

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS FOR AID AND DISASTER RELIEF

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Abstract

Natural disasters have shown humanity in the past and continue to prove the devastating strength of the Earth itself. However, in order to relieve their effects, numerous organisations which cooperate on local, national, and international levels have been appointed. The aim of the article is to outline contemporary international organisations for aid and disaster. Starting with the base structure characteristics, this article will reveal the core mission of international organisations for aid. The analysis will be supported with examples of international cooperation and specific achievements of the organisations including the perspective of the past 8 years. In the conclusions, the author argues that educational and informative actions are necessary to enhance cooperation among different organisations and their stakeholders.

Key words: natural disaster, international organisation, aid, disaster relief, disaster management

Introduction

Natural disasters are something neither human being nor animal can actually control at their fullest. A disaster is defined as “a serious disruption of the functioning of a society, causing widespread human, material, or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected society to cope using only its own resources. Disasters are often classified according to their speed of onset (sudden or slow), or according to their cause (natural or man-made)”¹. All that’s created can be demolished so easily by natural forces that at times one has to wonder how fragile human life actually is. It must be noted that environmental risks, including chronic and catastrophic forms of ‘natural disaster’, occur as part of the development process². In some cases, they can be predicted and actions can be taken to limit the losses, to recover and reconstruct after a cataclysm. That is why it is important to implement interoperable,

1 IDNDR, Glossary: Internationally Agreed Glossary of Basic Terms Related to Disaster Management, DHA-Geneva 1992, p. 83.

2 M. Pelling, *The vulnerability of cities: natural disasters and social resilience*, Earthscan, Routledge 2012, p. 6.

common solutions that enable fast and efficient signal transmission and prediction of their development³. Natural disasters might be different in their form, their way of striking or in their scale of potential harm but nonetheless, all of them are positively dangerous.

Hurricanes are one of the mightiest natural disasters because of their scale and capability for demolition. Earthquakes can be as destructive as well, killing thousands and sometimes capable of changing the very shape of the earth beneath our feet. Tornadoes are brief but usually quite intense and violent, potentially causing strong winds. Flooding is the most common natural hazard, even though one of the easiest to predict it can cause a great deal of material cost and human victims. It may also lead to flooding of warehouses and facilities containing hazardous substances and their release into the environment. The purification of this type of sewage will be very difficult, costly and will require unusual procedures, e.g. when removing radioactive contamination⁴. Drought is a rarer natural disaster but with the power to starve to death whomever faces it⁵. It is vital to stress that natural disasters may cause other harmful incidents, especially in areas where factories and nuclear power plants containing toxic industrial materials are located; in such cases, the deployment of special rescue teams is required⁶ to organise smooth traffic of victims during liquidation of the contamination⁷. It also requires specialist laboratories enabling professional identification of hazardous substances⁸.

3 M. Młynarczyk, P. Maciejewski, M. Szerszeń *CBRN Analysis and SI Promień-Comparison of the Functionality of the Software for the Assessment of Contamination*. Bezpieczeństwo i Technika Pożarnicza, 2015, 40.

4 P. Maciejewski, M. Ulewicz, W. Robak, W. Walkowiak, *Lariat ethers with a novel proton-ionisable groups: new generation of collectors in ion flotation process*, International Journal of Environment and Waste Management, 2011, 8.3-4, pp. 305-324.

P. Maciejewski, M. Żuber, M. Ulewicz, K. Sobianowska, *Removal of radioisotopes from waste water after "dirty bomb" decontamination*, Physicochemical Problems of Mineral Processing 43, 2009, pp. 65-72.

P. Majewski, Z. Zielonka, J. A. Wrzesiński, *Nowa metoda usuwania radioaktywnych zanieczyszczeń z roztworów poakcyjnych*. Bezpieczeństwo i Technika Pożarnicza, 2011, 2, pp. 51-58.

5 National Geographic, *About Natural Disasters*, <http://www.nationalgeographic.com.au/natural-disasters/> [accessed 11 May 2018].

6 Cf. P. Maciejewski, R. Pich, J. Wrzesiński, *Specjalistyczne grupy ratownictwa chemiczno-ekologicznego Państwowej Straży Pożarnej-zadania i wyposażenie*. Zeszyty Naukowe/Wyższa Szkoła Oficerska Wojsk Lądowych im. gen. T. Kościuszki, 2010, pp. 150-160.

