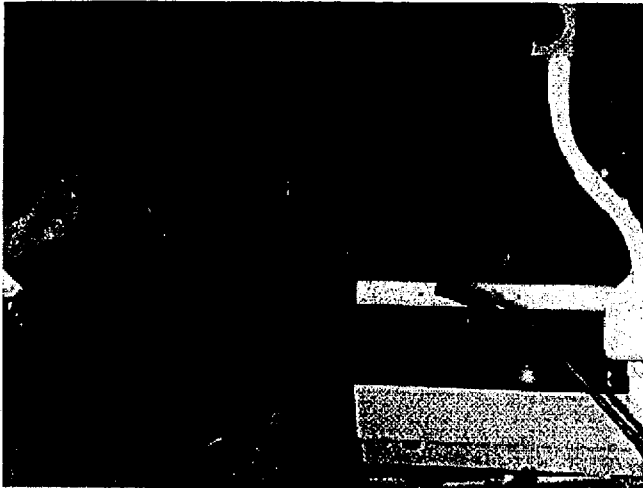


**PROPOSAL FOR A COORDINATED FLEXIBLE APPROACH
TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT AND QUALITY OF ESSENTIAL INFORMATION
POSTED ON RELIEFWEB AND
TO ENSURE THAT THE INFORMATION IS PROVIDED IN A FORMAT USEFUL
TO ALL RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS.⁽¹⁾**



Dennis King, ReliefWeb, Alan Huguley NIMA and Larry Roeder, US Department of State

Discussing elements of the Core Data initiative at the October, 1997⁽²⁾

ReliefWeb Seminar in Geneva.

The following proposal was presented to various NGO's, governments and UN organizations in Geneva in October, 1997 as a possible approach to ease the sharing of essential operational information. Please comment on the ideas represented here and let us know what you think in advance of the January Meeting of Experts on Emergency Information Management. If the conference attendees accept the proposal, we propose that UNDHA/ReliefWeb manage the development of the list in the future through UNDHA chaired meetings.

- 1. EACH RELIEF ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT COLLECTS INFORMATION ESSENTIAL TO NATURAL DISASTER AND HUMANITARIAN RELIEF OPERATIONS IN DIFFERENT WAYS. FOR EXAMPLE, A DATA TABLE ON WATER COLLECTED BY AN NGO MAY LOOK VERY DIFFERENT THAN ONE DEVELOPED BY WFP OR THE USG. WHEN PLANS ARE MADE TO GO INTO AN EMERGENCY, THIS INFORMATION IS NEEDED ASAP. THE DIFFERENT COLLECTION APPROACHES CAN SLOW THE FLOW OF INFORMATION AND MAY ALSO REDUCE THE DATA'S VALUE.**
- 2. TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM, THE USG PROPOSES THAT DONORS AND OPERATIONAL AGENCIES JOINTLY IDENTIFY CORE DATA USEFUL IN ALL EMERGENCIES THAT COULD BE COLLECTED IN A STANDARD FORMAT AND THEN BE POSTED ON RELIEFWEB FOR ALL TO USE.**
- 3. THE USG ALSO WISHES TO EXPLORE THE PRACTICALITY OF NEW, INNOVATIVE MULTILATERAL APPROACHES TO STIMULATE THE POSTING OF OPERATIONAL DATA ON RELIEFWEB.**
- 4. ONE POSSIBLE APPROACH IS TO EXPLORE NEW WAYS OF PROVIDING TO NGO'S, FOR FREE, GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION OWNED BY DONORS IN RETURN FOR THEIR POSTING CORE DATA ON RELIEFWEB ON A REGULAR**

BASIS AND IN AN AGREED FORMAT, FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE ENTIRE RELIEF COMMUNITY.

