disaster relief, preparedness and prevention is likely to be more effective than disjointed efforts. The experience of the UN system suggests, however, that co-ordination arrangements are more effective when those involved have participated in establishing them than when they have not. This is true both for jurisdictional reasons and because no one organization can or should duplicate the technical competence of the others.

158. These considerations led the Inspectors to propose a new approach to disaster emergency assistance which would be applicable to all types of disasters and would encourage a co-ordinated and unified contribution by the organizations of the United Nations system. Under this approach, UNDRO would continue to operate as described earlier in this report with a mandate limited to sudden natural disasters. In addition, in order to provide a mechanism to respond to the broader humanitarian issues necessitated by disasters of all kinds and also to preparedness and prevention needs, the following might be considered:

(a) An inter-agency Emergency Assistance Committee would be created by the ACC with members drawn from organizations of the United Nations system and UN bodies particularly concerned with disasters.

(b) Appropriate voluntary organizations acting in disaster relief and humanitarian situations, particularly the League of Red Cross Societies, should be invited to attend meetings of the Committee on a regular basis.

(c) The Committee would have a Chairman at a senior level appointed by ACC who might devote a substantial amount of his time to Committee affairs. Normally, the Co-ordinator of UNDRO would be the Chairman.

(d) UNDRO would serve as a technical secretariat for the Committee. This need not take the form of a special unit within UNDRO but rather the assignment by the UNDRO Co-ordinator to UNDRO staff of specific information-sharing tasks on behalf of the Committee. (The 1980 Secretary-General's report on UNDRO noted the wish of some governments that UNDRO serve as a central, information-sharing focal point for "creeping" disasters and civil strife situations, and expressed UNDRO's willingness to do so, using its existing communications facilities and without an increase in staff).

(e) The Emergency Assistance Committee would report to ACC, through ACC to the Governing Council of UNDP, and through them to ECOSOC.

(f) The Committee should not oversee or be required to approve humanitarian and related emergency assistance work by UN system organizations when their mandates clearly specify their responsibilities. However, these bodies should keep the Committee informed and be encouraged to use the Committee when necessary to help organize participation by other organizations of the United Nations system.

159. The functions of the Committee might be as follows:

(a) For each specific relief effort requested by governments and which is to be carried out over a period of months or years (and not days or weeks as in (c) below), the Committee would meet and, with the help of its secretariat and any lead agency the Committee had designated in advance, approve a plan of action for assistance by the United Nations system, specifying the role and contribution of each organization concerned. The plan of action would be submitted to ACC for approval under procedures which guarantee speedy action, and naturally would be subject to revision as work progressed.

(b) Any collaboration and co-operation required for technical co-operation projects in disaster preparedness and prevention could be organized by the Committee. The same rules and procedures applied to other technical co-operation activities would apply to these activities as well.

(c) UNDRO could also seek the advice of the Committee on policies and techniques for assisting in sudden natural disasters. In addition, the Committee could help strengthen the modalities for co-ordination and co-operation within the UN system for such disasters.

UNDRO, FINANCIAL SUMMARY (IN THOUSANDS OF \$US) 1/ AND ESTABLISHED POSTS, 1972-1981

Programme	1972-1973	1974-1975	1976-1977	1978-1979	Totals, 1972-79	1980-1981 est.
A. Executive Direction and Management						
Regular budget	106.0	192.9	239.2	508.3	1,046.4	665.2
Extra-budgetary (strengthening) 2/	-	-	50.5	229.6	280.1	170.1
B. Relief Co-operation, Preparedness and Prevention						
Regular budget	346.0	1,077.7	1,100.7	2,101.7	4,626.1	3,615.4
Extra-budgetary (strengthening)	-	425.6	1,466.4	974.6	2,866.6	851.5
Extra-budgetary (technical co-operation)	-	-	260.8	474.7	735.5	900.0
C. Programme Support: Administration and Common Services						
Regular budget	-	-	196.4	375.0	571.4	481.6
Extra-budgetary (strengthening)	-	-	684.0	430.4	1,114.4	436.8
TOTAL, REGULAR BUDGET	452.0	1,270.6	1,536.3	2,985.0	6,243.9	4,762.2
Extra-budgetary, strengthening:	-	(425.6)	(2,200.9)	(1,634.6)	(4,261.1)	(1,458.4)
Extra-budgetary, technical co-operation	-	-	(260.8)	(474.7)	(735.5)	(900.0)
TOTAL, EXTRA-BUDGETARY 2/	-	425.6	2,461.7	2,109.3	4,996.6	2,358.4
TOTAL, UNDRO DIRECT COSTS	452.0	1,696.2	3,998.0	5,094.3	11,240.5	7,120.6
Apportioned Costs				1,387.1		1,611.5
Established Posts: 3/	RB XB Ttl.	RB XB Ttl.	RB XB Ttl.	RB XB Ttl.	UNDRO Posts by Grade, 1980	RB XB Ttl.
A. Executive Direction and Management	1	1	2 - 2	2 - 2	4 4 8	5 3 8
B. Relief Co-ordination, Preparedness and Prevention	6	6	13 27 40	11 27 38	17 16 33	25 8 33
C. Programme Support: Administration and Common Services	-	-	- 3 3	2 7 9	4 4 8	4 5 9
TOTALS	7 - 7	15 30 45	15 34 49	25 24 49	P5 5 P4 8 P3 4 P2/1 2 GS 24 FS 1 Total 50	34 16 50

