Recommendations for Mobilizing Staff and Enhancing WFP’s Capacity to Respond to Emergencies

Executive Summary

This paper has been developed on the basis of discussions in the Rapid Response Working Group (RRWG) and Emergency Response Staffing Strategy/Emergency Response Training (ERSS/ERT) Sub-Working Group meetings in March/April 2006.

The Staffing Gap Analysis conducted in March/April 2006 indicated that WFP is able to respond to four Corporate Emergencies at any given time if actions are taken to:

1. Improve the management of staff mobilization;
2. Ensure proper backfilling procedures for staff going on TDY; and
3. Enhance/update the skills of WFP staff.

Therefore, the paper recommends actions to improve staff deployment in response to new emergencies, especially those declared as “Corporate Emergencies,” which are covered by the Activation Protocol. It is important to note that any system or procedure must allow for a certain amount of flexibility to ensure the most effective response.

I. Internal Staff Mobilization – Recommendations to Expedite TDY Deployments

| a) Enhance StaffNet to capture emergency-relevant skills and experience, and to enable more appropriate search results specifically for emergencies | i) Develop a section within StaffNet to capture emergency-related skills and experience applicable to both internal and external candidates, with a link to PACE for WFP staff.  
   ii) Upgrade StaffNet’s search capability to include functionality for emergency deployments, which will facilitate the replacement of 1st Wave deployments. |
|---|---|
| b) HQ to maintain a short-list of potential Country-level Emergency Coordinators (CO-ECs) | i) Develop TORs for the CO-EC that can be applied flexibly to various emergencies and situations.  
   ii) The HQ Emergency Coordinator (HQ-EC), in consultation with the SDED, the RDs and the RRGW, should maintain a list of up to 10 senior staff who have the experience necessary to serve as the CO-EC. The staff indicated on the list should be available to be mobilized within 24-48 hours to serve as CO-ECs. The HQ-EC should update the list regularly, taking into account re-assignments and the personal circumstances of the individuals. |
| c) Ensure that the Terms of Reference (TORs) and skill sets of RB-based staff are aligned with WFP’s strategic objectives as laid out in the Management Plan for 2006/2007, in this case, emergency preparedness and response. | i) Review and redraft TORs of RB staff to reflect WFP’s corporate priorities, with a special emphasis on emergency preparedness and response.  
   ii) Upgrade emergency preparedness, assessment and response skills of existing programme staff in the RBs to ensure appropriate level of response capability and backfilling for COs. |
| d) COs, RBs, and HQ division/functional units to maintain Stand-By Lists | i) RBs to work with COs to develop SBLs of staff available for emergency TDY within 72 hours. This list should be updated on a quarterly basis, and will be rolled into a Corporate SBL.  
   Staff |
(SBLs) for emergency deployment, updated on a quarterly basis, while taking into account seasonal considerations & workload.

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| g) Increase the number of staff qualified to respond to emergencies, including developing the skills of emergency response managers. | i) Refine current recruitment, reassignment and staff development policies with the goal of increasing the number of staff capable of responding to emergencies. |

| h) Ensure that the evolving model of the Finance and Administrative Support Team (FAST) and the RRWG deliverables are integrated, harmonised and developed as part of an overall corporate emergency response model. | i.) Finalise the FAST package in line with the strategic framework set forth by the RRWG. |
## II. Mobilizing Personnel from Other Sources – Recommendations to Enhance Present Arrangements

