



Lessons-learned Exercise

“THE UN EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO THE 2007 FLOODING IN TABASCO AND CHIAPAS, MEXICO”

SEPTEMBER 2009

Acronyms

BCPR	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
CANACINTRA	National Chamber of Transformation Industries
CENAPRED	National Centre for Disasters Prevention
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CONAPO	National Population Council
CP	Civil Protection
DIF	Systems for the Integral Development of the Family
DN-III	National Defence Plan III
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EPRP	Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FONDEN	National Disaster Fund
HQs	Head Quarters
IASC	Inter Agency Standing Committee
INEGI	National Institute of Statistics and Geography
INGO	International Non-governmental organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OFDA	Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
OSOCC	On-Site Operations Coordination Centre
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PDRM	Program for Disaster Risk Management
RC/HC	Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator
SAGARPA	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food
SEGOB	Ministry of Internal Affairs
SEDESOL	Social Development Ministry
SINAPROC	National Civil Protection System
SRE	Ministry of Foreign Affairs

SUMA	Supply Management System
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UN HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
UNDMT	United Nations Disaster Management Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNETE	United Nations Emergency Technical Team
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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1. Executive Summary

The Government of Mexico declared a state of emergency in the States of Tabasco and Chiapas on November 1st 2007. The declaration was due to torrential rains that began on October 23rd and continued through to November 4th 2007, causing floods that eventually covered 70 % of the two affected states. On November 2nd, the UNETE (accounting for 6 of the 22 UN agencies in the country) was activated and the Resident Coordinator offered the Mexican Government United Nations support. On November 5th, the UN response was activated on request from the Government. This was the first time in 24 years that the Mexican government had made a request for international assistance. From that moment onwards, the UNCT and UNDAC worked jointly on coordination and mobilization of international aid to the country. The Government of Mexico did not at any time make a formal call for international support, only a request for international solidarity.

Impacts, Damages and Losses

ECLAC calculated that damage and loss reached 3.1 billion dollars in Tabasco State alone. Insured losses were around 800 million dollars. The losses were the equivalent of 75% of all disaster losses that year in Mexico and accounted for near to 30% of the affected states gross state product.

The Mexican Emergency and Disaster Response System

Since the 1985 earthquake, the Mexican government has strengthened its capacity to respond to different crisis on the recognition that the country is subject to numerous natural hazards. The 2007 floods demonstrated that Mexico had significant installed response capacity, especially which channelled through SINAPROC. The 1985 earthquake was the stimulus for the creation of SINAPROC. Based on more than 20 years experience, this institution has become a working body of functional structures and relations, methods and procedures, established between different federal, state, and municipal government departments.

The UN Response

Before receiving the Mexican Government’s request for international support and solidarity and

even before the joint needs assessments undertaken by the UNDMT and OCHA teams, the Mexican UNETE Team was on alert. In order to conduct needs assessments and formulate financial requests or appeals, the agencies mobilized their staff to affected areas, supported by UNETE. The UN headquarters instructions were to apply the “cluster approach”, yet the procedure could not be implemented due to strong opposition from the government, its limited capacities with such a method and the lack of established coordination mechanisms with the UN system. The UNDAC team coordinated the CERF and FLASH Appeals. However, the magnitude of the emergency and the inexperience of agencies delayed the formulation of the FLASH appeal. Once formulated, the government declined to approve it. When the CERF was completed on November 14, national response to the emergency was almost complete and the Mexican Government, from this date on started the recovery phase. It is noted that UNDMT envisaged ten CERF projects, of which six were finally approved. The UN’s formal in field response started on November 5th, the date the UN Agencies started to attend the emergency, employing capacities and skills acquired with previous incursions in the field of disaster response in Mexico. Projects formulated by UN Agencies to attend the recovery phase started at the end of November.

The current exercise has not been able to exactly define what triggered the government to take the final step and request ‘international solidarity’. It has been noted that the request came late in the sequence of flooding experiences and may have been caused by the need to release large quantities of water from the dams in Chiapas that were by then at their limit. The opening of the dams was seen to have unforeseeable consequences, as large parts of the lower areas of Tabasco were already heavily flooded.

Mexico is prone to a variety of disasters. This seems to have made all parties aware that collaboration, preparedness, early warning, mitigation and close coordination had to be addressed systematically. For the UN System, the 2007-floods were a reminder that emergencies can occur anywhere, even in countries possessing strong financial and human capacity, as well as organised and well prepared response mechanisms. During the first days after the emergency, the entire UN System had to be organised from the outset. It may be presumed that the system should have had higher existing levels of capacity.

Because of the unexpected request from the Mexican government and a generally unprepared UN System, the system did and could not provide a timely and sufficiently effective response. Even after the late request for assistance, while the Government was thinking in terms of recovery, UN agencies were still engaged in relief-related activities.

2. Introduction

The torrential rains that began on October 23rd and continued through to November 4th 2007, led to flooding that eventually covered 70 % of the State of Tabasco, isolating and trapping many people in their homes. The flooding was accentuated due to the saturation of soils, rapid run off and the release of huge amounts of water from the upriver-dammed reservoirs. At maximum flood levels on November 2nd, the state Capital city, Villahermosa, was reported to be 80% under water. According to the state government, the floods affected 1,000,000 residents, (half of the state population) displacing as many as half a million and damaging or destroying an estimated 70,000 homes. Chiapas was also severely affected. Civil Protection reported 330,000 affected residents. Approximately 15% of the population (35-40,000 people) was directly affected and in need of humanitarian assistance. More than 35,000 hectares of crops were lost (14,000 maize 5,000 beans, and 10,000 cacao beans)¹.

The Government of Mexico declared a state of emergency across the affected states on November 1st, and officially accepted international support on November 5th. The National Civil Protection System (SINAPROC) and involved national government *Secretariats* (health, housing and sanitation, interior, defence, water and sanitation, social development, environment, infrastructure and education), the armed forces and volunteer organizations participated in the government response.

On November 2nd, the United Nations Emergency Team- UNETE- was activated and the Resident Coordinator consulted with Government counterparts offering the support of the United Nations. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs-OCHA- Regional office in Panama was immediately in contact with the Resident Coordinator's Office and closely monitored the situation in Mexico from then on through the elaboration of Situation Reports.