1/ Sources of financial data: 1972-1973 figures are adjusted appropriations (source: UN Proposed Programme Budget, 1974-1975, A/9006); 1974-1979 figures are expenditures plus unliquidated obligations (source: UN Office at Geneva, Accounts for the Biennium as of 31 December, 1975, 1977 and 1979); 1980-1981 figures are approved budget appropriations (source: UN internal memo. of 14 March 1980; extra-budgetary funds are estimates (source: UN Proposed Programme Budget 1980-1981, A/34/6); apportioned costs are estimates from UN Proposed Programme Budgets 1978-1979 (A/32/6) and 1980-1981 (A/34/6).

2/ "Extra-budgetary" funds include: "Strengthening" = the Trust Fund account for Strengthening the Office of the UN Disaster Relief Co-ordinator; "Technical Co-operation" = Trust Fund sub-account for Technical Assistance in Disaster Prevention and Pre-Disaster Planning plus funds provided by UNEP.

3/ Sources of established posts: the last UN manning table authorizations published toward the end of each biennium, except that 1980-1981 represents mid-1980 figures. The column heading abbreviations are: RB = regular budget; XB = extra-budgetary; Ttl. = total.

1978-1979 biennium (Source: A/32)

Disaster Element Objectives*

E 1: DISASTER RELIEF CO-ORDINATION

DISASTER PLANNING			
	1978-79 IS\$	TOTALS	1980-81 US\$
Opening Balances (1 January)			
Income:	2,440		341,792
Contributions from Government	1,087	936,609	28,094
Public Donations	1,020	2,020	
Savings, Prior Year Expenditure	1,934	10,934	
Subventions	-	-	
Interest Income	1,987	127,330	59,931
Miscellaneous Income	-	358	-
TOTAL INCOME	2,028	1,077,251	(August 1980) 88,025
Less: Expenditure			
Salaries and Common Staff			
Travel	1,025	262,754	
Contractual Services	1,903	2,903	
Operating Expenses	789	20,788	
Acquisitions	40	944	
Fellowships and Grants	173	10,873	
Administrative Overheads	1,746	437,197	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	1,676	735,459	(Estimated) 900,000
EXCESS: INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	352	341,792	
Closing Balances (31 December)	2,372	-	
	1978-79 IS\$	TOTALS	1980-81 US\$
Opening Balances (1 January)			
Income:	1,856	-	1,565,373
Contributions from Government	1,761	28,240,207	526,525
Public Donations	1,849	498,197	144,121
Savings, Prior Year Expenditure	1,353	38,353	-
Subventions	1,000	617,065	20,000
Interest Income	1,568	736,598	158,201
Miscellaneous Income	1,532	161,912	-
TOTAL INCOME	1,063	30,292,332	(August 1980) 848,847
Less: Expenditure			
Salaries and Common Staff			
Travel			
Contractual Services	1,623	3,725,703	
Operating Expenses	1,116	252,258	
Acquisitions	1,546	67,438	
Fellowships and Grants	1,666	16,519,787	
Administrative Overheads	173	164,606	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	1,422	7,903,645	93,522
EXCESS: INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	1,546	28,726,959	
Closing Balances (31 December)	1,517	1,565,373	
Opening Balances (1 January)			
Income:			
Contributions from Government			
Less: Expenditure			
Fellowships and Grants			
EXCESS: INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE			
Closing Balances (31 December)			

Mobilize, direct and co-ordinate disaster relief. Gather information on relief operations; co-ordinate relief operations, including on-site; and consult UN member countries to consult UN country teams on relief operations.

Improve existing pre-disaster arrangements with donor countries. About 20 missions to donor countries and at least 2 "donor missions" on relief operations.

Develop and maintain data on the immediate availability of relief information on emergency operations and sources of supply in disaster-prone countries.

Establish and maintain a disaster relief centre with adequate communication facilities, portable receivers, and continuing liaison with ITU of earth satellite communication possibilities.

Mobilize and co-ordinate relief operations. Maintain year-round disaster relief alert; compile series of disaster reports for donors and follow up to meet needs.

Provide disaster relief operations and supplies. Monitor about 100 disasters; send 2-man teams to at least 30 disaster sites; and arrange to \$1,000,000 savings in transportation costs.

Effective use of funds made available to the Co-ordinator, from regular contributions and regular relief needs.

Prepare case and evaluation reports on relief operations, when available, to assess effectiveness of lessons learned for future disaster planning.