- 5. BACKGROUND: WE DO NOT PROPOSE BUILDING A RIGID SYSTEM, AND RECOGNIZE THAT SOME OF THE CORE DATA MAY BE CONSIDERED TOO SENSITIVE TO POST ON THE INTERNET IN SOME INSTANCES. BUT BROAD USE OF COMMON DATASETS AND AUTOMATED MAPPING TOOLS WILL SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVE THE UTILITY AND FLOW OF USEFUL INFORMATION TO THE PROFESSIONALS THAT NEED IT. FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN EITHER PEACEKEEPING FORCES OR RELIEF OFFICERS ARE CALLED IN TO ASSIST IN A DISASTER, LOGISTICAL, FOOD AND WATER INFORMATION IS NEEDED ASAP IN AN INSTANTLY USEABLE FORMAT. USAID IS ALREADY EXPERIMENTING WITH THIS CONCEPT IN LIBERIA.**
- 6. THE USG PROPOSES THE FOLLOWING BE CONSIDERED AS A FIRST DRAFT OF CORE DATA. (IN ALL CASES, INFORMATION SHOULD BE DATED AND SOURCED. ORGANIZATION CALL SIGNS AND FREQUENCIES AND COORDINATES SHOULD ALSO BE SHOWN -- THOUGH NOT THE CALL SIGNS FOR INDIVIDUALS)**

DISPLACED POPULATIONS: TYPE (REFUGEE OR IDP), NUMBER, PLACE OF ORIGIN;

NUTRITION: DATES OF DATA COLLECTION, PERCENT OF UNDER FIVES MALNOURISHED, SAMPLE SIZE;

HEALTH: DATES OF DATA COLLECTION, DISEASE OR SYMPTOMS, NUMBER OF CASES;

HEALTH FACILITY: DATE OF DATA COLLECTION, NAME OF FACILITY, IN-PATIENT?, OUT-PATIENT?, SURGERY?, MEDICAL SUPPLIES/PHARMACY?, LAB?, BLOOD BANK?, NUMBER OF PERSONNEL, NUMBER OF OPERATIONAL VEHICLES;

AGRICULTURAL(SEED SOURCE): NAME OF SEED/SEEDLING SOURCE, CROP 1, CROP 2, CROP N;

SHELTER: DATE OF DATA COLLECTION, NUMBER OF PEOPLE NEEDING SHELTER, NUMBER OF UNITS MADE INHABITABLE, NUMBER OF INHABITANTS PER UNIT;

AIRSTRIPS: SURFACE, LENGTH, STATUS, HAZARDS, WEIGHT LIMITS

BRIDGES: WEIGHT LIMITS, STATUS, WIDTH

COMMUNICATIONS: ORGANIZATION, (SUCH AS NAME OF NGO, UN ORGANIZATIONS, ETC. XMT AND RCV FREQUENCIES, SUB-AUDIBLE TONES AND ORGANIZATION CALL SIGNS. (BUT NOT PERSONAL CALL SIGNS)

PORTS: TONNAGE/DAY, DRAFT, BERTH SIZE

ROADS: COORDINATES FOR START AND END, SURFACE, LANES, CONDITION;

RAILS: COORDINATES FOR START AND END, POWER SOURCE, STATUS;

UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE: TYPE, LOCATION, STATUS, NEAR INHABITED AREA AND DISTANCE, MARKED? PHOTO AVAILABLE?

WAREHOUSES: OPERATOR, CAPACITY;

WATER SOURCES: TYPE (WELL, BORE HOLE, RIVER, ETC.) DATE OF DATA COLLECTION, DESCRIPTION OF SOURCES, QUANTITY/RATE OF FLOW, QUALITY;

HAND DRAWN MAPS: MOST NGO'S CREATE HAND DRAWN MAPS OF WHERE THEY

PROVIDE ASSISTANCE, SHOWING ROADS, HOSPITALS, ETC, AND OFTEN ANNOTATE THE MAPS WITH QUALITATIVE DATA. FOR THE MOST PART, THESE END UP IN THE FILING CABINETS IN DONOR AGENCY OR NGO HQ, IF THEY EVER MAKE IT OUT OF THE EMERGENCY. RECOGNIZING THAT SOME OF THESE MAPS MAY CONTAIN INFORMATION INAPPROPRIATE FOR THE INTERNET, THE USG RECOMMENDS THAT IN ALL CASES, THEY BE SHARED WITH RELIEFWEB SO THAT THEY MAY BE GENERALLY SHARED WITH LEGITIMATE RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS. THESE PRODUCTS SHOULD BE USED WHEN APPROPRIATE AND VERIFIABLE TO UPDATE GEOSPATIAL PRODUCTS.

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1. This proposal was first discussed on an international basis at the October, 1997 Geneva ReliefWeb Seminar, after discussions in the USG International Informatics Committee and the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Working Group on Informatics, then in the October 18, 1998 USG International Informatics Committee.

2. Picture by Robert Schmitt, US Institute for Peace, 1997

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