

## What is the UNDAC team?

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

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

## What does the UNDAC system consist of?

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The UNDAC system consists of four components:

- Staff:** Experienced emergency managers made available for UNDAC missions by their respective governments or organizations. UNDAC team members are specially trained and equipped for their task;
- Methodology:** Predefined methods for establishing coordination structures, organizing and facilitating assessments, and information management during the first phase of a sudden-onset disaster or emergency;
- Procedures:** Proven systems to mobilize and deploy an UNDAC team to arrive at the disaster or emergency site within 24-48 hours of request;
- Equipment:** Personal and mission equipment for UNDAC teams to be self-sufficient in the field when deployed for disasters/emergencies.

## What is the “added value” of UNDAC?

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

In response to earthquakes, the UNDAC team provides an immediate On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC) to assist coordination of international urban search and rescue (USAR) teams responding to the disaster - essential if USAR assistance is to function effectively. This concept was strongly endorsed in UN General Assembly Resolution 57/150 of 16 December 2002 on “Strengthening the effectiveness and coordination of international urban search and rescue assistance”.

## UNDAC Emergency Response Missions

As of September 2014, the UNDAC Team has conducted 236 emergency missions in over 102 countries. OCHA (FCSS) mobilizes the UNDAC team mostly in:

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

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

and exceptionally in:

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

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

## Costs of UNDAC deployment

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

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