Outputs**

General information on relief supplies not much further developed. Little development of relief committee idea and not continued as programme element. Responsibility gradually shifted to UNDP Resident Representatives/Co-ordinators, as in 1980 UNDP/UNDP guidelines. Other co-ordination and disaster assessment activity as in PE 1.5, 1.6 below (and see PE 1.1, 1980-81).

12 missions to donor countries and five missions to organizations conducted, but extent of improvement in relief arrangements not clear. Only one donors' meeting held, other cancelled for economy measures (see PE 1.3, 1980-81).

Some further development of data bank but data still manual and incomplete (see PE 1.2, 1980-81).

Centre not further developed, again only partially used. Operating procedures considered but not developed. Radio sets in storage. Field test of portable earth satellite equipment proposed for 1980-81 but not approved. Centre and equipment not identified as 1980-81 programme element.

Year-round alert maintained and 152 situation reports sent on 40 disasters, but again extent and results of analysis and follow-up not clear.

About 100 disasters occurred, with extent and results of UNDP monitoring work uncertain. One-man teams sent to only 17 disaster sites. Transportation cost savings insignificant, no longer reported on after 1976.

UNDP administered about \$1,200,000 in voluntary relief contributions (down considerably from previous years), and allocated \$400,000 in emergency funds. However, analyses of the effectiveness of use of these funds were not made. Not identified as 1980-81 programme element.

One case report published, three still in preparation. Otherwise, only informal disaster mission reports, and no evidence that relief operations were formally assessed to improve them in future. Such reporting not identified as 1980-81 programme element.

Programme Element Objectives*

Outputs** (first half of 1980 only)

Sub-programme 1: Disaster Relief Co-ordination

PE 1.1 Relief co-ordination operations.
OUTPUT: involvement in co-ordinating about 20 to 30 major disasters, and maintain constant readiness to conduct such operations efficiently.

PE 1.2 Continue to develop and maintain a data bank.
OUTPUT: up-to-date information to support conduct of the relief and preparedness sub-programmes.

PE 1.3 Improve pre-disaster arrangements with donor sources and make new ones.
OUTPUT: Up to 20 missions to donor countries and 1 meeting of donor countries in Geneva.

UNDP had major involvement in two, and some lesser involvement in three of about 17 disasters that occurred. Extent and nature of readiness and monitoring again not clear.

Some further development but still not assessed for computerization and not complete or up-to-date.

Missions to six countries and four organizations, and one donor meeting held. Relief data base still not developed and extent of improvement in arrangements still unclear.

1976-1977 biennium (A/34/6, Vol. II, Section 22)

Activity Objectives*

Outputs** (first half
of 1980 only

Programme 1: Disaster Preparedness

(a) Study of state of the art in disaster prevention and mitigation: prepare report on preventive measures for main types of natural disasters, largely financed by UNEP.

Four consultant and three staff missions undertaken, but no specific projects as yet. Extent and results of liaison with other donors also not yet clear.

(b) World survey of disaster damage: collection of statistical data on disaster damage with UNEP, to be completed by early 1977 and, combined with (a) above, reviewed by expert panel to lead to an international strategy for disaster prevention.

No preparedness seminars undertaken, but many meetings attended. Training for UNDP Resident Representatives given during 1978-79, but second series for 1980-81 cancelled after one meeting for lack of funds.

(c) Begin publishing a descriptive and reference newsletter by early 19

Standard nomenclature effort proceeding with other organisations, towards end-of-1980 deadline. Draft international relief agreement still hoped for, perhaps by using consultant. Aspects of preparedness may be included in a "State of the art" volume (see PE 3.2 below).

(d) Complete a UNEP-financed study of natural disaster implications for human settlements with the UN, UNESCO WHO and WMO, to be published as manuals.

(e) Complete and publish a study of floods, severe storms and tropical cyclones and their economic and social effects.

(f) With WMO and UNESCO, publish an annual summary of information on natural disasters".

None undertaken as yet.

(g) Conduct 2 seminars in pre-disaster planning.

(h) Initiate fellowship programmes at training centres in developed countries.

(i) Help backstop a new international training and preparedness centre in Turkey, if the UN is established as executing agency.

Because "world survey" incomplete, disaster strategy is incomplete. Both will have to be re-formulated and cannot be completed without further funds. A further Joint Committee meeting was held in 1980. Ad hoc groups are UN system inter-agency activities. Two more "State of the art" studies in preparation and three more commissioned, but overall "State of the art" perspective does not exist and earlier volumes may be becoming outdated because of delays in completing the series.

(j) Initiate studies in such fields as insurance and mortgage aspects of disasters, designing emergency shelters, using satellite communications and formulating an international convention on disaster relief.