| a) Expand arrangements to mobilize and enhance specific skills of Stand-By Partners (SBPs) | i) Continue identifying and developing agreements with additional SBPs at global and regional levels, with a view toward expanding to other functional areas.  
ii) Develop relevant training courses for SBPs in new functional areas as appropriate.  
iii) Determine which SBPs would be willing to supply personnel for backfilling. |
|---|---|
| b) Consolidate arrangements to mobilize emergency-experienced and WFP-knowledgeable consultants, including recent retirees and other former staff members. | i) COs to maintain lists of national retirees, former staff members and other national personnel (including possible stand-by arrangements for secondments/loans from national institutes and other sources) who could be activated at short notice to mitigate the need to mobilize staff and others from outside the country.  
ii) RBs and functional units in HQ to collaborate on maintaining lists of recent international retirees, short-term staff and consultants who could be recruited short-term for emergency deployment or backfilling. Ensure that previous performance reports are reviewed before former staff/consultants are engaged.  
iii) ADHR to encourage all categories of former staff/consultants to keep their StaffNet profiles up to date. |
| c) Explore possibilities for mobilizing specific skills from private-sector partners | i) ODTL to pursue establishing an agreement with TNT and suggest critical elements to be included in any other discussions and agreements with potential private sector partners.  
ii) Continue to investigate additional possibilities for private sector partnerships to support ICT, finance and procurement functions.  
iii) Determine the need for training/orientation for private sector staff similar to that provided to SBPs. |
| d) Explore/expand possibilities for obtaining staff on loan from other UN agencies | i) Review existing agreements/MOUs with IASC-member organizations and, if necessary, negotiate amendments to ensure that loans, when agreed to be appropriate, can be arranged rapidly following established and well-understood procedures.  
ii) Evaluate the costs/benefits of establishing agreements/MOUs with other agencies to facilitate the rapid secondment of staff for emergency response.  
iii) Determine whether UNV provide a viable and cost-effective source for short-term emergency deployment. According to UNV, the average pro-forma cost estimate for an international UNV is $3,300/month, although the annual cost ranges from $33,000-$68,000. The average cost of a National UNV is $583/month. All costs vary by country. |

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5 Ref Draft UNV Position Paper to WFP, April 2006.
| e) Explore/expand arrangements for obtaining staff on loan from NGO partners and other institutions | i) Re-engage NGOs that have signed global MOUs with WFP to determine their willingness to loan personnel with certain types of expertise to WFP, or to assign them to joint operational units during emergencies. |
| f) Take concrete steps to benefit from the knowledge and skills in national, regional and international institutions | i) COs to maintain lists of individuals in national institutes who could be called upon, and of individuals in regional and international institutions with special knowledge of the country. Lists should be posted on a website available to all staff. ii) Functional services in HQ and RBs to collaborate in maintaining lists for their areas of expertise. |
Recommendations for Mobilizing Staff and Enhancing WFP’s Capacity to Respond to Emergencies

Introduction
This paper has been developed on the basis of discussions in the Rapid Response Working Group (RRWG) and Emergency Response Staffing Strategy/Emergency Response Training (ERSS/ERT) Sub-Working Group meetings in March/April 2006. It takes into account earlier work on the subject, and builds upon the Organizational Structure Template for a Corporate Emergency developed by the RRRWG. The recommendations complement the Corporate Emergency Activation Protocol issued by the Executive Director on 20 March 2006 (ED Circular ED/2006/003).

The Staffing Gap Analysis conducted in March/April 2006 indicated that WFP is able to respond to four Corporate Emergencies at any given time if actions are taken to:

4. Improve the management of staff mobilization;
5. Ensure proper backfilling procedures for staff going on TDY; and
6. Enhance/update the skills of WFP staff.

Therefore, the paper recommends actions to improve staff deployment in response to new emergencies, especially those declared as “Corporate Emergencies,” which are covered by the Activation Protocol. It is important to note that any system or procedure must allow for a certain amount of flexibility to ensure the most effective response.

The objectives of the recommendations contained in this paper are to:

1. Strengthen and systematize arrangements for mobilizing staff in response to new emergencies, especially corporate and “as-if” corporate emergencies, including back-filling TDYers, and the timely replacement of “1st Wave” staff;
2. Enhance the pool of skills and experience available in WFP for emergency response; and
3. Develop complementary “external” resources to provide a staffing surge capacity.

