

DISCUSSANT PAPER

Panel 2.18

Logistics, Information Technology (IT) and Telecommunication in crisis management

The following key questions need to be answered as outcomes of the discussion in the panel in order to translate the lessons learnt (what was done well and what could have been done better?) from the recent Tsunami for future disaster response:

a) What strategic components of IT and telecom should the health sector¹ consider for disaster management (including response and recovery) and preparedness? Why?

1. Key components are both Telecoms and the ability to use this infrastructure.
 - Support the general relief process and the safety of staff
 - Decision support and tracking
 - Resource management and reporting back to countries and donors
 - Allow for a structured approach to relief response
 - Strategic support to surveillance and GIS mapping
2. Preparedness is also key
 - What can be used within the local infrastructure
 - Plans people and training for support of a crisis
 - Business continuity (strategic reserves of systems, identified trained staff, operations procedures)
3. Capability Register (track contributors to a relief operation)
 - People, equipment, best practice development, interoperability.

b) How to further strengthen partnerships and build relations among various stakeholders² for development and sharing of disaster-resilient information and communication system?

1. Have the MOUs and partnerships in place before the next crisis
 - Private sector agreements to define who, what, where, when and how
 - Reciprocal agreements between Countries, UN agencies
2. While developing and sharing of disaster-resilient information and communication systems, issues to be considered are:
 - Sustainability
 - Appropriateness
 - Interoperability and Interface definition

c) How can we incorporate co-operation frameworks into the National policies to reduce barriers on the use of IT and telecom resources³ for disaster mitigation and relief⁴?

1. Through the development of national preparedness strategies documenting the in-house capabilities and the possible roles that agencies and private enterprise can plan.
2. Understanding the conflicts that arise between national issues and bureaucracy and humanitarian issues.
3. Promote the Tampere convention

¹ including local, national, regional and international levels

² Governments, Researchers, International organizations, NGOs and Private sector

³ not just financial and human resources, but also political and management support recognizing strategic importance of IT

⁴ including Disaster and Humanitarian response policies, IT and Telecommunication regulatory policies etc.

d) What were the major barriers in delivering timely and effective logistics support and how to overcome them for any future crisis?

1. By effectively managing what needs to be delivered and where, so protecting capacity.
2. Partnering with countries to develop solutions that can coexist with current legislative processes.
3. Ensure that capability development is performed in a manner that is sustainable by the country.