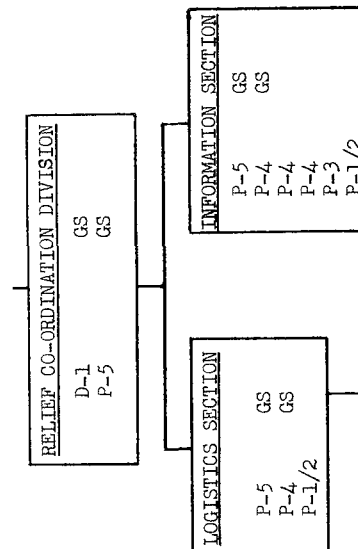
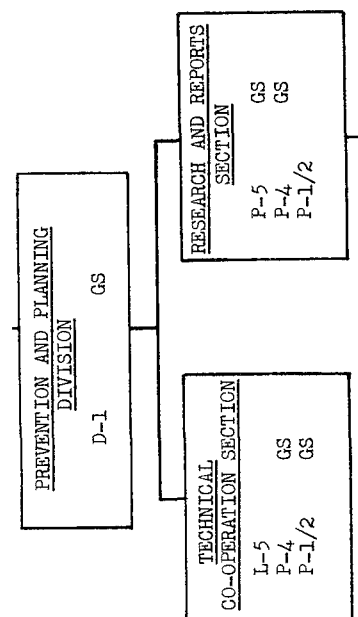
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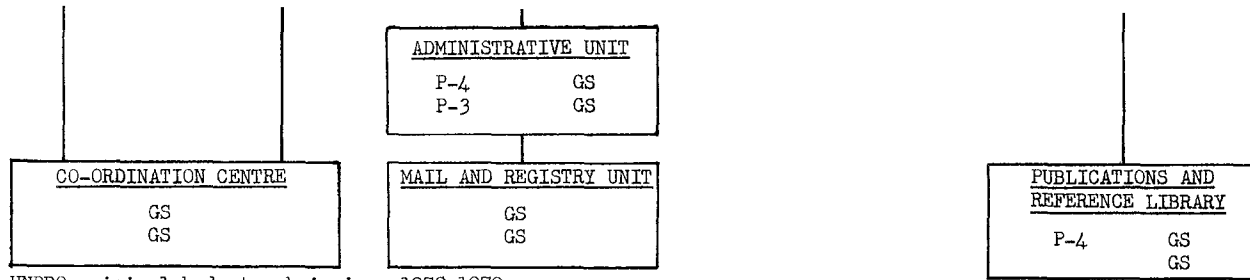
(k) Backstop UNDP regional disaster prevention project in the Andean countries, and participate in similar project in Central America.

comments is Chapter III of this Report.

(l) Provide expert services to assist governments in disaster preparedness to 8 or 9 countries, if financing becomes available.

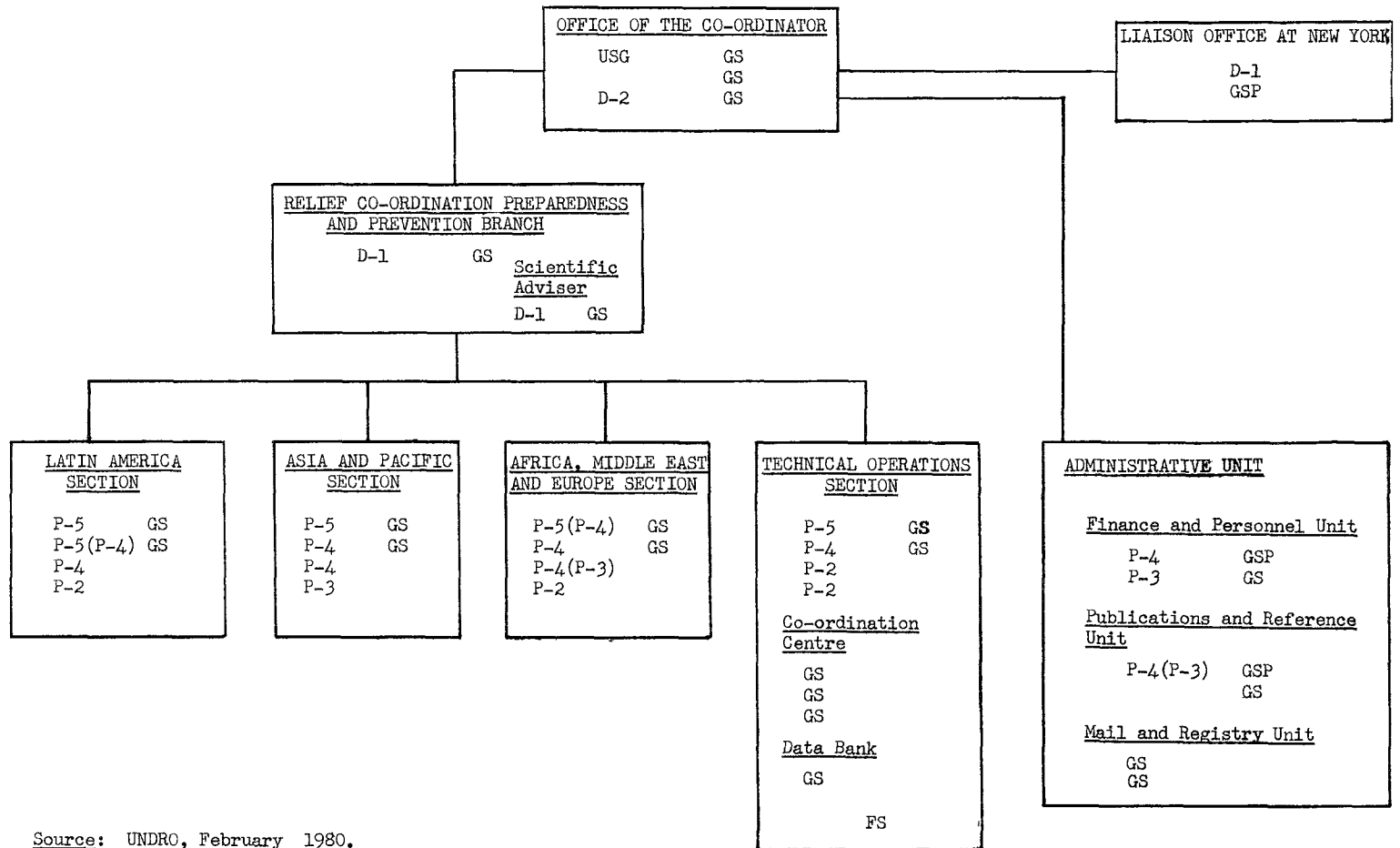
mes "Executive Direction and Management" and Administration and Common Services" are included in the UN programme budgets but not in this chart, and output statements are not required for standard nomenclature and draft agreement on led by ECOSOC and the General Assembly in 9 but not programmed in the 1978-79