On November 5th, following President Calderon's request for foreign support and solidarity, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and the Resident coordinator activated the United Nations Disaster Management Team (UNDMT) and met with the government focal point for

¹ ECLAC; Tabasco: características e impacto socioeconómico de las inundaciones provocadas a finales de octubre y a comienzos de noviembre de 2007 Por el frente frío número 4; Julio, 2008; México.

natural disasters at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SRE), with the purpose of defining actions to be taken after the call for international assistance. This was the first time since the 1985-earthquake that international assistance had been requested by the national government.

The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team (UNDAC), the Resident Coordinator and the OCHA Regional Director met with Civil Protection representatives to offer assistance and technical support for the Federal Operations Centre in Tabasco. The UNDAC team and UNCT then worked jointly on coordination and mobilization of international aid to the affected areas or states. On November 5th, UN response to the floods was activated.

Objectives of Exercise

The overall objective, according to the Terms of Reference (TOR), is to establish how well the UN System, and individual UN-agencies, succeeded in enacting their role in the context of the 2007 floods that affected Chiapas and Tabasco States; to assess the most salient strengths and weaknesses of the U.N. system during the response; and to draw conclusions and recommendations.

Specific objectives include:

- a) Analyze and document the programme response from each of the UN-agencies with specific attention to:
 - i. The geographical scope of interventions / targeting of emergency response in the context of the division of work among the UN-agencies.
 - ii. Type of assistance provided (cash, supply, human resources and technical support).
 - iii. Funds committed and utilized.
 - iv. Use of internal office capacity.
- b) Adequacy of the internal emergency and preparedness response mechanisms (EPRP).
- c) Analyze and document the level and appropriateness of coordination mechanisms within the UN-system and with national and state governments.
- d) Formulate lessons learned from the response to the emergency and prepare

recommendations and a draft action plan for enhancing preparedness and response by Government and the UN-system to future emergencies, where required.

Limitations and Opportunities

The exercise confronted limitations that have affected the lessons learnt outcome to a certain degree. The lack of access to secondary documentation prior to the mission made the exercise challenging as a thorough desk study would have enabled the team to attain minimal acquaintance with the UN response beforehand.

During the five-day visit to Mexico, three of the six UN agencies involved in the UNETE team and the person responsible for UNETE coordination were consulted. Subsequently, the impact of influenza AH1N1 meant that further interviews could not be held with a number of UN agencies.

Team

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Situation Map of Floods, 2007



Source: Relief Web (consulted November 9, 2007). Based on: OCHA Situation Report No.4, issued 7 Nov 2007 PAHO, UNICEF, WHO, WFP Press Release, issued 9 Nov 2007

3. Background

Disasters in Mexico, 2000-2007

Between 2000 and February 2007, 1,692 municipalities throughout the country were declared at least once to have been in a disaster situation and received aid from the National Disaster Fund (FONDEN). The vast majority of disasters occurring during this period was of meteorological origin and led to significant economic loss. Over the last two decades, it is estimated that Mexico has lost an estimated USD 25,911 millions. According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 99% of these losses were due to meteorological phenomena.

Utilizing data derived from the municipal declarations of disaster, the states of Chiapas, Oaxaca, Veracruz and Nuevo Leon were the most affected over the period 2000-2007, followed by the states of Yucatan, Puebla, Chihuahua and Guerrero. During this period, Tabasco represented only 0.4% of the disaster declarations (in total 15 municipal declarations). Taking into account the relevant differences to be found in the geographic extension and population densities of states and their municipalities, which precludes any real option to establish clear and definitive criteria for risk territorialisation, a concentration of disasters in the east-centre, south and south-east regions of the country can nevertheless be observed. It is in these areas that the highest levels of marginality are most commonly found; of all the municipalities that were declared in a disaster situation in these areas, 59.6% were ranked by the National Population Council, (CONAPO) as having High or Very High levels of marginality.

Mexico's risk and disaster profile is, therefore, primarily the result of a combination of high vulnerability to meteorological hazards and earthquakes, unequal trends in development and the territorial concentration of marginality. However, Mexico is a country that is able to offer its citizens relatively high levels of physical integrity, a minimum number of disaster related deaths, and has considerable experience with post impact recovery mechanisms and processes

The Mexican Emergency and Disaster Response System

The earthquake disaster of September 19, 1985 is the immediate prelude to the establishment of the National System for Civil Protection (*Sistema Nacional de Protección Civil*, SINAPROC). Created on May 6th 1986, the System was conceived as an organic and articulated set of functional structures and relations, methods and procedures, established between the different departments of the federal government and between these and the state and municipal governments. The purpose was to have a system that would act in a coordinated manner in case of disaster (Civil Protection General Law, 2000). A Program and a Council of Civil Protection are the two main components of SINAPROC, which also includes the National Centre for Disasters Prevention (CENAPRED) and volunteer groups. Agreements on technical, scientific and general cooperation in case of disaster have been signed with the USA, Japan, Guatemala, France, Spain, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and the World Environmental Centre².

The law establishes that a new National Program for Civil Protection (Programa Nacional de Protección Civil) should be drawn up by each new government administration. This program has to be in line with the more general National Development Programme (Programa Nacional de Desarrollo). State and municipal level Civil Protection programs have to be produced and agreements between federal and state governments should be in place. The programs identify present disaster risks, describe existing legal frameworks and institutional conditions and specify lines of action or sub-programs for the prevention and attention of emergencies. At the federal level, a Coordination Office of Civil Protection exists, while Units of Civil Protection exist at the State and Municipal levels, each in charge of designing their own programs. Nevertheless, at the time of the Tabasco and Chiapas floods, in November 2007, the National Program under President Calderon had yet to be published (the 2008-2012 program was only published in September 2008). The extent to which the lack of a national program may have affected the relationship between the government and the UN is difficult to evaluate.