Present Arrangements in the Main Functional Areas

ICT has used a blended approach of:

a) a core emergency preparedness and response (EPR) unit in Rome that looks after corporate issues and coordination and is the main point of contact for all EPR-related ICT issues;
b) a rapid deployment team (FITTEST) of senior ICT engineers who are deployable to strengthen a CO's capacity while maintaining the ICT strategic stock, providing off-site admin., logistic and procurement support to ICT responses, and who work on training/projects/etc. in between emergencies. FITTEST, based in Dubai, works on a cost-recovery basis and aims to be self-financing;
c) stand-by partners (SBPs); and
d) existing staff on TDY.

While a), b) and c) have worked well and proven very effective, d) – mobilizing existing staff on TDY – which is indispensable in most emergencies, is where they had the most problems.

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6 The earlier work includes: the report of the real-time evaluation of response to the tsunami; the OD/Adly paper Assessment of WFP Emergency Response Capacity (Aug. 2005); the OD draft Emergency Response Roster and responses to it (2005); and the report of the SERC (strengthening emergency response capacity) study (2000).

7 The lack of assurance of back-filling has been a major factor in managers’ reluctance to release staff for emergency TDY in the recent past. Another major factor has been the failure to honour promises that the TDY would be limited to an agreed-upon timeframe.
AD is planning to establish a Fast Administration Support Team (FAST), also in Dubai, on a similar basis to FITTEST. The details are presently being worked out. The team members would be deployed at the onset of a crisis to determine requirements and help the CO set things up. The required additional and follow-on staff would then be mobilized by TDY. Some former/retired staff may be mobilized on consultancies. (The possibility of further supplementing staff using personnel from SBPs or potential private sector partners needs further study.) Up to now, staff members for these functional areas have been mobilized from HQ, RBs and COs on TDY, and coordination by the HR staffing coordinator was effective for the tsunami.

Logistics has a (3-person) emergency response unit (ERU) in Rome whose tasks include support to: on-going emergencies, the UNHRD network; Inter-Agency efforts; field compliance; career planning; and managing WFP’s global lead of the Inter-Agency Logistics Cluster. The ERU was not set up for new Corporate Emergencies, but to support on-going ones. ODTL also has a well-established system of mobilizing existing logistics staff from around the world on TDY managed by the Senior Logistics Officer. ODTL makes extensive use of SBPs.

For assessment, staff members are mobilized on TDY from ODAN, ODAV, RBs and, in the last 9 months, from among the extra-budgetary-funded regional assessment officers (RAOs), before calling on other CO staff or consultants.8

For other programme-related functions (programme design, implementation and monitoring, plus reports officer and NGO liaison functions) staff have been mobilized on TDY from HQ, RBs and COs, organized overall by the OD Staffing Coordinator (whose post has recently been abolished due to budget constraints). The only field-based “programme” posts (excluding assessment) that are dedicated to emergency preparedness are the 3 preparedness/contingency planning posts in ODB, ODC and ODP.

While there is need to strengthen arrangements in all functional areas to be able to cope with 4 corporate emergencies at any given time, it is generally recognized that it is the “programme” area that requires the greatest attention and strengthening.

I. Internal Staff Mobilization – Recommendations to Expedite TDY Deployments

The following Recommendations include practical arrangements for improving emergency TDYs, as well as actions to enhance the skills and experience available within WFP. A combination of measures is needed as outlined below.

A guiding premise is that having all staff on call at all times is not realistic. Experience has also shown that the 3-month limit for TDY deployments must be respected, unless otherwise agreed upon, and that posts are back-filled as necessary.

a) Enhance StaffNet to capture emergency-relevant skills and experience, and to enable more appropriate search results specifically for emergencies.

Proposed actions:

i.) Develop a section within StaffNet to capture emergency-related skills and experience applicable to both internal and external candidates, with a link to PACE for WFP staff.

ii.) Upgrade StaffNet’s search capability to include functionality for emergency deployments, which will facilitate the replacement of 1st Wave deployments.

