

PD-10-101

UN-54197

AUDIT OF  
ADEQUACY OF DISASTER  
RELIEF ASSISTANCE PLANS--WORLDWIDE

AUDIT REPORT NO. 2-000-88-02  
JANUARY 29, 1988

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20523

Deputy  
Inspector General

January 29, 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR OFDA, Julia M. Taft  
FROM: DIG, James B. Durnil  
SUBJECT: Audit of Adequacy of Disaster Relief Assistance  
Plans--Worldwide,

The Office of the Regional Inspector General for Audit/Manila has completed an audit of the "Adequacy of Disaster Relief Assistance Plans--Worldwide." A copy of the audit report is attached.

The draft audit report was submitted to your office for comments and you expressed general agreement with the reported recommendations. The complete text of your written comments to the draft audit report is attached as Appendix 2b to the audit report. We consider the recommendations to be resolved. Would you please provide our office within 30 days, written comments describing the status of action taken to implement Recommendations 1(a), 2 and 3. Upon receipt of your final written comments, the recommendations can be closed.

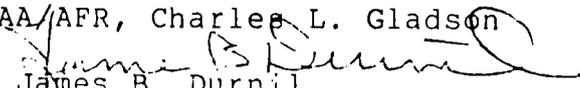
Thank you for the cooperation extended the audit staff.

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AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
WASHINGTON, D C 20523

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Inspector General

January 29, 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR AA/AFR, Charles L. Gladson  
FROM: DIG, James B. Durnil   
SUBJECT: Audit of Adequacy of Disaster Relief Assistance  
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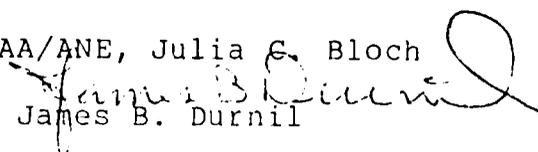
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20523

Deputy  
Inspector General

January 29, 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR AA/ANE, Julia G. Bloch  
FROM: DIG, James B. Durnil   
SUBJECT: Audit of Adequacy of Disaster Relief Assistance  
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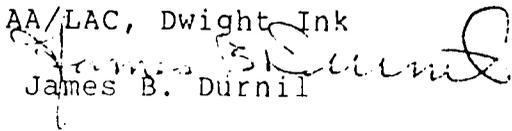
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20523

Deputy  
Inspector General

January 29, 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR AA/LAC, Dwight Ink  
FROM: DIG, James B. Durnil   
SUBJECT: Audit of Adequacy of Disaster Relief Assistance  
Plans--Worldwide,

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An important consideration of any emergency relief program is disaster preparedness and the development of a Mission Disaster Relief Plan. Such a plan maximizes awareness of potential disaster hazards and reinforces the mission's capability for disaster management and response. Disaster preparedness is the least costly and most effective means of ensuring that the emergency operation will be carried out efficiently and that there will be a quick return to normality. Mission disaster preparedness responsibilities focus on the designation of a Mission Disaster Relief Officer and the preparation, implementation, and maintenance of a disaster relief plan.

The U.S. Government's foreign disaster assistance program was established in 1964 under the authorization of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. Funds to provide such assistance are appropriated annually by Congress to the International Disaster Assistance Account to be used for disaster relief and rehabilitation, early warning, and preparedness. In Fiscal Year 1985, the United States Government provided almost \$20 million directly to the account and an additional \$107 million to help alleviate human suffering brought about by the drought affecting the African continent. During the past five years, the United States has provided an average of \$80.9 million annually for disaster assistance (exclusive of PL 480 funds) to about 32 countries. The A.I.D. Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance was established in 1964 to coordinate the assistance with that of international agencies, other donor governments, and private voluntary organizations.

This economy and efficiency audit was made to determine if existing Mission Disaster Relief Plans adequately promote disaster preparedness, especially the control, accountability, and monitoring of disaster assistance funds; and, if not, what measures would be required to strengthen Agency guidance, oversight, and implementation procedures.

A.I.D. guidelines pertaining to the preparation and content of disaster relief plans, particularly in controlling and accounting for disaster assistance needs to be improved. In addition, the plans submitted by the A.I.D. overseas field offices to the Inspector General office generally were not in compliance with existing Agency planning requirements. This happened in part because the guidelines for preparation of disaster relief plans are suggestive in nature and not necessarily obligatory.

Agency policy and A.I.D. Handbook 8 stress that in order to ensure that disaster assistance is appropriate, timely, and cost effective, missions should focus on disaster preparedness and the development of a Mission Disaster Relief Plan. These

efforts, however, have been far short of satisfactory as none of the 35 A.I.D. overseas field offices that submitted plans to the Inspector General were able to provide a plan fully consistent with Agency regulations. This condition occurred because (1) the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance apparently has little leverage to force field offices to comply with A.I.D. disaster relief planning requirements; (2) the individual field offices need technical assistance in developing disaster assistance planning documents, and (3) A.I.D. Handbook 8 did not clearly state the planning requirements, particularly in the areas of accountability and control. As illustrated by several A.I.D. Inspector General reports, disaster assistance, which averages \$81 million annually, was not always administered efficiently. Deficiencies in planning were specifically a factor in some of the inefficiencies and may have been a contributing factor in other instances.

We recommend that (1) the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance identify and communicate to the Agency's Operating Bureaus a list of those missions which fail to submit plans or submit plans with significant inadequacies, (2) the Agency Operating Bureaus require all missions to submit disaster relief plans to the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance for review and approval and require missions to correct plans found to be deficient, (3) the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance assist the A.I.D. field offices develop disaster relief plans, and (4) the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance improve A.I.D. Handbook 8 procedures, particularly in the areas of accountability and control.

AUDIT OF  
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RELIEF ASSISTANCE PLANS--WORLDWIDE

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AUDIT OF  
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PART I - INTRODUCTION

A. Background

The U.S. Government's foreign disaster assistance program was established in 1964 under the authorization of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. Funds to provide such assistance are appropriated annually by Congress to the International Disaster Assistance Account to be used for disaster relief and rehabilitation, early warning, and preparedness. In Fiscal Year 1985, the United States Government provided almost \$20 million directly to the account and an additional \$138 million to help alleviate human suffering brought about by the drought affecting the African continent. During the past five years, the United States has provided an average of \$80.9 million annually for disaster assistance (exclusive of PL 480 funds) to approximately 32 countries each year. The A.I.D. Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance was established in 1964 to coordinate the assistance with that of international agencies, other donor governments, and private and voluntary organizations.

An important consideration of any emergency relief program is disaster preparedness and the development of a Mission Disaster Relief Plan. Such a plan maximizes awareness of potential disaster hazards and reinforces the mission's capability for disaster management and response. Disaster preparedness is the least costly and most effective means of ensuring that the emergency operation will be carried out efficiently and that there will be a quick return to normality. Mission disaster preparedness responsibilities focus on the designation of a Mission Disaster Relief Officer and the preparation, implementation and maintenance of a disaster relief plan.

B. Audit Objectives and Scope

This economy and efficiency audit was made to determine if existing MDRPs adequately promote disaster preparedness, especially the control, accountability and monitoring of disaster assistance funds; and, if not, what measures would be required to strengthen Agency guidance, oversight, planning and implementation procedures. Other audit objectives were to determine if field missions were preparing and using disaster relief plans as required by Agency regulations, and to what extent Agency guidelines were being used by individual missions for the preparation and content of Mission Disaster Relief Plans.

The audit work was performed in Manila, Philippines and required that each of the 68 A.I.D. overseas field offices submit a copy of their MDRP to the Inspector General. From this universe, 35 draft and final plans were submitted and evaluated by the Inspector General to determine if individual mission plans were prepared in accordance with Agency guidelines. Also analyzed were the responses from the A.I.D. field offices which did not submit disaster relief plans. In addition, a review of various Inspector General disaster assistance audit reports was made to ascertain what inefficient and uneconomical practices resulted from the lack of adequate disaster relief preparedness. OFDA files were also reviewed and interviews were conducted with OFDA officials.

The audit was made in accordance with generally accepted government audit standards.

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PART II - RESULTS OF AUDIT

A.I.D. guidelines pertaining to the preparation and content of disaster relief plans, particularly in controlling and accounting for disaster assistance needs to be improved. In addition, the plans submitted by the A.I.D. overseas field offices to the Inspector General office generally were not in compliance with existing Agency planning requirements. This happened in part because the guidelines for preparation of disaster relief plans are suggestive in nature and not necessarily obligatory.

None of the 59 A.I.D. field offices responding to the Inspector General inquiry were able to provide a plan consistent with Agency regulations. Nineteen A.I.D. field offices did not have a plan, 5 offices were in the process of preparing a plan, and the 35 plans that were provided to the Inspector General did not fully comply with Agency planning requirements. In our view, many of these 35 plans would have little utility in the administration of U.S. disaster assistance. Nine of the A.I.D. field offices did not respond to the Inspector General inquiry.

We recommend that (1) the Agency Operating Bureaus ensure that the A.I.D. field offices submit adequate disaster relief plans to OFDA for review and approval, (2) OFDA assist the A.I.D. field offices to develop disaster relief plans, and (3) OFDA improve A.I.D. Handbook 8 procedures, particularly in the areas of accountability and control.

## A. Findings and Recommendations

### 1. Mission Disaster Relief Plans are not in Compliance with A.I.D. Regulations

Agency policy and A.I.D. Handbook 8 stress that in order to ensure that disaster assistance is appropriate, timely, and cost effective, missions should focus on disaster preparedness and the development of a Mission Disaster Relief Plan. These efforts, however, have been far short of satisfactory as none of the 35 A.I.D. overseas field offices that submitted plans to the Inspector General were able to provide a plan fully consistent with Agency regulations. This condition occurred because (1) the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance apparently has little leverage to require field offices to comply with A.I.D. disaster relief planning requirements; (2) the individual field offices need technical assistance in developing disaster assistance planning documents, and (3) A.I.D. Handbook 8 did not clearly state the planning requirements, particularly in the areas of accountability and control. As illustrated by several A.I.D. Inspector General reports, disaster assistance, which averages \$81 million annually, was not always administered efficiently. Deficiencies in planning were specifically a factor in some of the inefficiencies and may have been a contributing factor in other instances.