In the case of an emergency, the Civil Protection System is designed to operate from local levels and upwards to federal levels. Initially, the municipal authority intervenes to control the situation. Only in cases where the situation exceeds local response capacity should the State

² National Programme of Civil Protection, 2001-2006. SEGOB. México.

government units be activated and, in cases where State government capacity is surpassed the Federal government intervenes. The Law establishes that the SRE is in charge of dealing with international assistance. The Councils for Civil Protection (at the national, state and municipal levels) are focal points in case of an emergency. The President of Mexico heads the National Council while executive activities are in the hands of the head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (SEGOB). The Council includes the following Ministries: Foreign Affairs, Army, Navy, Finance, Social Development, Health, Education, Communications, Agriculture, Environment, Energy as well as State Governors. As the system is designed to operate in a flexible way each office intervenes according its own area of influence, thus there is no clear cut delimitation of activities. This can be problematic in the context of large emergencies when coordination between Federal, State and Municipal offices is needed or with regard to certain activities e.g. the management of shelters

Finally, it should be noted that the Army and the Navy have their own emergency response mechanisms that operate to a certain extent in an independent manner although they are an integral part of SINAPROC. The army may intervene as soon as the President of Mexico requires. At this moment, the so-called DN-III (National Defence III) plan begins to operate independent of any other established authority.

Since its creation in 1986, SINAPROC has moved from an exclusive focus on emergency response to one that recognises the need for integral risk management articulated around social participation, gender and human rights, and the need for considering vulnerability as a central component of the risk and disaster problem.

Whereas local management is widely praised as being a highly relevant strategy for disaster and risk management, this nevertheless requires that local governments have sufficient information and resources to be able to identify and respond to an emergency. It also requires good coordination and communication between different levels of government, something that is not always the case. Because the system, between its inception and November 2007, had never had to coordinate with external international agencies, little experience existed in this regard. Nevertheless, the Tabasco and Chiapas emergency triggered a beneficial process of assimilation and learning that is reflected in the most recent National Program.

The country has sufficient human, material and technical resources to face emergencies; the

legal framework has incorporated disaster risks into the national development agenda. This indicates a real interest in implementing projects and programs focused on disaster risk reduction.

The UN System and Agency Structures and Norms for Emergency Response

Humanitarian interventions adhere to the overall principles of UN:

“The sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of States must be fully respected in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. In this context, humanitarian assistance should be provided with the consent of the affected country and in principle on the basis of an appeal by the affected country”. “Each State has the responsibility first and foremost to take care of the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies occurring on its territory. Hence, the affected State has the primary role in the initiation, organization, coordination, and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory.” (GA Resolution 46/182).

For decades, up to the 1970, the UN concentrated humanitarian resources on peacekeeping activities. However, in the 70’s, it earmarked more resources for prevention of emergencies, relief assistance to developing countries, and prevention of epidemics and famine. Since the end of the 80s, the UN had allocated more and more resources for victims affected by disasters.

The UN General Assembly designated the 1990’s the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction and approved a corresponding resolution calling for the global community to focus on natural disaster prevention and emergency relief. At the same time, the UN created the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), whose mandate is to serve as a catalyst for humanitarian action in crisis moments until rehabilitation and reconstruction are under way. OCHA’s mandate for natural disasters dates back to the United Nations General Assembly (GA) Resolution 2816 (XXVI) of 14 December 1971 which authorizes the UN to “mobilize, direct and coordinate” international assistance.

OCHA’s objectives are:

- Ensure a comprehensive and coordinated program of humanitarian assistance.
- Ensure a steady and reliable flow of information to inform decision-making.
- Ensure sufficient resources to accomplish agreed programs.

OCHA has been directly present in Latin America since 2003 with the aim of coordinating effective and principled humanitarian action. The OCHA Office covers all countries of Central and South America and the Caribbean and is located in Panama.

The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team is part of OCHA and directly under the Secretary-General of the United Nations. It is deployed pursuant to a request from an affected Government, the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), or the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC). The team works to facilitate close links between country-level, regional and international response efforts and aims to assist in meeting international needs for early and qualified information on the situation and, when necessary, in the coordination of international relief at the site of the emergency. UNDAC teams work in close consultation and coordination with the RC/HC, the UN Country Team (UNCT)/Disaster Management Team (DMT) and the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC). While the basic human needs for security, food, water, shelter and medical treatment are the same for beneficiaries in natural disasters and complex emergencies, the role of an UNDAC team in a natural disaster will be bounded to a shorter period compared to emergencies that are more complex. In a natural disaster, speed of response is critical and is measured in hours and days.

At the country level, the Resident Coordinator (RC), in most cases the Resident Representative of UNDP, undertakes the field coordination. In between disasters, the RC coordinates preparedness and mitigation activities; monitors and provides early warning of potential emergencies; leads contingency planning based on early warning monitoring; and chairs the UNDMT. The composition of the UNDMT is determined by taking the types of disaster to which the country is prone and the UN organisations operating in the given country. The country representatives or most senior resident staff members of the following organisations constitute the UNDMT; FAO, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. The primary purpose of the UNDMT is to prepare for, ensure a prompt, effective, and concerted response,

and promote coordinated UN assistance to the government for post-emergency recovery. Apart from the already mentioned mechanisms, the UN also has the UNETE; an interagency technical support unit. UNETE is made up of UN agencies in the country and reports directly to the RC (or HC) in charge of the team.

In a natural disaster, the Operations Centre will typically be known as an On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC) and be located at the disaster site. Sub-OSOCCs may be established at other locations affected by the emergency³.

Cluster Approach/Sector Working Groups

At the beginning of the 2000s, a reorganization of UN humanitarian response has given place to the establishment of what has become known as the “cluster approach”. According to OCHA “The cluster leadership approach, at field level, should provide more effective technical support to the HC while also broadening the base of technical coordination through a stronger engagement of humanitarian partners. However, cluster leadership and coordination as currently envisaged goes beyond this in proposing that cluster/sectorial structures should be maintained at both the field and global level. As such, clusters would provide support to agencies and partners involved in cluster activities as well as supporting standard setting and potentially engaging in common training activities.”⁴ The implementation of such an approach, however, requires the constitution of clear and continuous linkages between dissimilar actors: UN agencies, governmental partners, other global agencies and INGO’s. In turn this implies that confidence, information sharing, coordination and clear delimitation of responsibilities all exist prior to an emergency in order for the clusters to be operative in the expedite fashion needed in an emergency. Shared experience in disasters is thus relevant as it provides the basic elements for building and testing operative bridges.