Source: UNDR0 original budget submission, 1978-1979

UNDR0 REVISED ORGANIZATION CHART, 1978-PRESENT *



Source: UNDR0, February 1980.

*Does not include one "L" post (technical assistance) added in 1980, for which level and location are not yet determined.

ANNEX V

EXTENT OF UNDRO INVOLVEMENT IN TOTAL DISASTERS, 1972 TO MID-1980 ^{1/}

Year	Total Disasters Number	UNDRO Involvement Number (Per cent)	"Major" UNDRO Involvement ^{2/} Number (Per cent)
1972	40	12 (30%)	1 (3%)
1973	49	10 (20%)	2 (4%)
1974	42	15 (36%)	6 (14%)
1975	44	19 (43%)	5 (11%)
1976	47	18 (38%)	6 (13%)
1977	58	22 (38%)	2 (3%)
1978	32	19 (59%)	5 (15%)
1979	64	37 (58%)	7 (11%)
1980 (6 months)	17	5 (29%)	2 (11%)
TOTALS	393	157	36
ANNUAL AVERAGE	46	18	4
AVERAGE SHARE		(40%)	(9%)

TYPES OF UNDRO DISASTER INVOLVEMENT, 1972 TO MID-1980 ^{1/ 2/}

Year	Situation Reports only	Funds Allocation only	"Major" Involvement ^{2/}	Other Combinations	Total UNDRO Involvement Number
1972	-	8	1	3	12
1973	3	3	2	2	10
1974	-	1	6	8	15
1975	-	4	5	10	19
1976	1	3	6	8	18
1977	7	6	2	7	22
1978	4	5	5	5	19
1979	12	7	7	11	37
1980 (6 months)	1	-	2	2	5
TOTALS	28	37	36	56	157
ANNUAL AVERAGE	3	4	4	7	18
AVERAGE SHARE	18%	23%	23%	36%	100%

^{1/} Sources of data on UNDRO involvement: Secretary-General's annual reports on UNDRO plus data supplied by UNDRO. Sources of listing of total disasters: record of disasters maintained by the Office of United States Foreign Disaster Assistance (with "civil strife" disasters excluded except for those in which UNDRO participated) and, in a few instances, press reports. The operative definition of a disaster used is that of a situation which causes serious damage or loss of life and exceeds the country's ability to cope without some type of international assistance. Averages and percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. See also footnote ^{1/} to following table.

^{2/} UNDRO may be directly involved in disaster relief co-ordination in four ways: (1) issuing telexed situation reports and alerts; (2) sending staff on disaster assessment or follow-up missions to the disaster site; (3) allocating regular budget funds for emergency assistance; and (4) channelling voluntary contributions donated through UNDRO. "Major" UNDRO involvement is considered as a combination of (1), (2) and (3), and may or may not include (4).