#### Recommendation No.1

We recommend that:

- a. the Director, Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, identify and communicate to the Agency Operating Bureaus a list of those A.I.D. field offices overseas which either fail to submit disaster relief plans or submit plans that are severely deficient, and
- b. the Assistant Administrators of the Agency Operating Bureaus ensure that A.I.D. overseas field offices submit Mission Disaster Relief Plans to the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance for review and approval and correct those plans found deficient.

## Recommendation No. 2

We recommend that the Director, Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance, develop and implement a plan to assist the A.I.D. overseas field offices in the preparation of their Mission Disaster Relief Plans. This assistance can take various forms including:

- a. The use of consultants to assist the individual field offices in developing their country plan.
- b. The use of a pro forma disaster assistance plan that can be tailored to meet the local conditions of the country.
- c. Site visits by staff members of the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance to assist A.I.D. overseas offices in developing their country plan.

## Recommendation No. 3

We recommend that the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance revise A.I.D. Handbook 8 to provide improved procedures for the preparation, content and maintenance of Mission Disaster Relief Plans. As a minimum, the changes should:

- a. provide specific procedures for control and accountability of disaster assistance (see Appendix 1, which could be used as a guide for improving Handbook 8 procedural requirements in these areas), and
- b. clarify Mission responsibilities for disaster preparedness, especially for those A.I.D. offices located in countries having little likelihood for a natural disaster.

## Discussion

A.I.D. policy on international disaster assistance points out that disaster assistance alone is not sufficient. Costs, damage and human suffering could be better reduced by helping disaster-prone countries prepare for the inevitable. Chapter 3 of A.I.D. Handbook 8 stresses that mission disaster preparedness focus on the development of a Mission Disaster Relief Plan (MDRP). Mission responsibilities, as cited in Appendix D of the Handbook include the designation of a Mission Disaster Relief Officer (MDRO) and the development of a MDRP. A.I.D. regulations require that A.I.D. field offices prepare a MDRP to maximize awareness of potential disaster hazards and reinforce the mission's capability for disaster management response. The MDRO is responsible for overseeing the preparation, implementation and maintenance of the MDRP.

A copy of the plan, when completed, is to be sent to the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) which uses the information in connection with its disaster preparedness activities and relief efforts. OFDA is the head U.S. organization responsible for responding to a disaster situation and its coordinates all U.S. assistance. Its role relative to disaster preparedness includes (1) seminars and training for disaster officials in disaster management, (2) direct technical assistance in national disaster planning for disaster prone countries, and (3) assistance to U.S. missions in the development of MDRPs. OFDA officials, however, believe that they do not have sufficient leverage to require compliance by individual missions which choose not to submit a plan.

#### Mission MDRPs not Prepared as Required by Agency Regulations

Sixty-eight A.I.D. field offices were requested by the Inspector to submit their MDRP for review and analysis. Of the 68 A.I.D. field offices, 35 submitted a final or draft plan, 19 did not have a plan, 5 were in the process of preparing a plan, and 9 did not respond to the Inspector General Inquiry (see Exhibit 1).

Missions located in countries that are not considered disaster prone often do not prepare MDRPs. Burundi, Somalia and Swaziland have no plans for preparing MDRPs since the likelihood for a disaster in those countries was considered so remote that disaster preparedness plans were unnecessary. For example, the mission in Burundi cabled that it "does not have a disaster relief operations officer and does not plan to name one. Burundi is fortunate in that it does not have a history of natural disasters . . . ." The mission in Somalia indicated that it ". . . does not have a formal disaster relief plan, but rather responds to disaster situations on an ad hoc basis." Also, the mission in Swaziland stated that it does not have a full disaster relief plan for Swaziland which is a relatively stable environment. Due to limited USAID staff resources, good communications in this small country, and relative disaster-free history, the Mission did not believe it necessary to develop an extensive plan along A.I.D. handbook guidelines.

The missions in Burma, Jordan, Kenya, Tunisia and Zaire indicated that even though they do not have an MDRP, they planned on preparing one shortly. Some missions utilize alternative sources as a substitute for an MDRP. For example, Portugal cabled that the Mission does not have a current disaster relief plan as past experience has demonstrated that government organizations are suitably responsive to Portugal's disaster needs. And for Zaire, although there was no plan, the U.S. Embassy does have on file a disaster assistance handbook prepared by the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs.

Nine of the missions notified the Inspector General that MDRPs did not exist for their respective countries even though OFDA believed that the missions had in fact previously submitted plans to OFDA (Brazil 1976, Burkina Faso 1977, Ethiopia 1975, Gambia 1975, Honduras 1983, Jordan 1975, Nigeria 1974, Tunisia 1977 and Zaire 1977). On the other hand, four of the MDRPs received by the Inspector General had not been received at OFDA (Belize, Ghana, Liberia and Sudan).

See Exhibit 2 for individual responses regarding non-submission of MDRPs. Also see Exhibit 3 for countries receiving U.S. disaster assistance but not having an MDRP.

In summary, 33 A.I.D. overseas field offices did not submit a disaster plan to the Inspector General as requested. Missions essentially questioned the need for a plan, especially when the chances for a natural disaster seem to be extremely remote. There also appears to be some question as to how many missions have in fact prepared MDRPs. This discrepancy can probably be attributed to a lack of effective centralized oversight.

Handbook Guidelines Are not Being Followed by Missions - None of the 35 A.I.D. field offices responding to the Inspector General inquiry were able to provide a plan fully consistent with Agency disaster relief planning requirements or with Agency guidelines. This occurred because the guidelines used for the preparation and content of mission plans are suggestive in nature and are not necessarily obligatory. In our view, many of these 35 plans would have little if any utility in the administration U.S. disaster assistance.

Appendix D to Handbook 8 provides guidance for the preparation of individual MDRPs. Plans should contain baseline data on essential disaster relief resources for health and sanitation, transportation, communications, shelter, food and water supplies and disaster equipment. It should also contain the organization and structure of the mission disaster relief team, defining roles and assigning tasks for mission staff during disaster relief assistance efforts. In order for relief assistance to have maximum impact, it must address specific needs with as much precision as possible so that assistance can be provided promptly.

To ascertain compliance with Agency guidelines, the Inspector General reviewed major sections of mission plans: (1) control, accountability, and monitoring, (2) country team resources, (3) post organization for relief assistance, (4) assessment of damage and needs, (5) coordination with host government, and (6) situation reporting. The results of the analysis are presented below.

SCHEDULE SHOWING  
ADEQUACY OF MISSION COMPLIANCE WITH MDRP  
PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

Number of A.I.D. Overseas Offices  
with MDRPs

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<u>MDRP Planning Requirements</u>	<u>Fully Complied</u>	<u>Partially Complied</u>	<u>Did not Comply</u>	<u>Total</u>
Monitoring, Control and Accountability	2	17	16	35
Country Team Resources	0	21	14	35
Post Organization for Relief Assistance	0	11	24	35
Assessment of Damages and Needs	1	11	23	35
Coordination with Host Government	0	14	21	35
Situation Reporting	0	18	17	35

Control, Accountability, and Monitoring - A.I.D. guidelines pertaining to the preparation and content of individual MDRPs, particularly in controlling and accounting for disaster assistance funding, were not being followed by A.I.D. missions.

A.I.D. policy emphasizes that disaster assistance responses be cost-effective and that cost reductions be facilitated through better disaster preparedness. The A.I.D. Handbook contains guidance relative to monitoring and accounting for disaster assistance and states that explicit lines of authority should be established for monitoring and managing the U.S. Government response. In an early 1986 Inspector General report on disaster assistance in the Philippines 1/, the Inspector General recommended that disaster relief plans should contain, as a minimum, procedures to improve the control, accountability, and monitoring of disaster situations. Specifically, MDRPs should contain information that would

- spell out the explicit lines of authority and responsibility for monitoring;
- clearly state that the Mission/Embassy is accountable for funds and other resources which it receives;
- stress accountability standards to host counterparts to avoid misuse of resources; and
- point out that short-term relief and rehabilitation should not become confused with long-term development activities.

The schedule above shows that only two of the plans (Indonesia and the Philippines) contained all the planning elements essential for proper control, accountability, and monitoring of disaster assistance. The remaining 94 percent contained three or fewer of the four essential elements.

Almost half of the plans failed to contain any procedures for control, accountability, or monitoring. In those cases where procedures were included, they often were vague and did not provide sufficient guidance. For example, although the Mauritania MDRP spelled out lines of authority and responsibility for monitoring, they were vague and non-specific as follows:

Turnover U.S. commodities and monitor distribution and use	A.I.D. and PC Directors
Monitor general relief and rehabilitation operations	MDRO
Maintain commodity accountability records	GSO/FFPO

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1/ Audit of Disaster Assistance Provided to the Philippines, Audit Report No. 2-492-86-01, dated March 17, 1986.

Bolivia only identified the Food for Peace Officer as being responsible for food commodity distribution and the Controller as responsible for approving and monitoring disaster-related transactions. The MDRP did not explain how these responsibilities were to be carried out.

Appendix 1 is an excerpt from the Philippines' MDRP which provides an example of how all four monitoring and accountability procedures could be specifically addressed by the missions. The Philippine plan spelled out several detailed procedures for monitoring costs and commodities. For example, the plan noted that all materials or commodities acquired must be adequately monitored. This monitoring should be at a level which will ensure that: the number of items purchased does not exceed the number of items approved for purchases; and any excess materials and/or commodities are disposed of properly.

See Exhibit 4 for the results of our evaluation of monitoring and accountability planning elements of individual missions.