P. Maciejewski, R. Pich, J. Wrzesiński, *Specjalistyczne grupy ratownictwa chemiczno-ekologicznego Państwowej Straży Pożarnej-zadania i wyposażenie-część II*. Zeszyty Naukowe/Wyższa Szkoła Oficerska Wojsk Lądowych im. gen. T. Kościuszki, 2010, pp. 217-241.

7 R. Pich, P. Maciejewski, J. Wrzesiński, *Organizacja ruchu poszkodowanych w czasie likwidacji skażeń(dekontaminacji)*. Bezpieczeństwo i Technika Pożarnicza, 2011, pp. 115-122.

8 P. Maciejewski, W. Robak, *Mobilne laboratorium obrony przed bronią masowego rażenia-nowy element systemu wykrywania skażeń*, Zeszyty Naukowe/Wyższa Szkoła Oficerska Wojsk Lądowych im. gen. T. Kościuszki, 2008, pp. 104-112.

Aid and support in cases of natural disasters is provided in a lot of forms, among them there can be individuals, international, non-governmental, governmental or national organisations, governments and different agencies, programmes and mechanisms⁹. Most of them in times of crisis are connected in a complex web of interaction and work for the purpose of preserving human health. International organisations (IO) for aid engage with one another at different levels and in different ways. Most IOs offer humanitarian aid and International Assistance¹⁰, some of them focus on issues regarding hunger, others on human trafficking, education, health care, human rights, environmental issues and other areas according to their objectives and mission. There are plenty of different organisations around the globe that are profoundly working in the field of post-natural disaster relief but we will only briefly look at a few of them in this article. The article explores the concept of International Organisations for Disaster Relief and analyses the role of key organisations in disaster relief: the United Nations (UN), the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the European Union (EU) and the International Red Cross Organisation (IRCO). It organises and systematises knowledge about international organisations for disaster relief.

International Organisations for Disaster Relief

The structures of IOs can have a few modifications but in essence, their structure is almost identical to the structure of any enterprise or corporation and, therefore, notably hierarchical. Each organisation has its own leader (head of organisation), its accounting department and its managers of various fields and projects¹¹.

For the purpose of accomplishing their tasks, IOs require substantial resources. Conducting humanitarian relief programmes is a convoluted and indeed expensive process, so most of them accept official funds. IOs alongside NGOs are part of the so called social movements within a civil society, as such IOs usually mobilise resources in the form of financial donations, materials or volunteer labour, in order to sustain

⁹ NATO, *Checklist and Non-Binding Guidelines for the Request, Reception and Provision of International Assistance in the Event of a CBRN Incident or Natural Disasters*, p. 10, https://www.nato.int/eadrcc/docs/checklist_eng.pdf, [accessed 11 May 2018].

¹⁰ International Assistance (International Disaster Relief Assistance) refers to material, personnel and services/expertise to cope with the consequences of a disaster sent from or through the territory of a state, to a stricken nation in order to assist in the national disaster response. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Oslo Guidelines and Memorandum of Understanding*, revision 1.1 November 2007, https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/OSLO%20Guidelines%20Rev%201.1%20-%20Nov%2007_0.pdf [accessed 11 May 2018].

¹¹ Ahmed S., *The Impact of NGOs on International Organizations: complexities and considerations*, *Brook. J. Int'l L.*, 2010, 36: 817. <https://brooklynworks.brooklaw.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1115&context=bjil> [accessed May 2018].

their projects and programmes, and they may provide their funds from different governments, contributors, membership fees, programmes and mechanisms¹².

When considering the financial aspect and funding, it is important to have transparency in the operations and goals so that the chance of fraud and corruption is limited. Such organisations are helping communities recover from crisis and improve their resilience to cope with future emergencies. Their concept is to help prevent disasters, food crises and human and material losses through promoting environmental sustainability and empowering people economically so that they are better prepared for difficult times and if difficult times should come, the organisation's priorities are to help with reorganisation and restoration.

Aid can be subdivided into a few categories: humanitarian aid unfolded in emergency relief activities as a response to natural disasters and a development aid target to assist countries in achieving long-term sustainable economic growth¹³. Some aid organisations carry out both kinds of aid, whilst others specialise in one aspect. Organisations use different kinds of specific assets and activities needed to respond to or prepare for disasters, such as emergency stocks, shelters, community-based early-warning systems, communication tools and networks of volunteers.