8 Until now, SBPs have not been used for assessments. During 2006, limited EFSA training will be provided to SBPs at their request, but it is expected that this will be geared toward basic orientation for personnel assigned to work with WFP in other functional areas.
b) HQ to maintain a short-list of potential Country-level Emergency Coordinators (CO-ECs)

When the SDED determines that a CO-EC should be deployed to an emergency, he may draw from a short-list maintained by the HQ-EC.

**Proposed action:**

i.) Develop TORs for the CO-EC that can be applied flexibly to various emergencies and situations.

ii.) The HQ Emergency Coordinator (HQ-EC), in consultation with the SDED, the RDs and the RRRWG, should maintain a list of up to 10 senior staff who have the experience necessary to serve as the CO-EC. The staff indicated on the list should be available to be mobilized within 24-48 hours to serve as CO-ECs. The HQ-EC should update the list regularly, taking into account re-assignments and the personal circumstances of the individuals.

c) Ensure that the Terms of Reference (TORs) and skill sets of RB-based staff are aligned with WFP’s strategic objectives as laid out in the Management Plan for 2006/2007, in this case, emergency preparedness and response.

To guarantee adequate planning, analysis and response to multiple emergencies in each region and worldwide, Regional Directors should make sure that the RB’s core functions and staff TORs are aligned with SO1 (save lives in crisis situation) and SO2 (protect livelihoods in crisis situations and enhance resilience to shocks).

**Proposed action:**

i.) Review and redraft TORs of RB staff to reflect WFP’s corporate priorities, with a special emphasis on emergency preparedness and response.

ii.) Upgrade emergency preparedness, assessment and response skills of existing programme staff in the RBs to ensure appropriate level of response capability and backfilling for COs.

d) COs, RBs, and HQ division/functional units to maintain Stand-By Lists (SBLs) for emergency deployment, updated on a quarterly basis, while taking into account seasonal considerations & workload.

For CO- and RB-level emergency preparedness and response efforts, each CO and RB should maintain a list of staff capable of carrying out emergency response tasks in their own countries and regions, as well as worldwide. Likewise, HQ units should create lists of HQ-based staff qualified and able to be deployed to emergencies globally. These lists will be consolidated into an electronic “Corporate Stand-By List,” and will be coordinated globally by the HQ-EC.

SBLs will be established and updated on a quarterly basis (Jan-Mar; Apr-June; July-Sept; Oct-Dec) for immediate deployment. The “listing” of staff will take into account seasonal variations in normal workloads, as well as skills, experience and personal circumstances, and provisions for back-filling should be considered concurrently.

SBLs will be tied to the Organizational Structure Template, in terms of posts and qualification levels. In the longer-term, and once StaffNet is enhanced, SBLs will be maintained and accessible through StaffNet.

The HQ-EC, in coordination with RDs and Staffing Coordinators should create a list of staff to serve as **Start-Up Team Members.** These staff will deploy immediately, and should be highly-experienced in setting-up systems, procedures and staffing plans under difficult circumstances. These staff will likely remain deployed for up to one month, at which point heads of units and other staff can take over.

Staff selected for deployment from the Corporate SBL will be screened in coordination with the CO-EC, the RD, the HQ-EC and functional staffing coordinators as depicted in the flowchart below.
Proposed procedure to mobilize staff when an emergency occurs

When a corporate (or as-if corporate) emergency occurs, the mobilization of staff should include the following steps as soon as possible:

**Proposed actions:**

i.) RBs to work with COs to develop SBLs of staff available for emergency TDY within 72 hours. This list should be updated on a quarterly basis, and will be rolled into a Corporate SBL. Staff members and their supervisors should confirm their agreement. Inclusion on the list/roster should be reflected in the individuals’ workplans and deployments be recognized in the PACE.

ii.) HQ-EC to work with RBs and Staffing Coordinators to develop an SBL for Start-Up Team Members.

iii.) Each HQ Staffing Coordinator to liaise with the RBs, HQ-EC, and HQ-based units to prepare a Corporate SBL to be updated on a quarterly basis. Names will be identified against each post in the Organizational Structure Template.

iv.) The TOR and PACE of all managers should include “support for WFP’s regional and global priorities”.

e) Re-establish a Staffing Coordinator post within OD to coordinate programme-related TDYs, recruitment, reassignment, and career development.