Country Team Resources - The A.I.D. Handbook lists four planning elements as guidance for managing country team resources:

- Listings of country team individuals with skills or interests of potential value in assessing damage and needs, monitoring U.S. Government and other donor assistance, staffing the post command center, situation reporting, handling the press, etc.
- Maps and technical data available in Commercial Library and Country Team component offices.
- Possible A.I.D. participation in in-country radio nets of Agriculture, Health and other ministries.
- Cars and trucks available for assessment travel; state of maintenance; spare parts/repair capability; fuel stocks and containers; field trip camping equipment.

None of the MDRPs addressed all four planning elements relating to country team resources, while 29 of the 35 plans contained only one or none of the suggested procedures. In many cases, the plans did not fully comply with the suggested planning criteria as the planning elements were only partially addressed. For example, the mission in El Salvador listed the cars and trucks available for assessment travel, but did not include their state of maintenance, repair capability, fuel stocks, etc. Costa Rica uses a quick reference guide which really did not satisfy any of the requirements because of its generality. In the cases of Botswana, Liberia, Cape Verde and Bangladesh, the plan contained a listing of country team

individuals, but did not provide a description of responsibilities, skills, or interests of potential value for assessing and monitoring disaster assistance.

See Exhibit 5 for the results of our evaluation of country team resources planning elements of individual missions.

Post Organization for Relief Assistance - The A.I.D. Handbook lists five planning elements as guidance for post organization for relief assistance for inclusion in MDRPs. However, the Inspector General previously evaluated two under Control, Accountability, and Monitoring. The remaining three elements are:

- Field assessments of situation and needs, and interim evaluation of factual information from government and other local and foreign observers; preparation of numbered Situation Reports and identification of material and in-country transport needs and local resources.
- The MDRP should provide for principal and alternative locations for use as a Command Center. The Command Center should be convenient to the post communications facility, and should be equipped with work tables, telephones, typewriters, emergency generator, and office supplies. Copies of the MDRP and maps should be readily accessible.
- The MDRP should establish responsibility within the Country Team for checking and securing all material purchased or arriving in country until receipt by an authorized official of a disaster relief implementing agency; provide for supply logistics monitoring by post personnel to assure timely distribution to the intended recipients and identify supplies in excess of needs for warehousing or subsequent recovery.

None of the 35 MDRPs address all 3 planning elements and only 4 had addressed 2 of the elements. Twenty-four of the plans contained none or only parts of the planning elements suggested. For example, USAID/Guatemala identified the location of the command center, but did not mention the type of equipment available; USAID/Costa Rica did not indicate where the location of the command center would be. The missions of Djibouti and Lesotho addressed field assessments, but did not indicate how these assessments would be conducted. The field assessment provision was addressed by USAID/India in the form of a list of names and locations of international relief agencies.

See Exhibit 6 for our evaluation of the post organization planning elements for individual missions.

Assessment of Damage and Needs - The A.I.D. Handbook lists four planning elements of assessment of damage and needs which could be included in the MDRP.

- Assessment is a key tool of the disaster manager, providing basic data upon which decisions can be made. Without good assessment, the disaster assistance offered may be inappropriate or irrelevant.
- Assessment information is most useful to the decision maker when it identifies what needs have been created by the disaster; what resources are available within the stricken community and surrounding area, and from various other donor governments and organizations; and, what is the remaining gap which must be filled. Baseline data are extremely important in answering these questions. Such data should be included in the MDRP or appropriate annexes.
- Posts should include provisions in MDRPs for every effort possible to assure that professional or responsible American officers (post staff or TDY) and FSN employees observe the disaster situation before recommending a major relief undertaking.
- The MDRP should provide for the assessment of rehabilitation needs as well as relief needs; and should designate post staff responsibility for developing and monitoring rehabilitation plans.

Only the plan from the Philippines contained all four of the suggested planning elements. Nine of the plans addressed three of the elements, but more than half of the plans (23) only contained provisions for one of the suggested elements or only partially addressed the suggested elements. For example, USAID/Botswana provided for the development of a rehabilitation plan, but did not discuss how this plan would be monitored. The USAID/Lesotho did not provide for specific staff designation for development of rehabilitation plans. In most plans, the suggested element was not specifically addressed or it was omitted completely from the plan.

See Exhibit 7 for our evaluation of the assessment of damage and needs planning elements for individual missions.

Coordination with Host Government - The A.I.D. Handbook lists six planning elements of coordination with host government which could be included in the MDRP.

- The MDRP should identify and provide telephone numbers for that individual or agency, such as the Foreign Ministry, empowered to make official requests for assistance or approve the requests of others.

- The MDRP should provide procedural guidance for informing the government of the determination and, at this time, suggesting that the government publish general instructions on reviewing and approving requests for external assistance (gracefully rejecting donations of unsolicited and inappropriate items, for example).
- If assistance is to be provided, the government should be requested to direct customs and airport management, etc., to arrange for immediate entry of assistance and secure storage until supplies are forwarded to the disaster area.
- The MDRP should assure that the post is alert to the substance of requests from other than official sources, but require that all requests have the approval of government before they are acted upon.
- The post should assure that government appeals for assistance are made to other potential donors as well as the U.S., or report the rationale for an exclusively bilateral initiative in a cable classified as appropriate.
- The MDRP should include a caution for any discussion with the host government of possible U.S. assistance in reconstruction until the post has discussed the matter with the Department and the appropriate regional Bureau of A.I.D..

None of the missions addressed more than three of the suggested planning elements. Thirty-two of the plans addressed none or only part of the elements suggested. For example, USAID/Senegal identified individuals empowered to make official requests for assistance or approve the requests for others, but did not provide the telephone numbers. Cape Verde identified the government disaster relief agencies, but did not provide addresses or telephone numbers. As in the previous evaluations, almost all of the USAID missions either did not specifically address the element or omitted it completely from the plan.

See Exhibit 8 for our evaluation of the coordination with host government planning elements for individual missions.

Situation Reporting - The Handbook suggests that the MDRP should offer guidance for preparation of a series of numbered Situation Reports, to be transmitted by immediate cable to OFDA, beginning with the actual or threatened disaster and continuing through the period during which emergency actions may be required.

Of the 35 MDRPs submitted by A.I.D. missions, 17 did not comply with the situation reporting requirement or contained a provision which proved to be inadequate or incomplete. For example, A.I.D./Morocco cited chapter 13 of the country team

Emergency Action Manual as the basis for their plan. The chapter provided the criteria for reporting the disaster description, its time, date, location, extent of damage or description, etc. and its recipient. However, the chapter does not provide for situation report preparation during and after the emergency action. In another case, A.I.D./Ghana's MDRP provided for the preparation and submission to OFDA of situation reports and final Disaster Summary Report. However, it did not offer any guidance on how the reports were to be prepared, when they should be prepared, or what they should contain.

On the other hand, MDRPs that satisfied the situation reporting requirement not only offered detailed guidance for situation reports preparation, but provided model situation reports as well. For instance, A.I.D./Indonesia's MDRP presented suitable provisions for initial and subsequent situation reports.

See Exhibit 9 for our evaluation of the situation reporting planning elements for individual missions.

Current Level of Disaster Preparedness is Not Efficient - As illustrated by several audit reports, disaster assistance, which averages \$81 million annually, was not always administered efficiently. Deficiencies in planning were specifically a factor in some of the inefficiencies and may have been a contributing factor in other instances.

In an OFDA report covering October 1, 1985 through October 9, 1986, OFDA provided over \$86 million in disaster assistance for new disasters and carry-over disasters from prior years. Approximately 34 percent or \$28.9 million was provided to 15 countries where USAID missions had failed to complete an MDRP (see Exhibit 3). For example, drought-related assistance totaling \$26 million was provided for the countries of Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Mozambique which have no MDRP.

Several A.I.D. audits have reported specific incidents where the assistance provided could have been spent more efficiently. As recently as 1986, the A.I.D. Inspector General reporting on disaster assistance to the Philippines <sup>1/</sup> indicated that a lack of control, monitoring and accountability resulted in several procedural shortcomings: excess materials for one disaster assistance activity were purchased; short-term rehabilitation funds were used for a long-term development activity; emergency relief funds were used for unintended purposes; publicity requirements for food commodities at the recipient level were not met; and disaster assistance totaling \$.5 million was spent for purposes not intended by Agency regulations. The audit report recommended substantial improvements be made in the MDRP particularly in accountability and monitoring of disaster assistance.

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<sup>1/</sup> Audit of Disaster Assistance Provided to the Philippines, Audit Report No. 2-492-86-01, dated March 17, 1986.

Below are examples of how disaster assistance funds for the Philippines were used for unintended purposes or other A.I.D. program requirements had not been met. The cause for these deficiencies was an inadequate MDRP.

- USAID personnel did not evaluate the reasonableness of estimates supplied by a Philippine Government Agency. Because of this, A.I.D. paid \$305,146 for electric utility poles which were in excess of disaster relief requirements. As a result of the audit report recommendations, USAID/Philippines included procedures in its MDRP to ensure that estimates supplied by implementing agencies are adequately evaluated by A.I.D. personnel. The MDRP was also strengthened to ensure that A.I.D. personnel monitor receipt of the U.S. donated commodities.
- Short-term rehabilitation funds of \$32,000 were inappropriately used to finance long-term development activities. As a result of the audit report recommendations, USAID/Philippines' MDRP was improved by the inclusion of criteria and procedures for reviewing proposed assistance to ensure that long-term development activities are not financed with disaster assistance funds.
- Emergency relief funds of \$25,000 were not spent immediately nor used to meet the basic needs of disaster victims, as required by A.I.D. regulations. As a result of the audit report recommendations, USAID/Philippines improved its MDRP by inclusion of criteria and procedures for controlling emergency relief funds.
- A.I.D. publicity requirements for U.S. food donations totaling \$2.2 million were not met by the private agency that distributed the food. As a result of the audit report recommendations, USAID/Philippines improved its MDRP by including procedures to ensure that A.I.D. publicity requirements are met, and that A.I.D. personnel monitor compliance with these requirements.