Reducing the impact of future disasters through disaster preparedness and risk reduction is by far the most contemporary concept and is inevitably becoming a part of IOs' performance policies and priorities¹⁴.

United Nation Organisation (UN) as International Actor for Disaster Relief

The 72nd anniversary of the foundation of the United Nations was celebrated in 2017. The United Nations is an international organisation founded in 1945. There are 193 official members of the IO in 2018. The mission and core performance of the United Nations is based on issues that people face nowadays such as climate change, human rights violations, economic crises, terrorism, natural disasters and emergencies¹⁵. On 18 March 2015, the Sendai Framework was adopted by UN Member States at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai City, Japan. The Sendai Framework is for Disaster Risk Reduction and builds global targets to achieve

¹² P. Willetts, *What is a Non-Governmental Organization?*, City University, London, <http://www.gdrc.org/ngo/peter-willetts.html> [accessed 11 May 2018].

¹³ Academic Dictionaries and Encyclopedias, *Aid agency*, <http://en.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enwiki/532896> [accessed 12 May 2018].

¹⁴ J. Kindra, *Giving Communities a Voice in Resilience*, Global Policy Forum sector, <https://www.globalpolicy.org/ngos/role-of-ngos-in-the-international-arena/52335-giving-communities-a-voice-in-resilience.html?itemid=id#31310> [accessed 14 May 2018].

¹⁵ United Nations Organization; *Overview*, <http://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/overview/index.html> [accessed 19 May 2018].

by 2030. On 1st of March 2017, a prototype of the Sendai Framework Monitor was launched at The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Cancun, Mexico. Data gathered through this monitoring system allows for understanding of disaster risk in all its dimensions, which is the first priority of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. With the Sendai Monitor System, UN Member States are able to use the mechanism to report on their progress in achieving the seven targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Sendai Monitor also allows for reporting against common indicators for key Sustainable Development Goals, notably on poverty eradication, resilient cities and climate action. The tool is incredibly useful as an instrument to review progress and guide development and implementation of strategies that will reflect the priorities.

For the successful co-ordination and running of joint activities, the UN Office has created several mechanisms and offices. Within the UN Secretariat, a central place for international humanitarian cooperation is OCHA (the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs); its functions are related to the mobilisation, funding and coordination of humanitarian action in response to natural or man-made disasters. The Office headquarters is in New York and there is an office in Geneva as well as 30 regional and local offices. The service employs 613 international and 1,182 local staff. OCHA is headed by the Emergency Relief Coordination. The Coordinator monitors all the situations in the world that require the provision of humanitarian aid by the United Nations and acts as the “contact point” for all humanitarian aid activities.

The mission of OCHA is to mobilise and coordinate humanitarian work in partnership with national and international actors with the following objectives: relief of human suffering in disasters and accidents; protecting the rights of people in need; helping to improve preparedness for disaster prevention and response; and helping to adopt lasting solutions to humanitarian issues.

There are representations of mechanisms such as the ReliefWeb. The ReliefWeb is a humanitarian information source which maintains insight on worldwide disasters and crises. It is a specialised digital service of the UN Office for the OCHA¹⁶. It provides reliable and timely information, enabling humanitarian workers to make informed decisions and to plan an effective response. It collects and delivers key information, including the latest reports, maps and info graphics from trusted sources. ReliefWeb is also truly valuable because of its network. The web operates with more than 1,200 Non-governmental Organisations, 384 Academic and Research Institutions, 302 Governments, 503 International Organisations, 215 Media channels and 117 Red Cross Organisations and Red Crescent Movements¹⁷.

The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) system is an example of a mechanism designed to assist the UN in meeting international

¹⁶ ReliefWeb, *General Information*, <https://reliefweb.int/organizations> [accessed 22 May 2018].

¹⁷ A list of organisations that are actively providing ReliefWeb (reports, jobs and training), <https://reliefweb.int/organizations> [accessed 19 May 2018].

needs for early and qualified information during the first phase of a sudden-onset emergency and in the coordination of incoming international relief at national level and/or at the site of the emergency. It is designed to deploy staff and experts at very short notice (12-24 hours) anywhere in the world.