There are currently 14 Staffing Coordinators, whose role is vital in helping WFP to recruit, reassign, manage career paths and screen staff for emergency deployments. In the 2006/07 Biennium budget, the overall Staffing Coordinator post for OD, which dealt primarily with programme-related functions, was abolished. Recent experience has shown that the reassignment process and TDY screenings are much more efficient when the functional area Staffing Coordinator is involved in the process. As programme posts are largely decentralized to the field, and programme-related units in HQ are dispersed, it is crucial to re-establish a Staffing Coordinator (either full-time or almost full-time) specifically for programme within OD.
Proposed actions:

i.) Re-structure programme in such a way that all programme functions are joined and coordinated under one command structure (Ref: support to the conclusion reached by the Operations Review Team, 2005).

ii.) Establish a full-time (or almost full-time) Staffing Coordinator post in OD for programme-related functions at the P5 level with G5/G6 support.

f) COs and RBs to include in their contingency plans arrangements for redirecting CO and RB staff to in-country emergencies, as well as backfilling strategies for when staff are deployed elsewhere on TDY.

To ensure that COs and RBs are prepared to respond quickly to emergencies without jeopardizing ongoing programmes:

Proposed actions:

i.) COs should determine how existing staff would be redeployed to respond to an in-country emergency while maintaining on-going activities as appropriate.

ii.) RBs and COs to determine how to backfill for staff deployed on TDY elsewhere, which should include maintaining lists of staff recently transferred elsewhere who have special knowledge and local experience.

iii.) Revise ODAP’s Contingency Planning Toolkit on EPWeb to include the need for COs and RBs to plan for backfilling staff sent on TDY. This type of planning should also be highlighted in training sessions, and stressed in ongoing quality reviews of contingency planning.

g) Increase the number of staff qualified to respond to emergencies, including developing the skills of emergency response managers.

Steps must be taken to provide training and career development opportunities to increase the cadre of staff with the skills and experience necessary to operate in a fast-paced emergency environment. Improved managerial skills and experience are essential for the Start-Up Team, and for the efficient implementation of operations.

Proposed actions:

i.) Refine current recruitment, reassignment and staff development policies with the goal of increasing the number of staff capable of responding to emergencies.

ii.) Develop/improve emergency-specific training courses, e.g., ERT, Just-in-Time, Emergency Management.

h) Ensure that the evolving model of the Finance and Administrative Support Team (FAST) and the RRWG deliverables are integrated, harmonised and developed as part of an overall corporate emergency response model.

Proposed action:

ii.) Finalise the FAST package in line with the strategic framework set forth by the RRWG.
II. Mobilizing Personnel from Other Sources – Recommendations to Enhance Present Arrangements

a) Expand arrangements to mobilize and enhance specific skills of Stand-By Partners (SBPs):

SBPs have proven to be a good means of mobilizing technical skills such as ICT, logistics, facilities management, aviation etc. There is less experience and mixed reviews in relation to assessment, programme design, and monitoring skills.

**Proposed actions:**

i.) Continue identifying and developing agreements with additional SBPs at global and regional levels, with a view toward expanding to other functional areas.

ii.) Develop relevant training courses for SBPs in new functional areas as appropriate.

iii.) Determine which SBPs would be willing to supply personnel for backfilling.

b) Consolidate arrangements to mobilize emergency-experienced and WFP-knowledgeable consultants, including recent retirees and other former staff members.

Recent retirees (national & international), former short-term staff and consultants, who have already performed well for WFP, are excellent resources to tap for emergency TDY or backfilling. COs (especially in emergency-prone countries) should keep lists, with up-to-date contact addresses, of national staff available to be recalled on short notice.