Other audit reports have also cited lack of adequate planning as a primary cause for inefficiencies in management of U.S. disaster assistance resources. For example, A.I.D. audits in India and Guatemala reported the following examples of inefficiencies or abuse of disaster assistance:

- A total of \$49,663 of grant funds were expended for commodities they either did not receive or failed to distribute. The primary cause for this excess expenditure was due to inadequate procurement monitoring procedures.

- Some of the activities financed with disaster assistance funds should have been funded as part of the regular development program, such as the purchase of new heavy equipment for \$1.3 million and water drainage, sewer systems for seven new towns in the amount of \$1.3 million. Inadequate A.I.D. guidelines which did not provide adequate descriptions of what projects should or should not be funded by disaster relief funds was cited as the cause for these improper funding actions.

In October 1986, the Office of Inspector General developed a deficiency tracking system for all audit findings contained in A.I.D. Inspector General and U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) audit reports. Four IG and two GAO audit reports addressing the U.S. disaster assistance program were reviewed.

Schedule Showing Deficiencies in the Disaster Assistance Program

<u>Deficiency</u>	<u>Frequency</u>		
	<u>IG</u>	<u>GAO</u>	<u>Total</u>
Accounting and Controls Inadequate	2	-	2
A.I.D. Funding Not in Compliance with Legislative Requirements	-	1	1
A.I.D. Funding Not Provided on Timely Basis	-	1	1
Commodity Procurement Planning Inadequate	1	-	1
Implementation Documentation Not Being Made on Timely Basis	-	1	1
Management Inadequate	1	-	1
Other Commodities Not Used	1	-	1
Physical Facilities Not Used Effectively	1	-	1
Project Design Not Planned Properly	-	1	1
Project Responsibility Needs to be Better Defined	2	-	2
	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>23</u>

Three areas of weakness emerge from this pattern of deficiencies:

- o The A.I.D. missions need to establish more effective procedures for monitoring the host countries' expenditure of funds provided under this program.
- o OFDA was not using the flexible funding authority available to it under the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA). Since the disaster program involves time critical assistance, it is important that this authority be used to avoid delays. However, in using this authority, OFDA must ensure that it complies with the FAA.
- o Two of the four audits of this program found confusion regarding lines of authority and responsibility for implementing and monitoring disaster programs. The A.I.D. missions need to acquire a better understanding of their responsibilities in regard to this program.

These deficiencies suggest the need for a better understanding of the time critical program and who is responsible for what.

Summary Comments - The need for missions to have MDRPs that comply with Agency regulations is apparent. The preparation and content of individual MDRPs are the responsibility of the 68 A.I.D. overseas field offices. OFDA is responsible for ensuring that the field offices prepare an MDRP and for advising the field offices at least annually of their responsibility to complete, submit, and maintain an MDRP consistent with Agency regulations. Neither the A.I.D. field offices nor the OFDA have met these responsibilities.

Almost \$28.9 million in disaster assistance was provided to missions not having disaster relief plans. If an A.I.D. office has not adequately planned to manage U.S. disaster assistance resources, the chances of abuse or misuse of such resources is high if not a certainty. Even when field offices are adequately prepared, the potential for abuse of U.S. disaster assistance is enormous. In order that abuse of U.S. resources be minimized, however, it is critically important that management ensure that A.I.D. field offices and OFDA adequately meet their responsibilities in disaster relief preparedness.

## B. Compliance and Internal Controls

### Compliance

Audit results showed that for those items tested there was inadequate compliance by the A.I.D. overseas field offices with applicable A.I.D. regulations regarding submission and content of Mission Disaster Relief Plans (MDRPs). This report recommends that the field offices be required to comply with applicable MDRP planning requirements. Nothing came to the auditors' attention as a result of specific procedures that caused them to believe that untested items were not in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

### Internal Controls

A.I.D. internal controls over the preparation of MDRPs were generally inadequate. As discussed in this report, there is a need for more centralized guidance in the preparation and submission of disaster preparedness plans. This report recommends several actions A.I.D. should take to strengthen agency internal controls in disaster relief preparedness.

AUDIT OF  
ADEQUACY OF DISASTER  
RELIEF ASSISTANCE PLANS--WORLDWIDE

PART III - EXHIBITS AND APPENDICES

LISTING OF A.I.D. OVERSEAS OFFICES  
CONTACTED BY INSPECTOR GENERAL

Accra, Ghana	Manila, Philippines
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	Monrovia, Liberia
Amman, Jordan	Maputo, Mozambique
Asuncion, Paraguay	Maseru, Lesotho
Bamako, Mali	M'babane, Swaziland
Bangkok, Thailand	Mexico City, Mexico
Banjul, Gambia	Mogadishu, Somalia
Belize City, Belize	Muscat, Oman
Bissau, Guinea Bissau	Naples, Italy
Brasilia, Brazil	Nairobi, Kenya
Bujumbura, Burundi	New Delhi, India
Cairo, Egypt	NDjamena, Chad
Colombo, Sri Lanka	Niamey, Niger
Conakry, Guinea	Nouakchott, Mauritania
Dacca, Bangladesh	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania	Panama City, Panama
Djibouti, Djibouti	Port Au Prince, Haiti
Freetown, Sierra Leone	Praia, Cape Verde
Gaborone, Botswana	Pretoria, Rep. of South Africa
Guatemala City, Guatemala	Quito, Ecuador
Harare, Zimbabwe	Rabat, Morocco
Islamabad, Pakistan	Rangoon, Burma
Kathmandu, Nepal	Sanaa, Yemen
Khartoum, Sudan	San Salvador, El Salvador
Kigali, Rwanda	Santo Domingo, Dominican Rep.
Kingston, Jamaica	San Jose, Costa Rica
Kinshasa, Zaire	Suva, Fiji
Lagos, Nigeria	Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Lilongwe, Malawi	Tunis, Tunisia
Lima, Peru	Yaounde, Cameroon
Lisbon, Portugal	

LISTING OF A.I.D. OFFICES WHICH DID NOT  
SUBMIT A CURRENT MDRP

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	Lisbon, Portugal
Amman, Jordan	Lusaka, Zambia
Bangkok, Thailand	Maputu, Mozambique
Banjul, Gambia	M'babane, Swaziland
Brasilia, Brazil	Mexico City, Mexico
Bujumbura, Burundi	Mogadishu, Somalia
Cairo, Egypt	Nairobi, Kenya
Conakry, Guinea	NDjamena, Chad
Harare, Zimbabwe	Rangoon, Burma
Kigali, Rwanda	Sanaa, Yemen
Kinshasa, Zaire	Tunis, Tunisia
Lagos, Nigeria	Yaounde, Cameroon

LISTING OF A.I.D. OFFICES WHICH DID  
NOT RESPOND TO IG CABLE

Beirut, Lebanon  
Bissau, Guinea Bissau  
Freetown, Sierra Leone  
Kampala, Uganda  
Lilongwe, Malawi

Lome/Cotonou, Togo, Benin  
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso  
Pretoria, Rep. of So. Africa  
Tegucigalpa, Honduras

LISTING OF A.I.D. OFFICES  
PROVIDING A CURRENT MDRP

Accra, Ghana  
Bamako, Mali  
Belize City, Belize  
Colombo, Sri Lanka  
Dakar, Senegal  
Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania  
Djibuti, Djibuti  
Gaborone, Botswana  
Guatemala City, Guatemala  
Islamabad, Pakistan  
Jakarta, Indonesia  
Kathmandu, Nepal  
Khartoum, Sudan

Kingston, Jamaica  
La Paz, Bolivia  
Lima, Peru  
Manila, Philippines  
Monrovia, Liberia  
New Delhi, India  
Niamey, Niger  
Nouakchott, Mauritania  
Port Au Prince, Haiti  
Quito, Ecuador  
Rabat, Morocco  
San Jose, Costa Rica  
San Salvador, El Salvador  
Santo Domingo, Dominican Rep.

LISTING OF A.I.D. OFFICES  
PROVIDING A DRAFT MDRP

Asuncion, Paraguay  
Dacca, Bangladesh  
Maseru, Lesotho  
Muscat, Oman

Naples, Italy  
Panama City, Panama  
Praia, Cape Verde  
Suva, Fiji

RESPONSES FROM A.I.D OVERSEAS OFFICES  
THAT DID NOT SUBMIT A MDRP

- Brazil - No plan. Logistics US Southcom Foreign disaster relief operations, dated May 19, 1980, SC regulation No. 700-4 is followed.
- Burma - A.I.D./Burma has in the past relied upon the Government of Burma's very capable and responsive disaster relief committees and the Burmese Red Cross Society for coordination of disaster relief in Burma. Though this approach has proven satisfactory in the past, the Mission will be pulling together information and material for its own disaster relief plan over the next two months or so.
- Burundi - Does not have a disaster relief operations officer and does not plan to name one. Burundi is fortunate in that it does not have a history of natural disasters.
- Cameroon - No Mission plan exists.
- Chad - Mission has no disaster relief plan which contains country-specific instructions. It plans to develop a country disaster relief plan. Although there is no disaster relief plan, it should be noted that there is a sophisticated mechanism in place which has successfully coordinated disaster assistance since 1982.
- Egypt - The Mission currently does not have a detailed disaster relief plan. We keep a list of contacts of government and voluntary agencies involved in disaster relief in Egypt.
- Ethiopia - The entire U.S. A.I.D. program in Ethiopia is an emergency relief operation; thus we have no specific disaster relief plan of the kind that most posts develop in anticipation of a disaster.
- Gambia - Banjul does not have a disaster relief plan nor has it any intention of developing any in the near future.
- Guinea - Mission has not completed its country disaster relief plan.