ANNEX V (continued)

EXTENT OF SPECIFIC UNDRO DISASTER ACTIVITIES, 1972 TO MID-1980 1/

Year	Total Disasters Number	Situation Reports and Alerts		Disaster Field Missions (Assessment and Follow-up)		UNDRO Allocation of UN Funds 2/		Voluntary Contributions Channelled Through UNDRO 3/	
		Number of Messages	Disasters Covered	Number of Missions	Disasters Visited	Amount US\$	Disasters Funded	Amount US\$	Disasters Funded
1972	40	3	1	5	5	179,000	12	184,000	2
1973	49	13	6	3	2	194,000	7	1,687,120	2
1974	42	36	13	10	7	227,872	15	22,794,353	9
1975	44	44	14	11	7	211,160	15	1,743,905	7
1976	47	59	14	16	9	201,867	12	1,478,180	9
1977	58	71	17	9	5	203,027	12	189,900	4
1978	32	56	13	9	8	240,350	14	283,296	2
1979	64	96	27	9	9	265,000	23	627,751	7
1980 (6 months)	17	23	6	4	3	70,000	4	419,983	4
TOTAL	393	401	111	76	55	1,792,276	114	29,408,488	46
ANNUAL AVERAGE	46	47	13	9	6	210,856	13	3,459,822	5

1/ Sources: Secretary-General's annual reports on UNDRO and data provided by UNDRO. Averages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Some assumptions were required to complete an orderly tabulation. For instance, UNDRO's long-term involvement in the Ethiopia drought has been counted as one disaster (1973), rather than counted as a new disaster each year. But Ethiopia disaster missions and situation reports subsequent to 1973 have been counted in the year in which they occurred (the same situation arises for several other disaster involvements). Disasters and disaster missions which overlapped the end of one year and the beginning of the next have been counted in the first year. Voluntary contributions channelled through UNDRO were all counted in the same year as the disaster to which they apply.

2/ Sources: Secretary-General's annual reports. UNDRO officials explained that these totals (and the total in paragraph 39 for 1978-1979) exceed the \$200,000 annual maximum because other income was also allocated and because not all the money allocated was actually spent. UNDRO records for 1974-1979 (1972-1973 records not available) show that \$392,000 was actually allocated in 1974-1975, \$400,000 in 1976-1977, and \$400,000 in 1978-1979.

3/ Sources: Secretary-General's annual reports. UNDRO biennial records (1972 records not available) show that a total of \$24,297,612 was actually contributed. UNDRO officials explained that the difference was primarily due to pledges made but not actually contributed.

UNDRO TRAVEL, 1976 TO MID-1980

TRIPS TO DISASTER-PRONE COUNTRIES			
Year	Disaster Assessment and Follow-up	Technical Co-operation	
		Staff ^{2/}	Consultants
1976	9 countries 20 trips	3 countries 2½ trips	11 countries 11 trips
1977	7 countries 9½ trips	4 countries 7½ trips	8 countries 9 trips
1978	9 countries 7½ trips	9 countries 4 trips	2 countries 1 trip
1979	8 countries 10 trips	12 countries 9½ trips	1 country 1 trip
1980 (6 months)	4 countries 5 trips	5 countries 3 trips	3 countries 3 trips
TOTAL TRIPS	52½	26½	25
AVERAGE ANNUAL TRIPS	11½	6	5½
SHARE OF TOTAL TRIPS	13%	7%	7%
Sub-total:			27%

TRIPS TO DONOR GOVERNMENTS, ORGANIZATIONS AND SEMINARS/MEETINGS					
Donor Countries	Organizations (UN system and others)	UN system governing body meetings	Other seminars/meetings ^{3/}	Consultants to meetings ^{4/}	GRAND TOTAL TRIPS
4 countries 11½ trips	8 organizations 4½ trips	3 meetings 8 trips	26 meetings 25½ trips	- 20 trips	103
8 countries 8 trips	3 organizations 3 trips	2 meetings 2 trips	26 meetings 27 trips	- 13 trips	79
5 countries 7½ trips	3 organizations 3 trips	5 meetings 5 trips	24 meetings 26½ trips	- 12 trips	66½
7 countries 10½ trips	2 organizations 3 trips	6 meetings 6 trips	27 meetings 24½ trips	- 20 trips	84½
6 countries 9 trips	4 organizations 3½ trips	2 meetings 2 trips	19 meetings 16 trips	18 trips	59½
46½	17	23	119½	83	392½
10½	3½	5	26½	18½	
12%	4%	6%	30%	21%	
Sub-total:				73%	

^{1/} Sources of data: UNOG travel authorization files (contains authorizations only for trips actually taken) and data prepared by UNDRO staff. "Trips" represent travel by one staff member: for instance, a 2-person disaster assessment mission would be counted as two trips for that purpose. Multi-purpose trips were divided into halves or thirds as necessary: for instance, a 2-person mission to visit a donor Government, visit an organization, and attend a meeting would be counted as two-thirds of a trip for each purpose. Totals rounded to nearest half or third, percentages to nearest whole number. Count does not include the small number of trips for fellowships, General Service staff missions, interviews for consultants, or consultant missions to disaster-prone countries financed by UNDP or bilateral sources. Since some trips were of long duration and others short, some were very expensive and others not, and the purposes of a number of trips were complex, unclear, or conflicting among the various data sources, these figures are intended to be only indicative rather than definitive. Total number of different countries visited were: disaster assessment and follow-up - 30; technical co-operation (staff) - 25; technical co-operation consultants - 24; and donor countries - 15.

^{2/} "Technical co-operation" trips by staff include informal consultations, exploratory missions and follow-up missions.