Source: A.C. Umfahrer, Austrian Armed Forces¹⁸.

Fig. 1. The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) system

Another example is The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) that is designed to serve as a centrepiece in the United Nations system for the coordination of disaster reduction and to ensure synergies among the disaster prevention activities of the United Nations system and regional organisations. Its core areas of work include ensuring disaster risk reduction in unison with the climate change progress, increasing investment for risk reduction, building disaster-resilient cities, schools and hospitals, and strengthening the international system for risk reduction¹⁹. The UNISDR's vision is anchored on the four priorities for action set out in the Sendai Framework: understanding disaster risk, strengthening disaster

¹⁸ A.C. Umfahrer, Multimedia presentation, *Crisis Management & Disaster Relief – A National Perspective*, Austrian Armed Forces, CBRN-Defence Command [October 2017] [accessed June 2018].

¹⁹ The Crisis Management and Disaster Response Centre of Excellence (CMDR COE), The office for disaster risk reduction, *UNISDR Annual report 2017*, Biennium Work Programme Final Report, pp. 4-6; 16-21, https://www.cmdrcoe.org/menu.php?m_id=48 [accessed 23 May 2018].

risk governance to manage disaster risk, investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience, and enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction²⁰.

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) as International in Disaster Relief

NATO's foundation and comparative advantage is in its military capabilities, including its proficiency in planning, organising and conducting operations involving armed forces and military interventions. NATO is not a humanitarian organisation, NATO is an organisation for peace, security and stability. However, the organisation also works intensively on emergency relief and uses all possible resources to bring relief to victims of disasters.

Crisis management mechanisms can involve military and non-military measures so that NATO can engage in any of the phases – before, during and after the disaster.

The involvement in the humanitarian aid activity also introduced NATO to a new society, that of the international humanitarian organisations. The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) were among the first new partners for NATO.

The structure of NATO's organisations and agencies operating in the civil emergency protection contains: Civil Emergency Planning; Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee (SCEPC); Civil Emergency Planning Boards and Committees; Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC); Management and Disaster Response Centre of Excellence (CMDR COE).

NATO Centres of Excellence (COE) and Coordination Centres are nationally or multi-nationally sponsored entities which offer expertise and experience for the benefit of the countries of the alliance.

The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) is NATO's principal civil emergency response mechanism in the Euro-Atlantic area. It is active all year round, operational on a 24/7 basis, and involves NATO's 29 Allies and all partner countries. The Centre functions as a clearing-house system for coordinating both requests and offers of assistance mainly in the case of natural and man-made disasters. The centre is located in the V building at the NATO Headquarters in Brussels. It is designed as a regional coordination mechanism, supporting and complementing the UN efforts. Furthermore, its principal function is coordination rather than direction. In the event of a disaster requiring international assistance, it is up to individual NATO Allies and partners to decide whether to

²⁰ *The Sendai Framework* (par. 48c), https://www.preventionweb.net/files/43291_sendai_frameworkfordren.pdf [accessed 18 May 2018].

provide assistance, based on information received from the EADRCC. Some of the responsibilities of the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre, include frequent consultation with UN-OCHA to coordinate the responses of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) to disasters happening in the EAPC area; to act as a central coordination point for information distribution among EAPC countries and to maintain close connections with UN-OCHA and the European Union as well as other organisations involved in international disaster response. Additionally, regular major disaster exercises are organised in different participating countries to practice procedures, provide training for local and international participants, build up interoperability skills and capabilities and harness the experience and lessons learned for future operations.



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- Kosovo Refugee Crisis 1998-1999
- Czech Republic Floods 2002
- Azerbaijan Floods 2003
- Pakistan Earthquakes 2005
- USA Hurricane Katrina 2005
- Bulgaria forest fires 2007
- Albania Ammunition Explosion 2008
- Ukraine H1N1 2009
- Turkey Earthquakes 2011
- Montenegro Snow Storms 2012



- West Africa Ebola 2014
- Syrian Refugees in Turkey 2014
- Iraq Internal Displaced Persons 2014
- Serbia Refugees 2014
- Israel 2016
- Montenegro Forest Fires 2017
- Georgia Forest Fires 2017
- Hurricane Harvey 2017

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Source: J. DiGioia²¹.