- Jordan - We do not have a disaster relief plan, but do have plans to survey host government disaster capability and based on survey establish appropriate procedures.
- Kenya - Mission currently does not have its own disaster relief plan. Mission currently intends to put together a disaster relief plan in the near future.
- Nigeria - There is no formal disaster relief plan. USAID staff very small and not qualified to produce plan.
- Portugal - Mission does not have current disaster relief plan as past experience has demonstrated that GOP has organizations suitably responsive to Portugal's disaster needs.
- Somalia - This mission does not have formal disaster relief plan, but rather responds to disaster situations on ad hoc basis.
- Swaziland - Mission does not have full disaster relief plan for Swaziland which is a relatively stable environment. Due to limited USAID staff resources, good communications in this small country, and relative disaster-free history, Mission does not believe it necessary to develop extensive plan along handbook guidelines.
- Tunisia - Mission advised that OFDA would engage a consultant to prepare the Mission's disaster relief plan.
- Zambia - Post does not have a current disaster relief plan. Development of a mission disaster plan will take some time. We will be beginning work on this shortly.
- Zaire - There is no particular plan. The Consular Officer does have on file a disaster assistance handbook prepared by the Bureau of Consular Affairs.
- Zimbabwe - Mission does not have a written disaster relief plan. Zimbabwe generally meets definition in which disaster emergency assistance is least likely.

COUNTRIES RECEIVING OFDA ASSISTANCE  
BUT NOT HAVING AN MDRP

<u>Country</u>	<u>Amount of Assistance</u>	<u>Type of Assistance Provided</u>
Burkina Faso	\$ 238,000	Insect Infestation - Ambassador's authority used for grasshopper control, grant to FAO and helicopter flying time
Burkina Faso	3,140,081	Drought - Used for well/dam construction and other water projects
Burma	24,000	Fire - Ambassador's authority given to Burma Red Cross
Cameroon	341,361	Lake Explosion - Scientists, physicians, tents, food & safety equipment
Cameroon	200,000	Insect Infestation - Grant to FAO for aircraft parts
Chad	940,841	Insect Infestation - Grant to FAO for technical assistance, tools
Chad	299,023	Drought - Procurement and airlift of medical supplies
Ethiopia	75,000	Insect Infestation - Grant to FAO for locust surveillance program
Ethiopia	16,976,592	Drought - For agricultural recovery programs, transportation support and emergency feeding
Gambia	35,000	Insect Infestation - Grant to FAO
Guinea-Bissau	29,000	Insect Infestation - Grant to FAO
Kenya	171,960	Drought - Increase in grant to CARE for transport of food
Mozambique	5,412,071	Drought - Purchase seeds, provide grants and transport blankets
Sierra Leone	22,800	Epidemic - Ambassador's authority contributed to UNICEF/UNIPAC for medicines

Somalia	25,000	Epidemic - Ambassador's authority donated to UNICEF for transport of medical supplies
Somalia	9,975	Accident - Protective clothing for chemical spill clean-up
South Africa	248,320	Civil Strife - Ambassador's authority for grants to local PVOs for purchase of tents, cots, blankets and other relief supplies
South Africa	125,000	Food Shortage - Grant for feeding program in homelands
Uganda	505,018	Displaced Persons -Purchase family kits for the displaced in the Luwero Triangle
Zaire	10,860	Insect Infestation - Technical assistance
Zambia	100,000	Insect Infestation - Grant for helicopter flying time
Total	<u>\$28,929,902</u>	

EVALUATION OF MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY  
PLANNING ELEMENTS OF MDRPS SUBMITTED TO INSPECTOR GENERAL

<u>Mission</u>	<u>Number of Essential Elements Contained in Plan</u>	
Accra, Ghana	0	
Asuncion, Paraguay	0	
Bamako, Mali	0	
Belize City, Belize	0	
Colombo, Sri Lanka	1	(c)
Dacca, Bangladesh	0	
Dakar, Senegal	0	
Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania	0	
Djibuti, Djibuti	0	
Gaboroni, Botswana	3	(a)(b)(c)
Guatemala City, Guatemala	2	(a)(b)
Islamabad, Pakistan	0	
Jakarta, Indonesia	4	(a)(b)(c)(d)
Kathmandu, Nepal	2	(a)(b)
Khartoum, Sudan	0	
Kingston, Jamaica	3	(a)(b)(c)
La Paz, Bolivia	1	(a)
Lima, Peru	1	(b)
Manila, Philippines	4	(a)(b)(c)(d)
Maseru, Lesotho	1	(d)
Monrovia, Liberia	0	
Muscat, Oman	0	
Naples, Italy	0	
New Delhi, India	0	
Niamey, Niger	1	(a)
Nouakchott, Mauritania	1	(a)
Panama City, Panama	2	(a)(b)
Port Au Prince, Haiti	3	(a)(b)(d)
Praia, Cape Verde	3	(a)(b)(d)
Quito, Ecuador	2	(a)(b)
Rabat, Morocco	1	(a)
San Jose, Costa Rica	0	
San Salvador, El Salvador	2	(a)(b)
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	2	(a)(b)
Suva, Fiji	0	

- a. Spells out explicit lines of authority and responsibility for monitoring
- b. Clearly states that Mission is accountable for funds and other resources which it receives
- c. Stresses accountability standards to host country counterparts to avoid misuse of resources
- d. Points out short-term relief and rehabilitation should not become confused with long-term construction

EVALUATION OF COUNTRY TEAM RESOURCES  
PLANNING ELEMENTS OF MDRPS SUBMITTED TO INSPECTOR GENERAL

<u>Mission</u>	<u>Number of Essential Elements Contained in Plan</u>	
Accra, Ghana	2	(a)(b)
Asuncion, Paraguay	1	(a)
Bamako, Mali	1	(a)
Belize City, Belize	1	(a)
Colombo, Sri Lanka	1	(a)
Dacca, Bangladesh	0	
Dakar, Senegal	1	(a)
Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania	1	(a)
Djibuti, Djibuti	0	
Gaboroni, Botswana	0	
Guatemala City, Guatemala	2	(a)(c)
Islamabad, Pakistan	0	
Jakarta, Indonesia	1	(a)
Kathmandu, Nepal	1	(a)
Khartoum, Sudan	0	
Kingston, Jamaica	1	(a)
La Paz, Bolivia	1	(a)
Lima, Peru	1	(a)
Manila, Philippines	1	(a)
Maseru, Lesotho	1	(a)
Monrovia, Liberia	0	
Muscat, Oman	0	
Naples, Italy	0	
New Delhi, India	2	(a)(b)
Niamey, Niger	0	
Nouakchott, Mauritania	0	
Panama City, Panama	1	(a)
Port Au Prince, Haiti	1	(a)
Praia, Cape Verde	0	
Quito, Ecuador	3	(a)(c)(d)
Rabat, Morocco	0	
San Jose, Costa Rica	0	
San Salvador, El Salvador	2	(a)(b)
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	1	(a)
Suva, Fiji	0	

- a. Listings of Country Team individuals with skills of interest or potential value in assessing damage or needs, monitoring U.S. Government and other donor assistance, staffing the post command center, etc.
- b. Maps and technical data available in Commercial Library and Country Team component offices.
- c. Possible A.I.D. participation in in-country radio nets of Agriculture, Health and other ministries.
- d. Cars and trucks available for assessment travel; state of maintenance; spare parts, repair capability; fuel stocks and containers; field trip camping equipment.

EVALUATION OF POST ORGANIZATION FOR  
PLANNING ELEMENTS OF MDRPS SUBMITTED TO INSPECTOR GENERAL

<u>Mission</u>	<u>Number of Essential Elements Contained in Plan</u>	
Accra, Ghana	0	
Asuncion, Paraguay	0	
Bamako, Mali	0	
Belize City, Belize	0	
Colombo, Sri Lanka	0	
Dacca, Bangladesh	0	
Dakar, Senegal	0	
Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania	0	
Djibuti, Djibuti	0	
Gaboroni, Botswana	0	
Guatemala City, Guatemala	1	(a)
Islamabad, Pakistan	0	
Jakarta, Indonesia	1	(a)
Kathmandu, Nepal	1	(b)
Khartoum, Sudan	0	
Kingston, Jamaica	2	(a)(b)
La Paz, Bolivia	0	
Lima, Peru	1	(b)
Manila, Philippines	1	(a)
Maseru, Lesotho	0	
Monrovia, Liberia	0	
Muscat, Oman	0	
Naples, Italy	0	
New Delhi, India	0	
Niamey, Niger	0	
Nouakchott, Mauritania	0	
Panama City, Panama	2	(a)(b)
Port Au Prince, Haiti	0	
Praia, Cape Verde	1	(a)
Quito, Ecuador	0	
Rabat, Morocco	0	
San Jose, Costa Rica	1	(a)
San Salvador, El Salvador	2	(a)(b)
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	2	(a)(b)
Suva, Fiji	0	

- a. Field assessments of situation and needs, and interim evaluation of factual information from government and other local and foreign observers; preparation of numbered situation reports; and identification of material and in-country transport needs and local resources.

- b. Principal and alternative locations for use as Command Center. Command Center space should be convenient to post communications facility, and should be equipped with work tables, telephones, typewriters, emergency generators, and office supplies. Copies of the MDRP and maps should be readily accessible.
- c. Establish responsibility within the Country Team for checking and securing all material purchased or arriving in country until receipt by an authorized official of a disaster relief implementing agency; provide for supply logistics monitoring by post personnel to ensure timely distribution to the intended recipients and identify supplies in excess of needs for warehousing or subsequent recovery.