^{3/} "Other seminars/meetings" include several which were held for disaster-prone country representatives or included their participation, but they have been counted under meetings rather than as direct trips to disaster-prone countries, because UNDRO staff were primarily attending, or only modestly co-sponsoring, someone else's meeting.

^{4/} "Consultants to meetings" is primarily for UNDRO's technical advisory panel and joint UNESCO/UNDRO earthquake risk committee, but includes other UNDRO-funded consultant travel as well.

ANNEX VII

GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 2816
OF 14 DECEMBER 1971

2816 (XXVI). Assistance in cases of natural disaster and other disaster situations

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind that throughout history natural disasters and emergency situations have inflicted heavy loss of life and property, affecting every people and every country,

Aware of and concerned about the suffering caused by natural disasters and the serious economic and social consequences for all, especially the developing countries,

Also aware of the varying needs of nations experiencing such disorders, which present new challenges for international co-operation,

Concerned about the ability of the international community to come to the aid of countries in a disaster situation,

Recalling its resolutions 2034 (XX) of 7 December 1965, 2435 (XXIII) of 19 December 1968, 2608 (XXIV) of 16 December 1969 and 2717 (XXV) of 15 December 1970, and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1533 (XLIX) of 23 July 1970 and 1546 (XLIX) of 30 July 1970 on assistance in cases of natural disaster,

Expressing appreciation of the Secretary-General's comprehensive report²¹ and of its perceptive examination of all aspects of the question, and taking note of the relevant passage in his statement to the Economic and Social Council on 5 July 1971,²²

Taking note of Economic and Social Council resolution 1612 (LI) of 23 July 1971 on assistance in cases of natural disaster and other emergency situations,

Noting the study, annexed to the Secretary-General's report, on the legal status of disaster relief units made available through the United Nations,²³

Mindful of the need to strengthen and make more effective the collective efforts of the international community, and particularly the United Nations system, in the field of international disaster assistance,

Bearing in mind that assistance provided at the request of the stricken countries, without prejudice to their individual country programmes under the United Nations Development Programme, can be an effective contribution to the rehabilitation and development of the stricken areas,

Bearing in mind also that the possible response of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and other credit organizations and development agencies to a request from the Governments concerned for complementary assistance to the stricken areas, without prejudice to the assistance provided by those organizations for the normal development programmes of the stricken countries, can be an important element in the reconstruction and development of those areas,

Noting the competence of the United Nations and its related agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme to render assistance in cases of natural disaster and other disaster situations,

Noting further the key role which the resident representatives of the United Nations Development Programme could play at the country level,

Recognizing the vital role in international relief played by the International Red Cross and other voluntary societies,

Recognizing further the necessity to ensure prompt, effective and efficient response to a Government's need for assistance, at the time of a natural disaster or other disaster situation, that will bring to bear the resources of the United Nations system, prospective donor countries and voluntary agencies,

1. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to appoint a Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, who will report directly to him and who will be authorized, on his behalf:

(a) To establish and maintain the closest co-operation with all organizations concerned and to make all feasible advance arrangements with them for the purpose of ensuring the most effective assistance;

(b) To mobilize, direct and co-ordinate the relief activities of the various organizations of the United Nations system in response to a request for disaster assistance from a stricken State;

(c) To co-ordinate United Nations assistance with assistance given by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, in particular by the International Red Cross;

(d) To receive, on behalf of the Secretary-General, contributions offered to him for disaster relief assistance to be carried out by the United Nations, its agencies and programmes for particular emergency situations;

(e) To assist the Government of the stricken country to assess its relief and other needs and to evaluate the priority of those needs, to disseminate that information to prospective donors and others concerned, and to serve as a clearing-house for assistance extended or planned by all sources of external aid;

(f) To promote the study, prevention, control and prediction of natural disasters, including the collection and dissemination of information concerning technological developments;

(g) To assist in providing advice to Governments on pre-disaster planning in association with relevant voluntary organizations, particularly with the League of Red Cross Societies, and to draw upon United Nations resources available for such purposes;

(h) To acquire and disseminate information relevant to planning and co-ordinating disaster relief, including the improvement and establishment of stockpiles in disaster-prone areas, and to prepare suggestions to ensure the most effective use of available resources;

(i) To phase out relief operations under his aegis as the stricken country moves into the stage of rehabilitation and reconstruction, but to continue to interest himself, within the framework of his responsibilities for relief, in the activities of the United Nations agencies concerned with rehabilitation and reconstruction;

(j) To prepare an annual report for the Secretary-General, to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council and to the General Assembly;

2. *Recommends* that the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator should be appointed by the Secretary-General normally for a term of five years and at a level comparable to that of an Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations;

²¹ E/4994.

²² See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-first Session, 1773rd meeting.*

²³ E/4994, annex III.