Fig. 2. The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC)

²¹ J. DiGioia, Multimedia presentation, *NATO Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre Consequence Management Activities Cases of a Major, CBRN Incident*, [published 2017], [accessed June 2018].

Since 2000, the EADRCC has conducted field exercises every year and, since 2016, a new line of exercises using virtual reality technology has emerged. Virtual reality is considered an inevitable part of the upcoming future and for this reason, much effort is currently concentrated there.

A great example of a local office is the Crisis Management and Disaster Response Centre of Excellence (CMDR COE) located in Sofia, the Republic of Bulgaria. It was established on 28 August 2013. According to the official reports on the CMDR COE web page (01.06.2018), the Centre has two Sponsoring Nations – Greece and the Republic of Poland, and one Framework Nation - the Republic of Bulgaria. The CMDR COE is founded upon the Memoranda of Understanding (MOU): the Operational MOU between the Participating Nations and the Functional MOU between the Participating Nations and NATO Supreme Allied Commander Transformation Headquarters (HQ SACT)²².

The CMDR COE is an accredited, fully operational, NATO COE focusing its work on one of NATO's main tasks – Crisis Management. The Centre provides the best practices and usage of available resources and infrastructure, in close cooperation with national and international military and civilian entities and experts, and it serves as a focal point of a Crisis Management and Disaster Response Community of Interest. The main goal of the CMDR COE is to facilitate operations and help in crisis management and disaster response operations through collaborative partnerships.

To accomplish the Centre's mission, CMDR COE provides expertise and advice on crisis management and disaster response, and contributes by enforcing the concept of development and experimentation. The Centre provides education and training opportunities, including mobile training teams, encompassing both civilian and military experts from senior military and civilian leadership to staff level, as well as units and teams. The CMDR COE is working and cooperating with the Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre (JALLC) and serves as a storehouse for International, National and NATO shared information, analysis and insight information on crisis management and disaster response²³.

At an international level, the Centre cooperates with the EU, UN, Allied Command Transformation (NATO), and OSCE: the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

22 The Crisis Management and Disaster Response Centre of Excellence (CMDR COE), *About Us*, 2014, https://www.cmdrcoe.org/menu.php?m_id=48 [accessed 22 May 2018].

23 The Crisis Management and Disaster Response Centre of Excellence (CMDR COE), *Concept of the Crisis Management and Disaster Response Centre of Excellence (CMDR COE) Version 5.0*, 24 November 2014, https://www.cmdrcoe.org/menu.php?m_id=48 [accessed 22 May 2018].

European Union's (EU) mechanisms for Disaster Relief

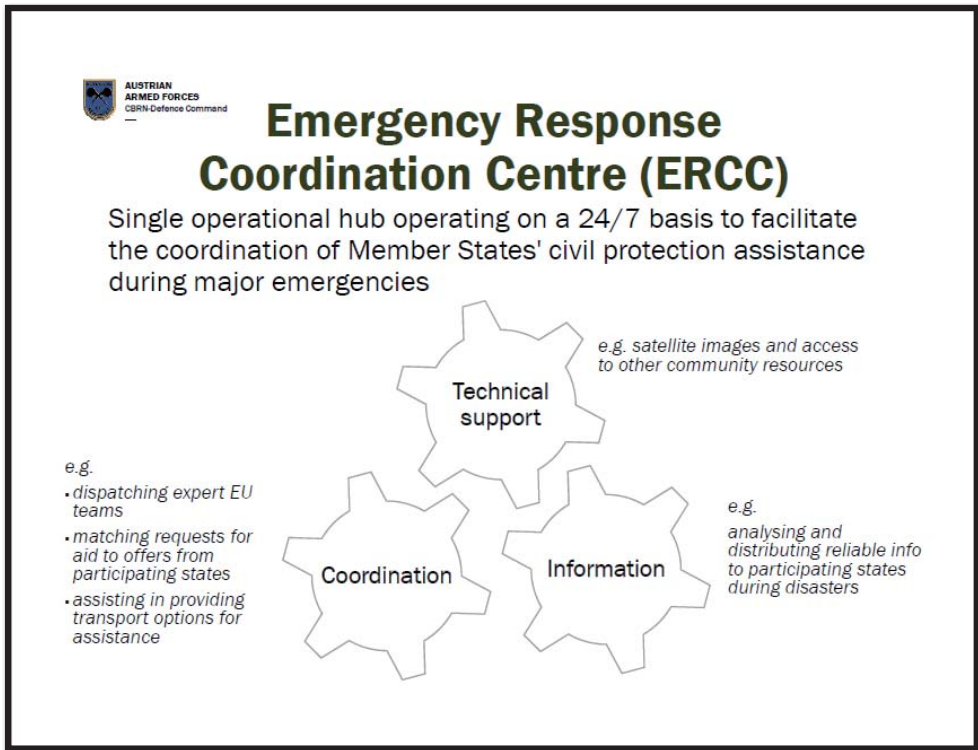
In accordance with the four foundation principles enshrined in international humanitarian law, EU humanitarian aid sees people's hardships and pain and gives special attention to the most defenceless and exposed people, respecting the dignity of all victims, favouring no conflict, providing assistance only based on needs, without any discrimination and acting independently of any programme, whether political, economic, military or otherwise.