³ OCHA Field Coordination Support, UNDAC, Handbook. 2006.

⁴ OCHA- Humanitarian Response Reform, http://ochaonline.un.org/ocha2006/chap6_6.htm

4. The Flooding and Landslide Events

The October 23rd to November 2007 floods were mainly triggered by two climatic anomalies, cold fronts with low pressure zones, occurring between the 23rd and 5th of November (a third phenomenon entered on the 6th November but with lesser consequences). For a clearer overview, we have divided these climatic anomalies into three events:

The first event, tropical storm number 4, occurred between the 23rd and 25th of October and was associated with intense rain over the three day period - up to 423mm in Sayula, Veracruz, next to Tabascan border and with an average of 186mm at all recording stations. This event was associated also with strong winds.

The second event, between the 28th and 4st November was associated with sustained precipitation that reached the extraordinary amount of 887mm in Ocotepéc, Chiapas in only three days. The average for all recording stations was 390mm. The extraordinary precipitation associated with this second event was associated with a strong jet of water vapour along the front and the forced convection by the more than 2,000 metres high Chiapan sierra. With an estimated 17 percent of the average annual rainfall hitting Tabasco and Chiapas in just three days, combined with the overspill from highland rivers, the situation was further exacerbated when the region's dams reached capacity-limits, and millions of cubic metres of water had to be released into the already saturated, low-lying areas. Villahermosa, capital of the State of Tabasco, where flooding started on November 2nd, was 80% under water at the highest point of the flood. On November 4th, a landslide buried Juan de Grijalva, a village in Chiapas near to the Tabasco State line, with 16 people missing and scores of injured.

The third event in Chiapas State on November 5th caused 4 deaths and up to 20,400 people were registered in 154 shelters. Some 200 landslides blocked 200 km of roads, 4,231 homes were damaged, and 2,673 persons sheltered in the municipalities of Reforma, Juárez, Pichucalco, Sabanilla, Ostuacán and Huituipán.

Impacts, Damages and Losses

According to UNICEF, 350,000 houses were lost or severely damaged in Tabasco and 4,700 in Chiapas. In Chiapas 40% of municipalities were affected, at the same time 100% of Tabascan municipalities were impacted. In Tabasco state, 2,500 schools were affected as a result of the height of flooding in 16 of the 17 municipalities. The vast majority of schools were used as shelters during the emergency. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean-ECLAC- has calculated that damages amounted to 3.1 billion dollars in Tabasco state alone. Insured losses were around 800 million dollars. The losses were the equivalent of 75% of all disaster losses that year in Mexico and accounted for near to 30% of the affected states Gross Share Product⁵.

⁵ ECLAC, IDEM.

5. A Chronology or Time Line of the Response

The floods in Tabasco and Chiapas formed a complex disaster in terms of its evolution and devastating impacts. In order to have a general perception of the UN response to the call for humanitarian assistance, we can distinguish three phases:

Phase I: Adjustment – 2nd to 11th of November

This first phase runs from the moment the UNETE team and the Government’s aid appeal are activated, to the establishment of the logistic centres in Tabasco and Mexico City. Central efforts were directed to: a) articulate with local and federal authorities; b) conduct or lead international assistance; c) understand and operate the UN mechanisms for humanitarian aid (UNDAC, Flash Appeal, CERF, etc.) and; c) gather appropriate information and reinforce inter agency nexuses . In this period, agencies also recurred to their head or regional quarters in order to be able to raise and operate with their own funds.

In this adjustment phase of the emergency, the UNDMT discussed the application of a cluster approach but many of the needed elements were absent such as the existence of strong and continuous nexuses between each agency and their sectoral counterparts in government and with local organizations; clear delimitation of focal points in governmental offices for each cluster, or previous agreements between government, UN and other humanitarian organizations to organize the clusters. In this regard, an issue was highlighted: the need to adjust the clusters to centralized organizations such as SINAPROC Along with lack of experience and the late assistance request, all these facts prevented the proper institutionalisation of clusters. Alternatively the UNDMT decided to establish eight sector working groups: Protection (UNICEF, UNFPA), Health (PAHO/WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF), Water and Sanitation (PAHO/WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF); Education (UNICEF, UNESCO), Food Assistance/Nutrition (WFP, FAO, UNDP), Shelter (IOM), Early Recovery (UNDP), Coordination (RC Office, UNDP, PAHO/WHO, UNFPA, WFP, ECLAC).

Whereas coordination limitations during the Tabasco and Chiapas experience enforced the idea that a sectoral approach is paramount for improving humanitarian response, apart from the

formulation of the CERF, all other relevant actions such as SUMA, Psychosocial Attention and even the Rapid Needs Assessment were carried out on an agency-agency interaction basis during the Tabasco and Chiapas emergency.

Phase II – Assessment and Intervention I- 13th to 23rd of November

Once coordination with state and federal governments and coordination of international assistance was established, the UNDMT processed the CERF appeal. In this phase, effective cooperation with local authorities and NGOs was achieved in order to prepare the direct implementation of projects such as psychosocial relief and emergency supplies – mainly for people that were gathered in shelters. Of importance was the fact that those agencies (PAHO, UNDP and UNICEF) that had previously work in the affected areas were implementing projects or were working in close contact with local authorities (in particular in Chiapas) at the moment of the emergency and were able to respond to the emergency with little intervention, support or advice from the UNDAC team. Also, activation of contacts with other agencies in order to coordinate assistance efforts was accomplished. In this period, UNDAC facilitated coordination with state governments.

