

What is the UNDAC team?

The UNDAC team is part of the international emergency response system for sudden-onset emergencies. It is designed to assist the United Nations and Governments of a disaster-affected country in meeting international needs for early and qualified information during the first phase of a sudden-onset emergency, as well as in the coordination of incoming international relief at national level and/or at the site of the emergency. It is capable of deploying at very short notice (24-48 hours) anywhere in the world and is provided free of charge to the disaster-affected country. The UNDAC System is managed by the Emergency Response Support Branch (ERSB) of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Geneva.

The UNDAC team was established in 1993 and today consists of over 230 national emergency managers from more than 80 participating countries, together with staff from OCHA, international and regional organizations including UN agencies. The UNDAC system comprises three regional teams: Africa, Middle East and Europe, the Americas (including the Caribbean), Asia and the Pacific. In major international emergencies, UNDAC teams are drawn from the entire membership, whereas in more localized disasters, they are normally drawn from the affected region.

What does the UNDAC system consist of?

The UNDAC system consists of four components:

Staff: Professional and experienced emergency managers and humanitarians made available for UNDAC missions by their respective Governments or international/regional (inter-governmental or non-governmental) organizations together OCHA staff. UNDAC team members are specially trained and equipped for their task.

Methodology: Predefined methods for coordination including the collection and management of information, coordinated assessment as well as coordination support structures during the first phase of a sudden-onset disaster.

Mobilization procedures: Proven systems to mobilize and deploy an UNDAC team, so that it will arrive within 48 hours of request at any disaster site anywhere in the world

Operational partnerships & equipment: Personal equipment and service packages making UNDAC teams self-sufficient and operational partnerships optimising service provision for the humanitarian community during UNDAC missions

What is the added value of UNDAC?

An UNDAC team can be dispatched at very short notice on occurrence or early warning of an emergency, upon receipt of a request from the national Government and/or UN Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator in-country. In either case, the team works under the authority of the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator. The UNDAC team provides additional capacity to support coordination of incoming international relief, initiate cross-sectoral emergency assessment and analysis, information management and provides immediate support in the form of a highly-experienced team of international professionals. Where necessary, teams can be supplemented with experts in specialized fields such as mapping, (environmental) assessment and analysis, humanitarian civil-military coordination, cluster coordination, administration and other areas of expertise. An UNDAC team is self-sufficient in basic telecommunications, office and personal

equipment. Operational partner organisations often complement the capacity and services of an UNDAC team in a range of areas, such as Information Communications Technology (ICT), logistics, field operations, information management, mapping, assessment and analysis.

When required, an UNDAC team may establish and run an On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC) and a Reception Departure Centre (RDC) to act as a link between international responders and national authorities, to facilitate coordination of international response, and to provide a platform for cooperation, coordination and information management amongst international humanitarian agencies. An OSOCC is a rapid response tool that may serve as a bridge from emergency response to longer-term relief and may become the foundation of an OCHA field office. The OSOCC structure will almost always be established in earthquake situations where international Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams are assisting in the rescue of survivors. This concept was strongly endorsed in UN General Assembly Resolution 57/150 of 16 December 2002 on “Strengthening the effectiveness and coordination of international urban search and rescue assistance”.

UNDAC Emergency Response Missions

As of April 2018, the UNDAC Team has conducted more than 285 emergency missions in over 100 countries. OCHA (ERSB) mobilizes the UNDAC team mostly in:

Natural Disasters: when a disaster-affected country requests international assistance in coping with a natural disaster and requires additional international coordination resources;

Environmental Disasters: with additional expertise to perform environmental and/or secondary impact evaluation and analysis; and occasionally in

Complex Emergencies: when a sudden-onset emergency or change in intensity results in a requirement for additional international coordination resources.

In each case, the deployment and detailed Terms of Reference of an UNDAC team are decided in consultation with the national Government and UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator. The team normally stays in the affected area for the initial response phase (up to four weeks in a natural disaster).

Costs of UNDAC deployment

The UNDAC team is provided free of charge to the affected country.

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For more information, please visit www.unocha.org