**Proposed actions:**

i.) COs to maintain lists of national retirees, former staff members and other national personnel (including possible stand-by arrangements for secondments/loans from national institutes and other sources) who could be activated at short notice to mitigate the need to mobilize staff and others from outside the country.

ii.) RBs and functional units in HQ to collaborate on maintaining lists of recent international retirees, short-term staff and consultants who could be recruited short-term for emergency deployment or backfilling. Ensure that previous performance reports are reviewed before former staff/consultants are engaged.

iii.) ADHR to encourage all categories of former staff/consultants to keep their StaffNet profiles up to date.

c) Explore possibilities for mobilizing specific skills from private-sector partners.

ODTL is working with TNT to strengthen and expand the existing corporate partnership. This might serve as a model for other agreements. Experience with Ericsson in relation to ICT services has been difficult (amongst other things, they rarely deploy people for more than 4 weeks).

Large-scale secondments from the private sector are not a realistic option for meeting staffing requirements due to unpredictability, short release periods and insurance problems. However, some specific services (as distinct from staff positions) might be obtained from private sector partnerships.

**Proposed actions:**

i.) ODTL to pursue establishing an agreement with TNT and suggest critical elements to be included in any other discussions and agreements with potential private sector partners;

ii.) Continue to investigate additional possibilities for private sector partnerships to support ICT, finance and procurement functions;
iii.) Determine the need for training/orientation for private sector staff similar to that provided to SBPs.

d) Explore/expand possibilities for obtaining staff on loan from other UN agencies.
Experience with volunteers from UNDP in Mozambique was good. WFP paid DSA and travel costs. An attempt to take up an offer of ICT services from DPKO failed because of the heavy bureaucracy involved.

Proposed actions:

i.) Review existing agreements/MOUs with IASC-member organizations and, if necessary, negotiate amendments to ensure that loans, when agreed to be appropriate, can be arranged rapidly following established and well-understood procedures.

ii.) Evaluate the costs/benefits of establishing agreements/MOUs with other agencies to facilitate the rapid secondment of staff for emergency response.

iii.) Determine whether UNV provide a viable and cost-effective source for short-term emergency deployment. According to UNV, the average pro-forma cost estimate for an international UNV is $3,300/month, although the annual cost ranges from $33,000-$68,000. The average cost of a National UNV is $583/month. All costs vary by country.

e) Explore/expand arrangements for obtaining staff on loan from NGO partners and other institutions.
Major NGO partners that conduct emergency food aid programmes have staff that may be useful for WFP’s emergency surge capacity. SCF-UK has provided assessment staff to WFP or joint units in Somalia and Sierra Leone. The British High Commission provided staff in Mozambique. Possibilities were discussed with some major international NGO partners during a meeting in Rome on 21 March.

Proposed actions:

i.) Re-engage NGOs that have signed global MOUs with WFP to determine their willingness to loan personnel with certain types of expertise to WFP, or to assign them to joint operational units during emergencies.

f) Take concrete steps to benefit from the knowledge and skills in national, regional and international institutions.

Proposed actions:

i.) COs to maintain lists of individuals in national institutes who could be called upon, and of individuals in regional and international institutions with special knowledge of the country. Lists should be posted on a website available to all staff.

ii.) Functional services in HQ and RBs to collaborate in maintaining lists for their areas of expertise.

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9 Ref Draft UNV Position Paper to WFP, April 2006.
## Definitions and Overall Mobilization Process

A **“Corporate Emergency”** is an extraordinary emergency situation which overwhelms the capacity of the CO and the RB to respond with existing in-country or regional resources – it is likely to require the temporary activation of special emergency response procedures, capacities, systems and tools, and will normally involved direct augmentation of HQ support at the highest corporate level.

An **“As-If Corporate Emergency”** is a situation which in itself could be handled by the RB, but which has to be handled as a corporate emergency because of other concurrent global demands.