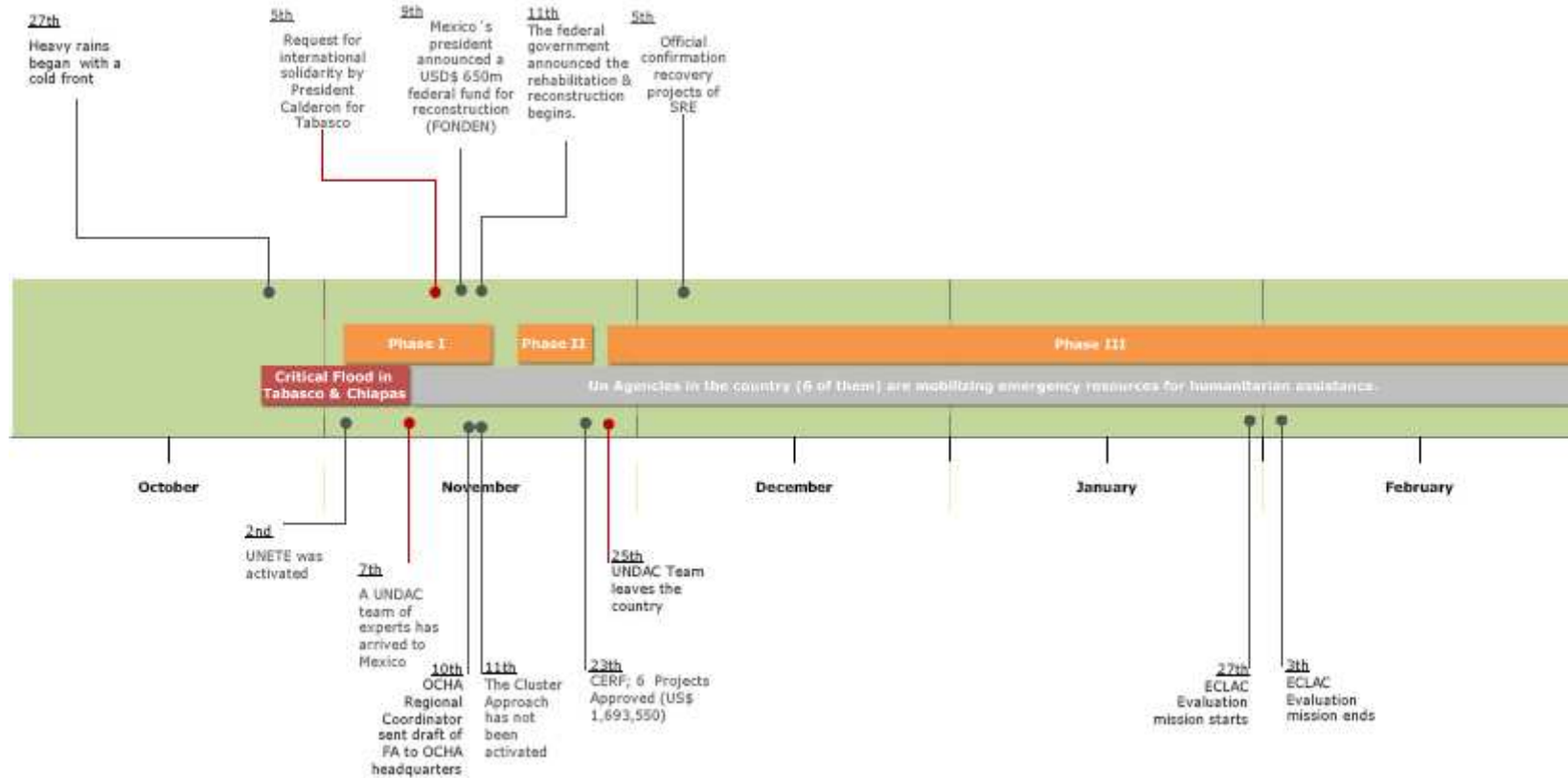
Phase III - Local implementation (Intervention II) - 25th of November to February 2008

The last stage of the intervention started with the end of the UNDAC mission and the closure of the strategic centres in Tabasco and Mexico City. The UN's (system wide) emergency response ended when the projects financed by the CERF concluded (mosquito nets, water containers, school and hygiene kits, and shelter provision). Other relevant projects financed by the agencies included the evaluation mission led by NCP and ECLAC, and the workshops for psychosocial attention in shelters that continued during this phase. Some agencies supported recovery activities beyond February 2008, including school reconstruction and assistance to affected populations in recovering their national identification and other documentation, which were both promoted by UNICEF. In phase III, the maintenance and development of the inter-organizational and inter-institutional relations created during the emergency and the expansion

of their presence and projects in Tabasco and Chiapas were relevant activities for some agencies. This is particularly the case of the regional office of the UN in San Cristobal de las Casas that now hosts representatives of UNDP and will soon host UNICEF staff.

Immediately below we provide a timeline to compare how the UN responded to the evolving emergency and the government’s request for assistance.

Timeline Abstract Table



6. Analysis of Timeline and UN response

A more detailed time line of the emergency shows that in the course of three days (October 27th to 29th) the affected areas included all Tabascan municipalities and potential damages were rapidly increasing due to the saturation of the dam system of the Grijalva River. As the extent of the events, worsened, local and state level response capacity was challenged. On the fourth day of the emergency (November 30th), Federal intervention started with funds being channelled to the emergency area coinciding with the army activating its DN-III plan. Also on October 31st, the intense rains were diminishing and the water level had begun to recede. Soon after this, the UNETE team was activated and initial contacts with federal government began. On the seventh day of the emergency, November 2nd and despite 50% of Tabasco being under water, the government had not yet appealed for international assistance. However, on November 4th, there was a risk of the dams collapsing, which may have contributed to the government’s decision to request international humanitarian assistance.

The UN was on alert from the beginning and ready to provide immediate support. An example of this is the application of SUMA (Humanitarian Supply Management System) by PAHO immediately following the government request, and the early shipment of 100-tons of high-nutritional cookies from the WFP. These activities were implemented before UNDMT and OCHA teams completed the rapid needs assessments and were not linked to a direct or formal request from the Government. The vast majority of the assistance projects implemented by the UN Agencies started towards the end of November – one month after the first flooding.

In order to conduct needs assessments and formulate appeals, the agencies mobilized their staff to affected areas in Chiapas and Tabasco, these activities was supported by UNETE.

The process for the FLASH appeal was complicated. It took longer to formulate than originally thought necessary due to the need to set competitive suppliers prices

in order to satisfy the needs of the projects in a very short period, and without previous experience of such processes. Another complexity was the lack of consideration and inclusion of NGOs and other assistance partners from the outset. It was not known that their inclusion was a requisite of the FLASH Appeal process. Finally the major organizations were incorporated, (Project Concern International, National Trade promotion organizations (ProMexico), Chambers of Trade and Industry (CANACINTRA), World Vision International, Save the Children, and Oxfam).