EVALUATION OF ASSESSMENT OF DAMAGE  
AND NEEDS PLANNING ELEMENTS OF  
MDRPS SUBMITTED TO INSPECTOR GENERAL

<u>Mission</u>	<u>Number of Essential Elements Contained in Plan</u>	
Accra, Ghana	0	
Asuncion, Paraguay	0	
Bamako, Mali	0	
Belize City, Belize	0	
Colombo, Sri Lanka	0	
Dacca, Bangladesh	0	
Dakar, Senegal	0	
Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania	0	
Djibuti, Djibuti	0	
Gabaroni, Botswana	0	
Guatemala City, Guatemala	3	(a)(b)(c)
Islamabad, Pakistan	0	
Jakarta, Indonesia	3	(a)(b)(c)
Kathmandu, Nepal	3	(a)(b)(c)
Khartoum, Sudan	0	
Kingston, Jamaica	3	(a)(b)(c)
La Paz, Bolivia	0	
Lima, Peru	0	
Manila, Philippines	4	(a)(b)(c)(d)
Maseru, Lesotho	3	(a)(b)(c)
Monrovia, Liberia	0	
Muscat, Oman	0	
Naples, Italy	0	
New Delhi, India	0	
Niamey, Niger	1	(c)
Nouakchott, Mauritania	0	
Panama City, Panama	3	(a)(b)(c)
Port Au Prince, Haiti	1	(c)
Praia, Cape Verde	0	
Quito, Ecuador	3	(a)(b)(c)
Rabat, Morocco	0	
San Jose, Costa Rica	0	
San Salvador, El Salvador	3	(a)(b)(c)
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	3	(a)(b)(c)
Suva, Fiji	0	

- a. Provides basic data upon which decisions can be made.
- b. Identifies what needs have been created by the disaster; what resources are available within the stricken community and surrounding area, and from various other donor governments and organizations, and what is the remaining gap which must be filled.
- c. Assures that professional or responsible American officers and FSN employees observe the disaster situation before recommending a major relief undertaking.
- d. Provides for the assessment of rehabilitation needs as well as relief needs; and should designate post staff responsibility for developing and monitoring rehabilitation plans.

EVALUATION OF COORDINATION WITH HOST  
GOVERNMENT PLANNING ELEMENTS OF  
MDRPS SUBMITTED TO INSPECTOR GENERAL

<u>Mission</u>	<u>Number of Essential Elements Contained in Plan</u>	
Accra, Ghana	0	
Asuncion, Paraguay	0	
Bamako, Mali	0	
Belize City, Belize	0	
Colombo, Sri Lanka	1	(a)
Dacca, Bangladesh	1	(a)
Dakar, Senegal	0	
Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania	0	
Djibuti, Djibuti	1	(a)
Gaboroni, Botswana	1	(a)
Guatemala City, Guatemala	0	
Islamabad, Pakistan	0	
Jakarta, Indonesia	3	(a)(d)(e)
Kathmandu, Nepal	1	(a)
Khartoum, Sudan	0	
Kingston, Jamaica	0	
La Paz, Bolivia	1	(a)
Lima, Peru	1	(a)
Manila, Philippines	3	(a)(d)(e)
Maseru, Lesotho	0	
Monrovia, Liberia	1	(a)
Muscat, Oman	0	
Naples, Italy	0	
New Delhi, India	1	(a)
Niamey, Niger	0	
Nouakchott, Mauritania	0	
Panama City, Panama	0	
Port Au Prince, Haiti	0	
Praia, Cape Verde	0	
Quito, Ecuador	0	
Rabat, Morocco	0	
San Jose, Costa Rica	0	
San Salvador, El Salvador	1	(a)
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	2	(a)(e)
Suva, Fiji	1	(a)

- a. Identify and provide telephone numbers for that individual or agency, such as the Foreign Ministry, empowered to make official requests for assistance or approve the requests of others.
- b. Provide procedural guidance for informing the government of the determination and, at this time, suggesting that the

- government publish general instructions on reviewing and approving requests for external assistance (gracefully rejecting donations of unsolicited and inappropriate items, for example).
- c. If assistance is to be provided, the government should be requested to direct customs and airport management, etc., to arrange for immediate entry and secure storage until supplies are forwarded to the disaster area.
  - d. Assure that the post is alert to the substance of requests from other than the official source, but require that all requests have the approval of government before they are acted upon.
  - e. Assure that government appeals for assistance are made to other potential donors as well as the U.S., or report the rationale for an exclusively bilateral initiative in a cable classified as appropriate.
  - f. Include a caution for any discussion with the host government of possible U.S. assistance in reconstruction until the post has discussed the matter with the Department and the appropriate Bureau of A.I.D..

EVALUATION OF SITUATION REPORTING PLANNING  
ELEMENTS OF MDRPS SUBMITTED TO INSPECTOR GENERAL

<u>Mission</u>	<u>Number of Essential Elements Contained in Plan</u>	
Accra, Ghana	0	
Asuncion, Paraguay	0	
Bamako, Mali	0	
Belize City, Belize	0	
Colombo, Sri Lanka	1	(a)
Dacca, Bangladesh	0	
Dakar, Senegal	0	
Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania	0	
Djibuti, Djibuti	0	
Gaboroni, Botswana	1	(a)
Guatemala City, Guatemala	1	(a)
Islamabad, Pakistan	1	(a)
Jakarta, Indonesia	1	(a)
Kathmandu, Nepal	1	(a)
Khartoum, Sudan	0	
Kingston, Jamaica	1	(a)
La Paz, Bolivia	0	
Lima, Peru	1	(a)
Manila, Philippines	1	(a)
Maseru, Lesotho	0	
Monrovia, Liberia	0	
Muscat, Oman	0	
Naples, Italy	0	
New Delhi, India	1	(a)
Niamey, Niger	1	(a)
Nouakchott, Mauritania	0	
Panama City, Panama	1	(a)
Port Au Prince, Haiti	1	(a)
Praia, Cape Verde	1	(a)
Quito, Ecuador	1	(a)
Rabat, Morocco	0	
San Jose, Costa Rica	0	
San Salvador, El Salvador	1	(a)
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	1	(a)
Suva, Fiji	1	(a)

- a. Offer guidance for preparation of a series of numbered Situation Reports, to be transmitted by immediate cable to OFDA, beginning with the actual or threatened disaster and continuing through the period during which emergency actions may be required.

USAID/PHILIPPINES MDRP  
MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY  
PROCEDURES

1. Spell out the explicit lines of authority and responsibility for monitoring.

Accountability and Internal Control - The CM has the overall responsibility for monitoring the distribution and use of relief supplies to ensure that they reach the disaster victims. In actual practice, the MDRO serves as the guarantor that accountability is maintained for all U.S. Government disaster assistance provided (including funds, commodities, etc.) and that reporting requirements are met. The MDRO is assisted in meeting his responsibilities by the Mission Disaster Relief Team. In order to ensure that adequate accountability for the disaster assistance is maintained, careful attention should be given to the following items by the responsible Mission Disaster Relief Team Members.

- All cost estimates submitted by implementing agencies of disaster assistance must be adequately reviewed. This review should include: verifying on a sample basis the actual need for the requested assistance; independently verifying the reasonableness of the costs for any commodities being provided; and verifying that the mathematical extensions of unit prices and quantities included in the estimates are correct.
- All materials or commodities acquired must be adequately monitored. This monitoring should be at a level which will ensure that: the number of items purchased does not exceed the number of items approved for purchase; the items purchased for specific locations are actually sent to and used at those locations for approved purposes; and any excess materials and/or commodities are disposed of properly.
- Short-term rehabilitation funds are not used to finance regular long-term development activities. With this regard, Chapter 1 of A.I.D. Handbook 8 requires that particular attention to paid to the concepts of emergency disaster relief, short-term rehabilitation assistance, and long-term rehabilitation because the funding authority differs in each instance. It states that long-term rehabilitation is subject to normal A.I.D. programming procedures and cannot be funded from the International Disaster Assistance account. It also specifically states that short-term rehabilitation funds are not intended to supplement long-term development or technical assistance projects.

- This means that requests for assistance must be critically reviewed to ensure that they cover only short-term benefits to disaster victims. Any requests which will provide long-term benefits (such as a factory or other such facility which did not exist before the disaster) should not be approved using short-term rehabilitation funds.
- Emergency relief funds should be monitored to the extent necessary to ensure that such funds are used for purposes intended by Agency Regulations and within the allowed time period (See Annex D).
- The source of donated food commodities must be publicized at the recipient level in accordance with Agency Regulations. With this regard, A.I.D. Regulation 11, Handbook 9, requires that during the distribution of food commodities by cooperating sponsors, to the maximum extent practicable and with the cooperation of the host government these cooperating sponsors shall give adequate public recognition in the press, by radio and other media that the commodities have been furnished by the people of the United States. It further requires that at distribution centers (recipient levels) cooperating sponsors, to the greatest extent feasible, shall display banners, posters, or similar items which shall contain such information.
- The publicity requirements are contained in USAID's agreements with cooperating sponsors. These requirements should be emphasized in memorandums approving food commodities for disaster assistance. Monitoring should then be done at the recipient level to ensure compliance with the publicity requirements.

Individual Mission Disaster Relief Team Members will be held accountable for implementing necessary internal control procedures to ensure that the above procedures are satisfactorily carried out, as appropriate, for all categories of disaster relief provided. Audit rights are included.

2. Clearly state that the Mission/Embassy is accountable for funds and other resources which it receives.

Individual Mission Disaster Relief Team Members will be held accountable for implementing necessary internal control procedures to ensure that the above procedures are satisfactorily carried out, as appropriate, for all categories of disaster relief provided. Such procedures, and their implementation, must be documented in enough detail to satisfy independent review that accountability for all disaster assistance provided was met.

3. Stress accountability standards to their host counterparts to avoid misuse of resources.

It is important during all phases of the disaster situation, and most importantly during the procurement and provision of relief/rehabilitation supplies and services, that effective coordination with GOP disaster authorities, PVOs, and other donors from the international community be maintained. Such coordination is necessary to ensure minimal wastage and duplication and to ensure that the needs of the victims are being met.

4. Point out that short-term relief and rehabilitation should not be used with long-term construction.

Short-term rehabilitation consists of limited assistance needed to restore disaster victims to self-sufficiency. This might include, but is not limited to, provision of seeds, agricultural or construction hand tools, roofing materials, emergency repair of flood-protection dikes, etc. International Disaster Assistance funds may be used during a 90-day period (which may coincide with the initial emergency period) which begins as soon as plans are developed and funds become available. The rehabilitation period does not extend beyond the 90-day period unless a longer period is approved by the Director, OFDA. Short-term rehabilitation activities are not intended to supplement long-term development or technical assistance projects.