Civil protection and humanitarian aid are correlative. If a need for humanitarian aid occurs, the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations Unit shares duties with the EU Member States and together they function as one of the world's leading humanitarian donors. As regards civil protection, the European Union takes an auxiliary role by coordinating voluntary contributions for assistance in the form of goods and provisions from states that take part in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. The EU Civil Protection and Humanitarian Operations Units have been assisting people at risk since 1992. The year-round budget for its humanitarian operations is more than 1 billion EUR, and it is helping up to 120 million people every year. When a catastrophe occurs, every minute is important for saving life. An immediate, coordinated and pre-planned response is needed. The EU is committed to ensuring timely and effective response to disasters and ensuring that European aid meets the real needs of the affected population, whether in Europe or beyond.

The Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) is set up to support, coordinate and swiftly respond to disasters, both within the European Union and outside of it. The Centre uses assets and supplies from states that partake in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

With the capacity to deal with multiple simultaneous emergencies in different time zones, the ERCC is a 24/7 coordination centre that facilitates the response to emergencies, helping to reduce unnecessary duplication of effort. It collects and analyses real-time information disaster management, monitoring capacities, and preparing deployment plans. Experts, teams and equipment work with Member States to identify available assets and coordinate the EU response to disasters by combining offers of assistance with the needs of the country hit by disaster.

The ERCC also supports a wide range of training activities, starting from prevention, through awareness-raising seminars to operational exercises that simulate prompt emergency response.



Source: A.C. Umfahrer, Austrian Armed Forces²⁴.

Fig. 3. The Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC)

Many disaster relief and post-crisis management operations have their own objectives depending on the nature of the crisis, which define the scope and scale of the response. EU mechanisms have the capacity to deal with post-crisis management and, more specifically, disaster relief operations using their quality coordinating system and the sufficiency of human resources and technical support.

The International Red Cross Organisation

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is a global humanitarian network of 80 million people that helps those facing disaster, conflict and health and social problems. It consists of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the 191

²⁴ A.C. Umfahrer, Multimedia presentation, *Crisis Management & Disaster Relief – A National Perspective*, Austrian Armed Forces, CBRN-Defence Command, [October 2017] [accessed June 2018].

National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies²⁵. The organisation's base principles are humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality. These seven fundamental points provide a conscientious, functional and institutional framework for the performance of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. They assist people in need during armed conflict, natural disasters and other emergencies. The foremost asset of the organisation is the human resource - the volunteers²⁶. After disasters, volunteers quickly adapt themselves, searching for new and original measures to help people in need and facilitate their journey through the difficulties and distress.

Volunteers usually apply local solutions to help people at risk. They are focused on the small-town community - they stay, work there, and they give their best to try to acknowledge and get to know the culture, languages and needs. Their services include emergency and ambulance services, blood contributions and first aid. The organisation's working focus is also on programmes based on the potential effects of climate change. The program's objective is to get across the idea that the future will bring new risks and that there has to be better planning at every stage of the disaster management cycle. Projects include acknowledging a better use of weather forecasts as a key component of any early-warning system, raising people's awareness of climate change as an issue and the setting-up of local disaster reduction committees and preparedness training²⁷.