The formulation of the Flash Appeal was also subject to debate within the UNDMT as to its real need (hence contribution) in the face of the governments' considerably increased response and, not least, financial capacity.

The Flash Appeal was never approved, though the reasons given for this are contradictory. According to the government it was declined on the basis that it was outdated at the time it was presented; according to the UN, the Government was late in responding to the Flash Appeal and it therefore was 'outdated' and replaced by the CERF.

The CERF appeal was completed on November 14th (with a total budget of US\$2,220,243⁶) and approved (with a total of US\$ 1,693,550⁷) on November 23rd. The magnitude of the emergency and the limited financial resources and capacity among staff seems also to have delayed the formulation of the CERF. It is unclear to what extent the UNDAC team provided assistance for the elaboration of the CERF. However, simultaneously to this process, some agencies, like UNICEF, provided direct assistance with their own resources.

In spite of the lack of familiarity with the different response mechanisms such as the Flash Appeal and CERF, and of limitations in access to and the quality of information, it is noted that UNDMT presented ten projects under the CERF, ranging from coordination activities, to health, shelter and provision of emergency supplies. Six of these proposals were finally financed.

⁶ Request to Mr. John Holmes signed by Mr. Hoekman on November 14th, 2007.

⁷ Email titled: CERF: Rapid Response Window, Mexico Grant Request, sent on November 23rd, 2007.

7. The UN System’s Response to the Floods

UNDP

UNDP, as the coordinator of UNETE, provided full-time staff, facilities, equipment, and the Technical Coordinator of Program for Disaster Risk Management (PDRM). Their support in conducting Rapid Assessment through the UN-PDRM was important because it provided information to almost all the participating agencies, as well as the OCHA and UNDAC missions. The Rapid Assessments were mainly possible thanks to the UNDP's program in disaster prevention in rural areas in southeastern Mexico. This program started in 2003 after an official request from the Government of Yucatan (seriously affected by Hurricane Wilma) and by 2007, the programme had expanded out from Yucatan to other southeastern regions in Mexico including Tabasco. With this expertise, the UN-PDRM was able to produce risk maps as well as analysis of regional vulnerability. Despite a lack of experience in Tabasco, the UNDP team was able to bring together Mexican experts. These experts were trained in technical skills for supporting the emergency diagnosis in the state.

UNDP worked closely with UNICEF to assess loss, damage and needs in the affected area, much helped by their contacts with local organizations. In Tabasco, the presence of UN agencies was very limited; however, they were well received by the authorities contacted through UNDP, especially in rural areas of the state where agreements had been signed with NGOs, universities and local governments. Due to its experience with fieldwork and risk management in the area, as well as its network of contacts, UNDP was essential to the development of proposals for the Flash Appeal and Early Recovery.

Having an important level of experience at the local level in southern Mexico, UNDP played a critical role during the UNDMT meetings. In several of these, the agency expressed concern about the pressure for the activation of the Flash Appeal, while the team emphasized the importance of developing the flash appeal with Civil Protection support. Following the call for support made by the Mexican

government, UNDP urged caution in managing information, contacts and coordination with the government, given the inexperience in working together in emergency responses. They also noted that the international NGOs present in Mexico are not generally focused on humanitarian assistance and do not have a strong representation in this area in the country.

UNDP shouldn't have requested funds from the CERF, as their work is limited to the recovery phase; according to Mandates, Roles and Mechanisms of UN entities in the Disaster Management Cycle. UNDP participation was with regard to UNDMT coordination and support in identifying needs in flood zones and Coordination activities cannot be considered in the CERF. Hence, the request was turned down in the pre-evaluation of proposals phase at headquarters. The argument for rejecting the UNDP request was that the regular budget of the BCPRs Thematic Trust Fund for Crisis Prevention and Recovery has a special track for coordination and UNDP had access to this⁸.

After the activation of the UNCT, UNDP announced that the RC requested USD\$ 50,000 Cash funds to relieve the pressing needs in the field. However, not all funds were spent and UNDP subsequently reprogrammed the Cash Grants for projects in the disaster zones in Chiapas and Tabasco.

UNICEF

As part of its wider mandate, UNICEF responds in emergencies to protect the rights of children. In coordination with United Nations partners and humanitarian agencies, UNICEF makes “*its unique facilities for rapid response available to its partners to relieve the suffering of children and those who provide their care*”. (According to UNICEF's Mission Statement)

As to the Mexico-emergency response, the operative structure of UNICEF was in

⁸ UNDP's Executive Board decision 95/23 (16 June 1995) led to the earmarking of 5% of UNDP core resources for initiatives in Countries in Special Development Situations. TRAC 1.1.3 Resources, as this funding is termed, are intended to enable UNDP to better assist countries in crisis or emergency situations, thus fulfilling its role as the lead UN development agency and manager of the UN Resident Co-ordinator system.

transit – a new Country Programme was about to start (January 2008) and new staff members were being appointed or had recently arrived, including the Country Representative. At the time of the crisis, UNICEF had 17 vacancies to be filled.

Despite the existence of an UNICEF Emergency Preparedness Plan, this had never been activated and the agency staff was not updated on it or adequately trained. The document had been prepared by a non-emergency specialist and was seen to be very unwieldy and long. Consequently, it seems, UNICEF relied on the previous experiences of staff-members’ in other countries in order to organize its actions during the emergency. Regional and head offices’ support and advice were relevant, in particular with regard to rapid access to resources to finance the initial operations. Cases of inadequate mobilization of international personnel to this country were also pointed out during interviews.

All staff members took part in the emergency response, either in activities in the affected areas or through coordinating mechanisms at UNICEF’s office in Mexico City. Internal resources, in terms of mosquito nets, water containers and emergency kits, facilitated by the Supply Division in Copenhagen, helped the initial response. Apart from assistance in the distribution of emergency kits and materials, at the peak of the emergency, UNICEF identified specific needs in order to provide value added assistance in a context where much of the primary attention to affected people was already covered

UNICEF, in coordination with the Systems for the Integral Development of the Family (DIF) in Tabasco and Chiapas, provided psychosocial attention in shelters and distributed emergency kits for women. Both interventions were in line with the agency’s mandate and capacity and were highly appreciated by state and federal authorities. It opened up the opportunity for further cooperation as is the case with the program for the recovery of Documents and Registry processes once the emergency phase ended. UNICEF facilitated a mobile unit assisting the population in regaining their lost vital personal documentation. The unit started working in February 2009.