#### Long-Term Rehabilitation or Reconstruction Assistance

Long-term rehabilitation or reconstruction assistance is that which aims to bring the stricken community to a state beyond immediate self-sufficiency, or to improve the pre-existing state of the community. This type of assistance is subject to normal A.I.D. procedures and cannot be funded from the International Disaster Assistance account.

APPENDIX 2

Official Management Comments

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
WASHINGTON D C 20523

September 24, 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR DIG, James B. Durnil

FROM: IG/PSA, Supervisory Auditor, Frank A. Dickey

SUBJECT: Draft Audit Report on the Adequacy of Mission  
Disaster Relief Assistance Plans

As you discussed with Leo LaMotte, RIG/A/M, I have summarized the discussions Leo and I had with officials of the A.I.D./ Washington regional bureau regarding recommendations of the subject draft audit report. Our purpose was to determine whether the regional bureaus would be receptive to a recommendation that required the regional bureau AAs to direct the A.I.D. overseas mission and offices submit disaster assistance relief assistance plans that meet OFDA and A.I.D. Handbook requirements. The wording of the recommendations discussed with these officials follows:

Recommendation No. 1

We recommend that the Director, Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance furnish on a periodic basis to the Assistant Administrators of the Bureau for Africa, Bureau for Asia and Near East, and Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean a list of A.I.D. overseas missions and offices that have not submitted disaster relief assistance plans and identify the inadequacies in the plans of overseas missions or offices which have submitted plans.

Recommendation No. 2

We recommend that the Assistant Administrators of the Bureau for Africa, Bureau for Asia and Near East and Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean require that the A.I.D. overseas missions and offices submit disaster relief assistance plans to the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance and require inadequacies of plans as identified by the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance be corrected.

The below persons contacted in the regional bureaus essentially agreed to the intent of these recommendations. The intent of the recommendations was that (1) OFDA would retain oversight responsibility to ensure the plans were submitted and complied with OFDA planning and A.I.D. Handbook requirements, and (2) the regional bureaus would not have oversight responsibility but would use their line authority to require the overseas mission and offices submit plans that complied with OFDA planning and A.I.D. Handbook requirements.

Persons Contacted

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If there is anything more you want me to do on this please let me know.

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
WASHINGTON D C 20523

October 14, 1987

MEMORANDUM

TO: DIG, James B. Durnil

FROM: OFDA, Julia V. Taft *Julia Taft*

SUBJECT: Draft Audit Report on the Adequacy of Mission Disaster Relief Assistance Plans

This memorandum responds to the subject draft audit report which was forwarded with your memo of August 24, 1987. As we discussed with you and General Beckington several weeks ago, this audit is one of four by the GAO and IG which reflect on the need for improved guidelines for disaster assistance activities. Because the issues which have emerged - integrity of accounts, transition from relief/rehabilitation to reconstruction, accountability, etc. - are so important to OFDA and the Agency we have looked upon the cumulative recommendations as an opportunity to clarify policy, processes and procedures. This is an awesome task which must take into account the 23 years of our experience, the intervening changes in the Agency's perceptions of disaster assistance, the legislative history and the several regional variations of the recovery theme.

Our plans to let contracts to accomplish this work have been delayed because of the fiscal year-end constraints on non-relief funding. We intend to proceed apace now that new year funds are available.

With regard to the most recent recommendations on Mission Disaster Relief Plans, our comments are attached.

## OFDA Comments

on

### Draft Audit Report on the Adequacy of Mission Disaster Relief Assistance Plans.

#### 1. Summary

OFDA has long recognized the problems highlighted by the Office of the Inspector General in respect to the lack of disaster relief planning. The lack of precision in Handbook 8 guidelines has led to wide diversity in quality of Mission Disaster Relief Plans - or in many cases, no plan at all - which does not necessarily reflect the countries' proneness to disasters. There are several reasons why plan requirements have not been more stringent, including:

- o Wide variations in the frequency and type of disaster response required of A.I.D. field offices and U.S. Diplomatic Missions.
- o Need for flexibility in U.S. Government responses to foreign disaster victims.
- o Lack of mechanisms by which to enforce requirements for U.S. Mission disaster planning.
- o Lack of uniformity of resources available in U.S. overseas Missions to create and maintain plans.

OFDA appreciates the opportunity offered by the Inspector General's audit report to strengthen Mission disaster planning. We will, however, need guidance from the Office of the Inspector General and A.I.D. management in defining the scope of planning which should be required of A.I.D. field offices and the mechanisms by which such requirements may be enforced.

#### 2. Executive Summary

The root of the problem, from OFDA's perspective, is contained in the phrase: "guidelines for preparation of disaster relief plans are suggestive in nature and not necessarily obligatory." Several important factors have led to this fact.

1. Disaster relief, by Congressional intent, is meant to be as flexible as feasible within the context of sound management judgment. Any constraining mechanisms such as more stringent language in Handbook 8 have been difficult to formulate without jeopardizing that intent.

1/1

2. Disaster relief has generally been perceived as anomalous to the mandated functions of the AID Missions; disasters are, with the exception of a few Missions, perceived as being counter to development rather than a part of the Mission's portfolio.
3. The function of Mission Disaster Relief Officer (MDRO) is not recognized as a formal position; MDROs commonly inherit the responsibility without benefit of compensating authority and without recognition in their career development. They are not usually evaluated on their MDRO responsibilities, which are additional to the full time functions represented by their overseas position descriptions.
4. There is common agreement (shared, we believe, by the Inspector General) that countries - even A.I.D. countries - vary significantly in their prone-ness to disasters, in the ability of the host government to cope and in the mechanisms through which disaster relief is appropriately channeled. Since the draft audit report calls for OFDA to assist Missions in their plan preparation, this factor becomes critical: (who) needs a plan and how much of a plan is needed?
5. OFDA has severe staffing constraints: A single regional division staff person may have responsibility for twenty or more countries, respond to ten or more disasters a year and also have a full plate of regional and national disaster preparedness activities requiring constant monitoring and supervision. Mission preparedness is a high priority for all of us, but there are only so many hours in a day. Add to this the difficulty we have in funding OFDA staff travel to the Missions and it becomes clear that OFDA is extremely hard pressed to facilitate or assure readiness in the field.
6. We agree with the IG that improved guidelines for Mission disaster preparedness are required and can help solve some of the problems outlined above. We can speculate that guidelines will be used correctly only if Mission personnel are familiar and comfortable with them. This implies the need for heightened awareness and training.

We have developed the mechanism for communicating with our counterparts in the Missions and have recently forwarded packets of awareness materials which have been well received. We do not, however, have sufficient means for training and maintaining awareness of Mission personnel nor do Missions have funds earmarked for this purpose (e.g. travel).

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We are hopeful that the Office of the Inspector General and the Bureau for Management can assist us in reconciling the above problem areas.

## Part I - Introduction

Section B. Audit Objectives and Scope: Although the audit covered only A.I.D. field offices, there are several other U.S. diplomatic Missions which may be instrumental in delivering disaster relief assistance without benefit of A.I.D. representation. Although these embassies and consulates may be beyond the purview of the A.I.D. Inspector General's concern, amendments or new guidelines will need be reflected in the Foreign Affairs Handbook: Crisis Management, which will soon supersede 2 FAM 060 (Foreign Affairs Manual Chapter on Disaster Assistance). Presumably the A.I.D. Inspector General has or will coordinate its concerns and recommendations with the State Department IG.

## Part II - Results of Audit

### Section A. Findings and Recommendations

The paragraph suggests three reasons why Mission Disaster Relief Plans (MDRP) have been inadequate:

1. OFDA has little leverage to require field offices to comply. OFDA perceives that this condition pertains, at least in part, because of the chain of responsibility which is summarized in the Executive Summary of Handbook 8: "In brief, the Ambassador or Chief of Mission has primary responsibility for providing U.S. assistance in the event of disaster in a host country...." "It is in the interest of the CM and the USG to anticipate and develop plans to be implemented in the event of a disaster." OFDA is not empowered, to the best of our knowledge, to require the CM to submit plans. Further, there is no requirement that the Mission Disaster Relief Officer (MDRO) need be an A.I.D. employee; thus the ability of A.I.D. to exact requirements such as a plan "fully consistent with Agency regulations" becomes even more suspect.

Three solutions suggest themselves. The Agency can exclude non-A.I.D. countries and give A.I.D. field offices clear responsibility for formulating and maintaining the MDRP. The Agency can prevail upon State to require the Ambassador to take action. Or, best, a combination of the two could cover all countries in which relief assistance may be administered.

2. Field Offices need technical assistance. This has served as leverage in the past. Where OFDA has perceived a crying need for creation or updating of a plan, we have provided assistance in preparing it. OFDA is not sure how specific OFDA funded plans have been found by the Inspector General to be inadequate. It would appear from the Tables of Evaluation that secondary sources, such as national disaster plan contents, which would make certain elements of the MDRP redundant, have not been taken into consideration. OFDA's chief problem here is our extremely limited resources - both funding and qualified experts - which can be made available to assist Missions to revise their plans.
3. Handbook 8 does not clearly state planning requirements. This we are preparing to remedy.

Recommendation No. 1

OFDA believes the two actions addressed to the AA/M can be useful in attaining better compliance. As noted earlier, OFDA has provided each mission with a packet of information on its role and past activities in the country. A sample packet is provided and may be considered to have achieved the desired effect of action item (1). Action item (2), we believe, could answer part of the problem addressed above in the "Findings and Recommendations" comments. We are not sure what options are available to AA/M, but assume they would either have to be consistent with the current understanding that the Ambassador bears responsibility or that understanding would have to be changed.

Recommendations No. 2

OFDA has utilized all three of the suggested alternative forms of providing technical assistance on an ad hoc basis. Again, we are pleased to offer such assistance within our severely limited resources. To reiterate:

- a) Funding for and availability of qualified consultants is constrained.
- b) Since none of the plans OFDA has provided assistance for has, according to the draft report, met the standards of the IG, we would appreciate the Inspector General's assistance in formulating a pro forma disaster assistance plan (The new State Crisis Management Handbook may be an appropriate model (See attachment)).
- c) OFDA's allocation of non-relief travel funds is so minuscule as to preclude direct hire staff functioning in this capacity, much as we would benefit from doing so. Our staff has frequently provided initiative and advice, but we have never been able to afford the luxury of spending the required 2-3 weeks in-country for this purpose.

