

A PROPOSAL FOR A DISASTER SITUATION ANALYSIS

1. Research by the Disaster Research Unit at Bradford University and by Ritchie at Manchester has disclosed an absence of records concerning the way the various national, international and voluntary agencies involved in a Disaster Relief operation, communicated and related to their recipients and one another. Of particular interest in such situations are:
 - a. the channels of communication between those involved
 - b. how co-operation and effectiveness were influenced by communications, information, pre-planning and transport.
2. In view of UNDRO's intention to evaluate future relief operations with a view to applying experience to the improvement of future effectiveness, it is suggested that the manpower resources of the Bradford Disaster Research Unit and Manchester's Department of Administrative Studies should be made available to UNDRO for employment in some future DR situation, so that information relative to the areas mentioned above can be collected and collated.
3. This proposal has been discussed by Ritchie in Geneva with Mr. Rossborough and Mr. Stanissis of UNDRO, with Mr. Kilde and Mr. Parakatil of the League of Red Cross Societies' Disaster Preparedness Bureau and with Mr. Ritchie of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies. All have expressed interest and qualified approval of the proposal.
4. It is envisaged that a small team of members of the Disaster Research Unit, University of Bradford, and the Department of Administrative Studies, University of Manchester, with each person having a specific allotted role for the duration of this study, be sent to a disaster situation as soon as possible after the occurrence.
5. The study we have in mind will include:
 - a. Communication:
 - i. of the disaster event in the local, regional, national and international context;
 - ii. of the immediate situation and requirements for assistance (local, regional, national and international).
 - iii. relating to relief supply logistics in a local, regional, and national context.

- iv. updating the situation;
- v. information to the press (local, national and international).

b. The relief machine:

- i. inter-governmental,
- ii. non-governmental.

Closely related to 'communications' above, a study to examine how stated requirements match the need and how relief equates to the need. This study will also include an examination of techniques for assessing losses.

c. The state of preparedness:

- i. the state of pre-disaster planning,
- ii. the effectiveness of the pre-disaster plan in its several parts i.e. stockpile, administration etc. (again relates to 'communications' above).
- iii. the effectiveness of stated (pre-plan) and unstated administrative techniques.
- iv. the effectiveness of warning systems.

6. It is anticipated that a team of three persons will be required with roles relating closely to the three sections above. A particularly important aspect is seen as being the timing of visits in relation to the post-disaster phases which will at the time be unknown. It is proposed that the initial visit will be made at (Disaster) D + 1 or 2 days (at the most) and that it should extend to cover study of the first 30 days (D + 30), i.e. returning on say D + 32. It is seen as essential to envisage this time allocation at this stage.
7. A short follow-up visit is seen as desirable at say D + 3 months, but the timing, length and members of this visit will be subject to reassessment after the first visit. For the time being it is in mind that all team members re-visit for a period of seven days to 'follow-up' their enquiries of the first visit and subsequent events in the longer term phases following 'relief'.
8. The preferred disaster types are seen as the sudden rather than the slowly evolving and the large and 'newsworthy' (rapidly communicated) events and are expected to be earthquakes or hurricanes (and possibly volcano).
9. The preferred location is seen in terms of English speaking, but with the possibility of French speaking. (In the anticipated work situation of pressure and excitement the use of an interpreter is seen as being out of

the question and whilst the team will have working French as a second language capability, native language would seem to be preferable in this instance). Locations are likely, therefore, to be the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean/Bay of Bengal, or South-East Asia for instance.

10. Because it is regarded as essential that the principle international agencies are in accord with the purpose and intent of this study and as clearance with the host country and its non-governmental organisations will be a matter of urgency via these international agencies, considerable time will be allotted to this preliminary stage. It is not envisaged that a visit will be possible before, say, October 1975.

11. Costs for the study are seen as being:

- i. transportation for preliminary study and discussion in Geneva,
- ii. transportation for team members to the disaster location (on each visit),
- iii. per diem expenses for meals, (on each visit),
- iv. the cost of accommodation, (on each visit),
- v. the cost of local transportation, (on each visit),
- vi. the costs of report production, photography, etc.

Once there is an approval in principle from the sponsoring authority, preliminary research can commence in detail in the following:

The requirements of sponsoring authorities.

Experience of previous disaster situations.

Previous similar or related research or inquiry.

and the team can hold themselves available for an immediate departure.