In the case of Chiapas, the agency was already in contact with the state’s ministry of education and the local DIF, with which cooperation programs had previously been implemented. The agency also worked closely with the UNDP in planning its intervention in isolated communities for which little official information existed. Coordination with that agency as well as with federal, state and even private local actors was paramount for the implementation of the program for psychosocial attention in shelters. In this particular activity, federal and state organisms as well as a private institution participated.

On the other hand, the agency faced important challenges in Tabasco due to the extent of the emergency, the complexities of the organization of the response, and the lack of previous work and focus contacts in the area. Problems with regard to the management of shelters made initial interventions difficult until a proper emergency operations centre was clearly established. Here interagency coordination appeared to be rather limited and recourse to neighbouring states’ NGOs was needed to launch the programme for psychosocial attention.

Authorities at different levels underlined the fact that despite strong capacity within the Mexican response system, these were all areas that would have remained completely unattended if it were not for UNICEF’s support.

Following its mandate, UNICEF participated in all the UNCT, UNETE, and UNDMT meetings and helped in the deployment and work of the UNDAC team, which arrived soon after the government assistance call. Of special relevance, was field coordination with other UN agencies for channelling resources and establishing contacts with local organizations and the government.

In the various UNDMT meetings, UNICEF played a central role in the discussion and production of both the CERF and the FLASH appeals. The agency presented two projects: “Family protection for Malaria and Dengue in shelters” and “Provision of hygiene inputs and awareness campaign” which used PAHO/WHO and IOM as implementing partners. Both projects were supported by the

Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Office. According to its 2008 report⁹, UNICEF spent around 2.15 million dollars or 27% of its annual budget for humanitarian assistance during the Tabasco-Chiapas emergency. The annual report informs that the agency collected 20,438,575 Mexican pesos (MX\$), of which 93% came from local donors, while the remaining 7% came from foreign countries (Ireland). As the total expenditure reported was MX\$23,572,839, it is possible to conclude that the agency spent MX\$3,134,264 (almost 300 thousands US dollars) of its own funds (emergency funds sent from HQ and CERF)¹⁰.

UNFPA

In disaster and crisis situations, UNFPA operations include reproductive health on affected communities and after the relief phase, the agency continues working on the reconstruction. Furthermore, the Fund furthermore supports various data collection activities, including censuses to provide detailed information for planning and rapid health assessments to allow for appropriate, effective and efficient relief¹¹.

The agency’s participation was limited in the UNDMT in Mexico City but played a central role in coordinating with health officials, getting involved in the activities of the UNETE-OCHA group. At the beginning of the emergency, UNFPA carried on several consultations with the National Centre for Gender Equity and Reproductive Health in order to identify the principle needs. The agency provided the UNCT team with official demographic and health information, and helped to access information from the statistics officials in Tabasco and the Ministry of Health. A specialist from the Office for Humanitarian Assistance was hired to coordinate CERF activities in Tabasco and Chiapas. Along with other agencies, UNFPA helped in the elaboration of a Rapid Needs Assessments. It provided equipment to enhance attention to pregnant women, prevention of SDT and undesired pregnancy in three shelters in Tabasco. In total, 50 clinics in Tabasco affected by the floods were restored and strengthened through the provision of a wide range

⁹ <http://www.unicef.org/mexico/spanish/informeUNICEF2008final.pdf>

¹⁰ UNICEF Mexico Informe Anual de Actividades, 2008,

¹¹ Assisting in emergencies, <http://www.unfpa.org/emergencies/>

of reproductive health commodities, such as emergency kits, fetal dopplers, hormonal vaccines and colposcopes. In addition, information materials for prevention of sexual violence were handed to the brigades for mental health of the Health Ministry that worked in the shelters. The intervention of the agency helped the national officials to create a special shelter for pregnant women in Tabasco and highlighted the general need for a gendered approach to assistance. It distributed 20,000 ‘dignity kits’ for women and provided information materials to prevent and attend gender and family violence in shelters. An estimated 50 thousand people were reached through educational health services.

UNFPA participated in the elaboration of the CERF appeal. It presented three projects: “Restore and strengthen the capacity of the local primary health system to provide emergency Reproductive Health services”; “Distribution of dignity kits for displaced women and girls”; and “*Ad-hoc*” population and housing census and registry of the affected population to support humanitarian operations and recovery planning”. The last two projects were rejected; the first one because of replication with another project presented by UNICEF and the second because it did not comply with CERF criteria.

PAHO-WHO

WHO acts as the directing and coordinating authority on international health work and furnishes appropriate technical assistance in emergencies and necessary aid upon the request or acceptance of Governments¹².

PAHO keeps a close relationship with health and government institutions, and was a first line of response during the emergency. By the time, the Mexican government requested international assistance; the agency had already sent doctors to the affected areas and was monitoring the risk of flood-related diseases in Tabasco. The agency also responded to the initial requirement of helping in the management of health and food supplies by implementing the SUMA project. Five specialists and an expert in sanitation and solid waste management (regional consultant in

¹² Menu, Jean-Paul; A New Role for WHO in Emergencies; Emergency Coordinator Division of Emergency and Humanitarian Action.

Peru) were sent to Tabasco with agency resources.

Even though the implementation of the SUMA project was successful, experts arrived late to the affected zone and faced difficulties with the army due to chaotic management of the warehouses in Tabasco during the first phase of the emergency. The amount of emergency supplies also caused coordination problems between them, which ended up with the experts being provisionally expelled from the warehouses. The army, that historically has been the logistic authority in charge of operations, did not know about the official SUMA support in the centres. According to the SINAPROC plan, these centres were managed in a rather rudimentary fashion by the army. Eventually the specialists were re-admitted, but the resulting scheme appeared to be a combination of the army system and SUMA program. The army had complete control of the centres but tried to manage them (classification and distribution of aid) in concordance with the SUMA program.

Apart from SUMA, PAHO organized the distribution of 20 thousand specially treated mosquito nets, and 16 thousand water containers in the shelters. These projects were part of the actions financed with the US\$ 564,960 provided by CERF. By the time the CERF appeal was completed the agency had already allocated USD\$ 150,000.