ANNEX VII (continued)

3. *Endorses* the Secretary-General's proposals for an adequate permanent office in the United Nations system for disaster relief matters;

4. *Recommends* that that office should be headed by the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator and located in Geneva, be a distinct element within the United Nations Secretariat and be augmented as necessary by short-term secondment of personnel for individual emergencies;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare for the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-third session, taking into account any relevant suggestions and the experience gained by the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, a report on any further steps which may be required to enable the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator adequately to perform the functions entrusted to him under the present resolution;

6. *Further endorses* the plan for a roster of volunteers, to be drawn from experienced staff members of the United Nations system and interested non-governmental organizations, who could be made available at very short notice;

7. *Recommends* that the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator should maintain contact with the Governments of States Members of the United Nations or members of specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency concerning available aid in emergency situations, such as food supplies, medicines, personnel, transportation and communications, as well as advice to countries in pre-disaster planning and preparedness;

8. *Invites* potential recipient Governments:

(a) To establish disaster contingency plans with appropriate assistance from the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator;

(b) To appoint a single national disaster relief co-ordinator to facilitate the receipt of international aid in times of emergency;

(c) To establish stockpiles of emergency supplies, such as tents, blankets, medicines and non-perishable food-stuffs;

(d) To make necessary arrangements for the training of administrative and relief personnel;

(e) To consider appropriate legislative or other measures to facilitate the receipt of aid, including over-flight and landing rights and necessary privileges and immunities for relief units;

(f) To improve national disaster warning systems;

9. *Invites* potential donor Governments:

(a) To respond promptly to any call by the Secretary-General or, on his behalf, by the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator;

(b) To consider and to continue offering on a wider basis emergency assistance in disaster situations;

(c) To inform the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator in advance about the facilities and services they might be in a position to provide immediately, including where possible relief units, logistical support and means of effective communication;

10. *Decides* to authorize the Secretary-General to draw on the Working Capital Fund in the amount of \$200,000 for emergency assistance in any one year, with a normal ceiling of \$20,000 per country in the case of any one disaster;

11. *Further invites* all organizations of the United Nations system and all other organizations involved to co-operate with the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator.

2018th plenary meeting,
14 December 1971.

ANNEX VIII

GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 3243
OF 29 NOVEMBER 1974

3243 (XXIX). Strengthening of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 2816 (XXVI) of 14 December 1971, by which it created the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator and established its primary functions of co-ordinating disaster relief, especially through its role as an information clearing-house, and of assisting in disaster prevention and preparedness,

Endorsing Economic and Social Council resolution 1891 (LVII) of 31 July 1974, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to investigate the feasibility of measures to strengthen the disaster prevention, pre-disaster planning and co-ordinating roles of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator and to submit his findings to the Council at its fifty-ninth session, and in which the Council recommended that the General Assembly, at its twenty-ninth session, should reconsider the proposals of the Secretary-General for additional staff resources,

Taking note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance in cases of natural disaster and other disaster situations,¹⁷ and of the statement made to the Second Committee by the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator on the activities of his Office,¹⁸

Noting in particular the statements in the Secretary-General's report that, while some progress has been made in the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator in establishing its assigned function of mobilizing and co-ordinating relief, the lack of staff and facilities, combined with the frequency, duration and simultaneity of disaster situations, has seriously impaired the effectiveness of the Office in discharging these and other responsibilities,

Concerned that lack of adequate co-ordination on a world-wide basis results, in some cases, in lapses in meeting priority needs and, in others, in costly duplication and in the supply of unneeded assistance,

Convinced that the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator is in a unique position, given adequate staff and facilities, to provide a world-wide system of mobilizing and co-ordinating disaster

relief, including the collection and dissemination of information on disaster assessment, priority needs and donor assistance,

Convinced further that this capability should be strengthened, as a matter of priority and urgency and without prejudice to the disaster prevention and disaster preparedness roles assigned to the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator,

Convinced that disaster prevention and pre-disaster planning should form an integral part of the international development policy of Governments and of international organizations,

1. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to provide sufficient staff, equipment and facilities to strengthen the capacity of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator to provide an efficient and effective world-wide service of mobilizing and co-ordinating disaster relief, including particularly the collection and dissemination of information on disaster assessment, priority needs and donor assistance;

2. *Decides* that the additional costs of providing this strengthened capability should be met by voluntary contributions during the first year, commencing as soon as possible, and during the biennium 1976-1977, at which time the method of financing for succeeding periods shall be subject to review in the light of experience, with the understanding that the additional resources made available under the terms of the present resolution should be concentrated on strengthening the co-ordinating capability of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, but without prejudice to any improvements that can be made in the roles of that Office in disaster prevention and in pre-disaster planning within the resources otherwise available to it;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take appropriate measures, drawing upon the aforementioned voluntary funds, to prepare a plan and budget for this increased capability, and to proceed with its immediate implementation;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General, as called for in Economic and Social Council resolution 1891 (LVII), to continue to investigate the feasibility of measures to strengthen the United Nations machinery with regard to disaster prevention and pre-disaster planning;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-ninth session and to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session.

2303rd plenary meeting
29 November 1974

¹⁷ A/9637.

¹⁸ Official: Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Second Committee, 1620th meeting, paras. 1-7.