For the benefit of all their projects and programmes, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement use their own "Disaster Management Information System (DMIS)". This is a web-based working tool made accessible only to Red Cross and Red Crescent staff working in National Societies, delegations and Geneva headquarters. It is a system from which users have access to real time information on disaster trends; online internal and external resources and tools and databases that they can use at any time. Donors to the DMIS to date include: The European Commission; The Telecommunication Company "Ericsson"; The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark; the Department for International Development of UK and some of the local Red Cross Bodies (Red Cross Spain, Netherlands, Japan, UK and more)²⁸.

25 International Committee of the Red Cross, <https://www.icrc.org/en> [accessed 15 May 2018].

26 The Red Cross Organization, <http://www.redcross.org/about-us/our-work/disaster-relief> [accessed 15 May 2018].

27 *Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Guide Disaster Management*, pp. 78-88, http://www.climatecentre.org/downloads/files/RCRC_ClimateG_DisasterManagement.pdf [accessed 15 May 2018].

28 The Disaster Management Information System (DMIS), https://www-secure.ifrc.org/DMISII/Pages/00_Home/login.aspx [accessed 18 May 2018].

General conclusions

The article reviewed the nature and legal status of international organisations dealing with disaster relief. The work and impact of IOs, both at the domestic and international levels, has been widely recognised, studied and appreciated. As they carry out their work, they do face many serious problems such as administrative difficulties, cultural and language obstacles, corruption, difficulties with finding donors and sponsors, difficulties with crossing frontiers, customs clearance, transportation of relief supplies, and status of relief personnel²⁹. In order to increase the awareness of society about these organisations' 'area of activities, there should be actions which popularise knowledge about them and engage individuals and groups in supporting their actions. It is worth noting that dealing with natural disasters is part of education for security and safety, which can be formal and informal, traditional or supported with new technologies³⁰. This kind of education steadily gains the attention of stakeholders, which is reflected in the appointment of international working groups which operate in military and civilian environments³¹. Education on types of organizations for aid, how to support them, or just how to prevent or relieve a crisis situation should be based on engaging and motivating activities³² and meaningful tasks³³. Such educational or informative actions may enhance further cooperation between different units as the awareness of their personnel and leaders is improved.

Another major impact is associated with the amount of publicity disasters get or, simply paraphrased, how many media channels have broadcast information of a recent disaster. This is vital to the work of establishing partnerships with governments, donors and other stakeholders and supporting the recovery programmes of the organisations. But even in the face of all these stumbling blocks, IOs must work effectively not only with other organisations but with civil society, the academic, scientific and research entities, business, professional associates and private sector financial institutions, the social media and information centres to establish the trust and confidence necessary for successful future operations. The free and fast exchange of information on the

29 Relief Personnel: 'Relief Personnel' constitutes those individuals, groups of civilian individuals, teams and constituted units executing disaster. From "Checklist and Non-Binding Guidelines for the Request, Reception and Provision Of International Assistance in the Event of a CBRN Incident or Natural Disasters", p. 11, https://www.nato.int/eadrcc/docs/checklist_eng.pdf [accessed on May 2018]

30 M. Gawlik-Kobylińska, *Nowe technologie w edukacji dla bezpieczeństwa. Kształcenie w paradygmacie społeczeństwa informacyjnego i jego przyszłość*, Rozpisani.pl Grupa Wydawnicza PWN, Warszawa, 2016.

31 M. Gawlik-Kobylińska, P. Wierzbicki, *Istota i założenia środkowoeuropejskiego forum edukacji wojskowej w kształceniu wojskowym z perspektywy Akademii Obrony Narodowej*. Zeszyty Naukowe AON, 2011, 4 (85): pp. 161-166.

32 M. Gawlik-Kobylińska, *Machinima in Education for Security and Safety*, IJRET: International Journal of Research in Engineering and Technology, Vol. 06 Special Issue: 04, pp.42-45.

33 M. Gawlik-Kobylińska, *Task-Based Approach in 3D Education for Security and Safety*. International Journal on Information Technologies & Security, 2017, pp. 3-12.

disaster is essential to ensure effective international cooperation. The harmonisation of efforts should result and have been resulting in more lives being saved and less economic collapses. Perhaps NATO's quote should be left as an indicator of a better future: "International organisations do not work in isolation. They complement each other to help create a peaceful environment in which economies can flourish and individuals prosper"³⁴. By combining new technologies, shared information through a global network distributing humanitarian assistance to civilians worldwide is becoming more and more sufficient every day.

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