### Recommendation No 3

OFDA is currently planning revisions to Handbook 8 to be responsive to four recent audit reports (or draft report).

1. GAO Audit on EL Nino Reconstruction
2. IG Audit on EL Nino Reconstruction
3. IG Audit on Typhoon Disaster Assistance to the Philippines.
4. IG Audit on Mission Disaster Relief Assistance Plans.

One significant part of this effort is the clarification of the responsibility for and the contents of the MDRP.

### Discussion

A small point, but the second sentence of paragraph 2 should read "coordinates all J.S. Government assistance."

### Mission MDRPs not Prepared as Required by Agency Regulations

Recommendation No. 1 clearly calls for each and every A.I.D. overseas field office to submit a MDRP. What is less clear is the IG's reaction to the concept (as stated in this section by Swaziland) that different countries need different levels of plan to be determined by the frequency or magnitude of disasters or by the ability of the host government to cope. If we arbitrarily require a full blown plan by all Missions (including, for example, Paris) then OFDA faces a real dilemma if we are required to facilitate the development and maintenance of the plans. If we do not have the resources for supporting the plans, much less enforcing their timely and adequate preparation, who, then, is liable for inadequate preparation? The question of timing and priority becomes critical. During the past few years we have been able to field individuals or teams to complete no more than four MDRPs per year. Some countries (e.g. Ivory Coast, Philippines) have been able to comply by their own initiatives. Still, we must assume others will not.

The question also arises as to what, if any, responsibility A.I.D. in general and OFDA specifically bear in ensuring that diplomatic posts without A.I.D. representation provide adequate planning and subsequent accountability in the disbursement of International Disaster Assistance (IDA) funds and relief supplies. As stated earlier, we are actively engaged in transferring relevant Handbook 8 content to the Foreign Affairs Handbook on Crisis Management. Where lies the responsibility for enforcement, however, in non-A.I.D. countries, especially highly disaster-prone countries like Venezuela and Chile?

### Handbook Guidelines Are Not Being Followed by Missions

Herein lies the crux of the problem as viewed by the Inspector General and OFDA. Below are the solutions OFDA plans to implement with reference to constraints we may face.

- Control, Accountability and Monitoring: OFDA will revise Handbook 8 guidance to address each of the four essential elements. Additionally, we shall take every opportunity to reinforce the guidelines with telephone and cable guidance to meet the specific needs of a disaster relief effort.
- Country Team Resources: Obviously, since OFDA included these points in Handbook 8, we feel they are important. Clearly, however, we need more incentive for the Missions to comply. This is another exercise for which we give Missions responsibility, but no resources by which to accomplish the effort.

Inherent in the analysis by the Inspector General, with regard to the El Salvador example, is a suggestion that the letter of Handbook 8 guidance is more important than the spirit. Taking El Salvador to task for not including maintenance, repair parts, etc. may not be productive. On reflection, it would appear more sensible to rely on the Missions to insure availability of existing assets through normal administrative procedures rather than requiring a detailed listing of resources in the plan. The point is that we can weaken our case by demanding unrealistic compliance by the Missions.

- Post Organization for Relief Assistance: The problem here would appear to be related to a question of what needs to be in a "plan" as opposed to what needs to be done to satisfy requirements of Handbook 8 at the time of a disaster. OFDA proposes to revise guidelines to the plan to better depict how the necessary information should be collected and stored.
- Assessment of Damage and Needs: Through a grant to the University of Wisconsin, OFDA has developed a training course and manuals in damage and needs assessment, including personal computer applications. As soon as published, these will be made available to relevant Missions and guidance will be revised to incorporate the new processes.
- Coordination with Host Government: Each A.I.D. Mission will have different needs and ability to coordinate with the host government. For this reason OFDA suggested (Appendix D to Handbook B, Page D-4) "Each post should design its MDRP based on its perception of needs within the country; a standard format is not required." While agreeing with the Inspector General that better guidelines are needed, it's

not clear to us what exception the Inspector General takes with the way this element is handled in the extant plans. If it is suggested that the Handbook 8 guideline elements should simply be copied into the MDRP, then we feel it would be hard to justify this redundancy. OFDA will consider including free-standing pages of guidance in Handbook 8 which can be readily transferred into the MDRP.

- Situation Reporting: Here, again, it is not clear to us why there needs to be redundancy between Handbook 8 which spells out reporting requirements, and the Mission Disaster Relief Plan. If the Inspector General is arguing that all relevant guidance be incorporated in the MDRP, as opposed to some elements residing for reference in Handbook 8 as was the original intent, we're not sure that the advantage of having it all in one place outweighs the cost of redundancy.

Current Level of Disaster Preparedness is Not Efficient: OFDA agrees in principle with this conclusion. We are concerned, however, with the tacit presumption that good MDRPs will guarantee good relief efforts. We suspect that the examples cited in the section were at least in part due to the following:

- High volatility and pressures posed by life-threatening disaster situations.
- Responsible U.S.G. and host government officials having to deal with competing job demands in addition to relief tasks.
- Mission Disaster Relief Officers not having benefit of training in relief operations.

Therefore, although we do not question the desirability and need to improve guidelines to the Missions and upgrading of MDRPs, these actions in themselves do not solve the problem. We would argue that fundamental changes to "the system" would be needed to ensure efficient relief efforts. These would include redefining the role, authority and responsibilities of the Mission Disaster Relief Officer and providing suitable and continuing training opportunities.

#### Schedule Showing Deficiencies in the Disaster Assistance Program

The conclusions (three areas of weakness) drawn from the frequency distribution of deficiencies seems to be a little short on statistical validity, which does not bother us. OFDA is concerned, however, by the second of the three areas. Presumably this paragraph refers to the GAO Audit on the El Nino Reconstruction effort. Since OFDA bore no responsibility for the disposition or management of these reconstruction funds - nor could we under our mandate - it is erroneous to say that "OFDA was not using the flexible funding authority available to it..." Perhaps it was intended to be "A.I.D." rather than

"OFDA." In any case, this is being examined in the context of OFDA providing guidelines for the transition from relief/rehabilitation to reconstruction.

Summary Comments: Some of the apparent inconsistencies mentioned above are reiterated here. Although it is clear that A.I.D. field offices are obliged to prepare MDRPs, Handbook 8 gives them considerable leeway in terms of content. This was thought to be reasonable because of the variances in disaster threat and the ability of several host countries to respond to their own needs with little or no A.I.D. intervention. OFDA, according to the report, is responsible for ensuring plans are prepared and kept up to date, yet we have no vehicle for enforcement, particularly if, as we have interpreted it, it is the U.S. Ambassador who is responsible for the preparedness of the U.S. Mission. Additionally, as earlier stated, OFDA has not the resources to support all Missions in this respect.

By alluding to the fact that disaster assistance has gone to Missions without MDRPs implies that disaster assistance might be conditioned on the existence of such a plan. From a policy viewpoint this might not be consistent with our purely humanitarian mandate, Congressional intent, our not-withstanding clause, foreign policy considerations, etc.

This section would seem to ignore the fact that A.I.D. Missions exist to program, implement and monitor field operations. Extant guidelines in no way suggest that sound management practices and common sense accountability can be waived in disaster relief activities. We agree entirely that guidelines need strengthening, but, as the report states, abuse is possible even when the Mission is fully prepared - no matter how good the MDRP may be. This supports our contention that the issue is wider than the plan itself. We must look at the controlling issues of authority and responsibility, familiarization and training, and maintenance of awareness. To do the job that needs to be done, some additional resources will be needed. OFDA looks forward to the views of the Inspector General and A.I.D. management as to how these resources may be brought to bear.

#### Compliance and Internal Controls

There is no question regarding the inadequacy of compliance to date. We have a significant question, however, as to what tools can be used to enforce compliance. Conditioning response to the adequacy of MDRPs is a mechanism which would not be supported by Agency Management or the Congress. We need guidance from A.I.D. management on alternative approaches.

OFDA is currently working with the Office of the Controller as well as the Inspector General to insure adequate internal control safeguards in the Disaster Assistance program.

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LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Page

Recommendation No.1

4

We recommend that:

- a. the Director, Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance identify and communicate to the Agency Operating bureaus a list of A.I.D. field offices overseas which either fail to submit disaster relief plans or submit plans that are severely deficient, and
- b. the Assistant Administrators of the Agency Operating Bureaus ensure that A.I.D. field offices overseas submit Mission Disaster Relief Plans to the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance for review and approval and correct those plans found deficient.

Recommendation No. 2

5

We recommend that the Director, Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance, develop and implement a plan to assist the A.I.D. overseas field offices in the preparation of their Mission Disaster Relief Plans. This assistance can take various forms:

- a. The use of consultants to assist the individual field offices in developing their country plan.
- b. The use of a pro forma disaster assistance plan that can be tailored to meet the local conditions of the country.
- c. Site visits by staff members of the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance to assist A.I.D. overseas offices in developing their country plan.
- d. The use of seminars in which cognizant A.I.D. oversea office staff members are advised of disaster relief planning requirements.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS (Contd)

	<u>Page</u>
<u>Recommendation No. 3</u>	5
<p>We recommend that the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance revise A.I.D. Handbook 8 to provide improved procedures for the preparation, content and maintenance of Mission Disaster Relief Plans. As a minimum, the changes should:</p>	
<p>a. provide specific procedures for control and accountability of disaster assistance (see Appendix 1) which could be used as a guide for improving Handbook 8 procedural requirements in these areas, and</p>	
<p>b. clarify Mission responsibilities for disaster preparedness, especially for those A.I.D. offices located in countries having little likelihood for a natural disaster.</p>	

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