A **“Start-Up Team”** is a small team of experienced staff assembled on-site within the first 48-72 hours to conduct a preliminary investigation, and define WFP’s staffing requirements for the first few weeks. The team may include existing country office staff, as well as staff on TDY.

In case of a corporate or as-if corporate emergency the Start-Up Team would normally include the emergency team leader and an experienced professional in each of the following areas: food security/needs assessment; programme planning & management; logistics; admin & finance; HR; ICT; facilities management; procurement (food and non-food); reports/public information; SB partner coordination; air operations (when needed); security (when needed).

### Three main scenarios:

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<th>Situation</th>
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| Emergency (minor) can be handled by existing CO staff with only remote advice and support from the RB or HQ | Within 24 hours (*timeframes indicative, and highly dependent on circumstances*):  
- The CD redeploys existing CO staff and informs the RD and HQ-Emergency Coordinator of actions taken and that s/he has things under control.  
- RD and HQ-EC confirm – (*Level 1 emergency: the situation is to be managed by the CO*) |
| Emergency (major) that requires staff support from outside the country | Within 24 hours:  
- The CD consults with the RD and HQ-Emergency Coordinator;  
- The RD and HQ-EC determine whether staff mobilization should be managed by the RB or HQ needs to coordinate the mobilization globally |
| | The situation can be handled by existing CO staff and TDY staff from the RB and other COs in the region; and there are no major/corporate emergencies in other regions that may require inter-regional deployments. (*Level 2 emergency: the situation is to be managed by the CO and RB*) |
| | There is insufficient capacity within the region so mobilization from HQ and/or other regions is necessary (a “corporate” emergency); or there are major/corporate emergencies in other regions that require inter-regional deployments so that WFP’s resources have to be managed from a global perspective (an “as-if corporate” emergency). (*Level 3 emergency: mobilization of personnel from outside the country is to be managed by HQ*) |
| | Within 24 hours:  
- CD, RD and HQ-EC agree on the composition of the Start-Up Team  
- SDED designates the Emergency Team Leader (may be the CD)  
Within 24-48 hours:  
- HQ-EC, with approval of SDED, mobilizes required TDY staff for the Start-Up Team  
Within 72 hours:  
- The CD/CO-EC and Start-Up Team define staff requirements for the first 3 months and the desired arrival schedule |
Annex II

Basic principles for the design and operation of a staff mobilization system

1. Staff for major/corporate emergencies will be mobilized by a combination of the following means:
   a. Redirecting staff resources within the CO (where there is an ongoing WFP programme)
   b. Staff deployed on TDY from other WFP offices (COs, RBs or HQ): this may include international professional, international GS, national staff 10
   c. Personnel from Stand-By (SB) Partners, current and new SBPs
   d. Consultants, national and international, especially individuals who have already worked with WFP, including recent retirees
   e. Personnel from private-sector partners
   f. Loans from major international NGO partners (those with which there are MOUs or other forms of official, global agreement on staff loans or secondments)
   g. Loans from other agencies and institutions, national and international
   h. Recruitment, local (of nationals and others) and international

2. Maximum use must be made of existing CO staff, they should not be marginalized by an influx of junior TDY staff or other (non-WFP) personnel.

3. Staff assigned during the first few days and weeks should be ready to stay for (up to) 3 months to complete the organizational and operational set up and ensure continuity in relations with partners during this critical period. Rapid turnovers take up an excessive amount of the time of managers and admin services in the field and disrupt relations with partners. Exceptions may be made for individuals required for specific short-term technical tasks. All TDY staff should have a proper handover to their successor.

4. Staff requirements including an organizational structure and phased arrival schedule will be defined by the CD/CO-EC with the assistance of a Start-Up Team (see Annex 1), and in agreement with the RD and HQ. This should ideally be done within 72 hours depending on circumstances. The standard organizational structure for a corporate emergency (and associated sample TORs) must be adapted to the needs of the situation. Exceptionally, the SDED or RD may over-rule the CD.

5. Requirements must be expressed in terms of the specific technical skills, knowledge, language abilities and personal aptitudes required (not just broad categories such as “programme” or “logistics”).

6. Personnel from WFP, SB partners and other sources may be put on stand-by (by the CO, RB or HQ) as soon as potential needs are identified but the individuals should move only when the need is confirmed by the Start-Up Team and decided by the RD or the SDED in consultation with the RD and HQ emergency coordinator. When confirmed, they will be mobilized in accordance with the defined arrival schedule that takes account of operational constraints as well as programme requirements. When there are major constraints in terms of accommodation, transport or security, personnel may initially be called forward to a nearby staging area ready to move in when the CD/CO-EC confirms that they would be able to contribute to the operation (and not be a burden on the existing staff and facilities). While waiting, they may provide remote support.

7. Teamwork is essential and individuals with a range of knowledge and skills are valuable in all functions and essential for sub-office management.

While it is important to mobilize expertise in assessment, logistics and other key functional areas, polyvalence is also an important quality for those sent in during the early stages of an emergency. A team approach is essential and this requires each member of the team to have a general understanding of all aspects of response and management as well as their own specialist competencies. They must be able to support and back-stop each other. The Emergency Response Training is intended to contribute to this but the required breadth of understanding will

10 The deployment of national staff to other countries is sometimes complicated by visa/nationality problems.
depend largely on previous practical experience. The experience of running a sub-office in a large emergency operation is particularly valuable. It should be an important element in the selection of individuals for the roster and in the definition and implementation of an overall HR development strategy.” [SERC, 2000]

The tsunami evaluation team expressed concern about over-specialization within WFP and noted that “the head of sub-office post is a good mix of programming and logistic skills”.

8. **Substantial country knowledge** is useful within the sub-teams, e.g., programme & logistics.

“When an emergency demands rapid deployment to reinforce an existing office or to establish an operation from scratch, priority should also be given to mobilizing, from the outset, available staff (and consultants) who have relevant previous experience in the country concerned. Their particular value has been demonstrated recently in Mozambique and Ethiopia. Such staff can, and should, be identified and considered in addition to individuals on the roster when mobilizing staff for initial response.” [SERC, 2000]

9. **Experience** is important, especially during the first 2 weeks. A balanced mix of experienced emergency professionals and younger staff with relevant skills should be sought for most operations but the “Start-Up Team” during the first few days should be made up of personnel with substantial emergency response experience.

10. All **lists/rosters/databases** of staff and others who might be called on when needed must include data on the individuals’ skills, experience and performance in an easily-searchable form, and must be regularly up-dated. Skill profiles and standard draft TORs are needed for all the job functions normally required in an emergency operation. **StaffNet** should incorporate these elements.

11. The overall system and procedures must enable WFP to fulfil its **global responsibilities** in responding to urgent humanitarian needs without undue detriment to its **current beneficiaries** or prolonged excessive stress on **staff and their families**. All WFP staff are subject to being mobilized but arrangements must ensure that it is not always the same individuals who are called on unless they have accepted – volunteered for – a post that explicitly requires the incumbent to be always available for emergency duty anywhere in the world.

12. Provision must be made for **backfilling** certain posts from which staff members are deployed on TDY. This must include provision for travel and other costs for the temporary replacements.

**Role of HR during the initial stages**

A TDY HR officer needs to be included in the ‘Start-Up Team’ if the existing CO is small or a large-scale operation is in prospect in order to:

- manage all local recruitment activities from the outset including preparing TORs, issuing VAs, arranging interviews and appointments (enabling other members of the core team to focus on their areas of responsibility);
- work on living conditions to allow the CD/CO-EC to establish a temporary rest and recuperation system pending the establishment of a formal R&R system (thus reducing the likelihood of staff burn out);
- set up travel procedures to ensure that TAs are prepared to cover all travel of staff outside the duty station from the outset of operations so that staff are insured and can be reimbursed for expenditures.

Consideration should be given to making the HR officer responsible for administration of travel in emergency operations (excluding the financial certification).