IOM

IOM provides transportation and emergency humanitarian assistance to persons requiring evacuation from emergencies as well as post-emergency movement assistance. While evacuation assistance, including assistance to countries of temporary protection, may involve international migration, post-emergency movement assistance generally relates to domestic movements of internally displaced persons, demobilized soldiers and persons affected by natural disasters. Assistance is also provided for post-emergency reconstruction initiatives¹³.

The International Organization for Migration implemented two major projects in

¹³ Emergency & Post-emergency Operations, <http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/op/edit/pid/714>.

Tabasco and Chiapas. As in other cases, it mobilized resources oriented to gather information and coordinate with local NGOs and government (two in Tabasco and one in Chiapas) for implementing the assistance at the local level. This included provision of materials for establishing shelters and monitoring health condition of 2,500 in Tabasco and 1,700 in Chiapas for a period of three months. After meetings with town councils and visits to affected communities, the IOM decided to concentrate on the municipality of Nacajuca due to the extent of the damage it suffered. In this Tabascan municipality IOM worked closely with the town council, while provision of complementary assistance as well as that for monitoring health and sanitary conditions required the coordination with governmental institutions at state and federal levels and WFP-PAHO-UNICEF. For implementing its shelter program the agency had as a partner the Association of Rural Zones of Tabasco (Asociación de las Zonas Rurales de Tabasco), the only one operating in Nacajuca. At the state level, it worked with the Housing Institute of Tabasco (Instituto de Vivienda de Tabasco). The agency channelled US\$401, 700 in shelter assistance to Tabasco and US\$ 175,480 to Chiapas from the Central Emergency Response Fund.

OTHER AGENCIES

WFP

The WFP is not present in Mexico, nonetheless, immediately after the Government's request, WFP sent a truck convoy from Panama carrying enough ready-to-eat meals (biscuits) to feed 70,000 people over five days. The biscuits however proved to be difficult to distribute and were not appreciated by the population. It has also been suggested that the agency intervened late in the UNDMT meetings, and did not participate in the UNETE team. WFP proposed a project for the CERF appeal, which was discarded as a stand-alone sectoral coordination project that was not linked to the distribution of food aid, and therefore did not comply with the CERF life-saving criteria¹⁴. WFP's traditional role in emergencies, apart from food aid, is logistics; however, this was efficiently, taken

¹⁴ <http://ochaonline.un.org/OchaLinkClick.aspx?link=ocha&docId=1109463>

care of by the Mexican Army. For the lessons learned exercise it is important to highlight WFP’s unilateral intervention, maybe explained by the fact that the agency is not permanently present in the country and is not fully aware of the country context. The failure to have the project approved under the CERF also indicates the organisations lack of knowledge of the Mexican context and needs.

Other Organisations’ Contributions¹⁵:

FAO - Five experts in agriculture and forest development visited the impact zones for a first assessment. FAO and SAGARPA formulated a technical cooperation project for food and agriculture in emergencies.

UNIFEM - Cargo Dignity kits sent to Tabasco. Information and prevention ‘package’ aimed at protecting women who were living in shelters or camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs).

UNEP - Experts sent to damage zone for Rapid Needs Assessment formulation.

UNESCO - The agency provided a Technical Consultancy to the Secretariat of Education of Tabasco and Chiapas. The agency designated a UN focal point for the SRE Information Centre established on November 15, on November 22. It also participated in the process of elaboration of the CERF and FLASH appeals.

UN-Habitat - Technical Consultancy supported to local government for housing recovery and demographic relocation.

UN Inter Agency Coordination and Collaboration Appropriation, Efficiency and Efficacy.

There seems to be little doubt that the Mexican Government’s first denial and then unexpected request for international assistance caught the UN system by surprise

¹⁵ For the organizations listed below, only very limited information exists and meetings were not held with them because of the outbreak of the

and in a state where it was seemingly unprepared to provide an effective and efficient emergency response.

Despite significant efforts to mount an efficient response through established coordination mechanisms, such as the DMT and UNETE, there is no evidence to suggest that this led to more coordinated actions among agencies within the affected states. This is exemplified by the needs assessments. Despite discussions at UNDMT level of the need to provide joint rapid needs assessment – which is also a work tool and part of the OCHA emergency guidelines – each agency took the field level needs assessments into their own hands, which may have hampered the formulation of the flash appeal and CERF. While it must be added that there is too little evidence to draw firm conclusions concerning this matter, it has not been possible to deduce any linkages between central level activities (UNDMT/UNETE) and actions that were carried out on the ground in Tabasco and Chiapas.

Furthermore, as mentioned in the timeline section (chapter 4), the overall response was constrained by the fact the system was undergoing an institutional transition and only two persons of UNETE had been trained in disaster operations by that time. Further to that, at agency levels (in this case UNICEF), we have verified that no continuous and permanently updated training has been provided to staff on disaster preparedness and emergency responses.

On the other hand, agencies’ working experience in the affected areas was a significant asset and facilitated unilateral responses. The existence of specialists in risk reduction in the state of Chiapas allowed for more focalized attention, whereas in Tabasco the UNETE attained a more institutional approach through the state government. The difference between the emergencies in Chiapas and Tabasco played, nevertheless, an important role in defining the strategies for implementation of humanitarian assistance.

Although the results of the CERF appeal revealed project replications and difficulties in effectively applying the humanitarian instruments, the Chiapas and Tabasco teams (both integrated by staffs from UNICEF, UNDP and UNDAC)

managed to put together a CERF appeal (with support from UNESCO). Coordination with federal officials and the establishment of focal points (for communication and donor relations) constituted concrete actions coordinated by the UNDMT in Mexico City. UNETE supported the activities of the UNDAC team. However, the tasks of UNETE overlapped with the immediate requests of UNDAC, indicating that coordination between agencies was complex.

OCHA

The deployment of UN OCHA was generally considered relevant and supportive during the emergency. Nevertheless, its participation suffered from similar constraints to those faced by the UNCT, namely the limited contextual knowledge of its team members and gaps in providing timely response.

Although OCHA's HQ supported formulation of the CERF and the Flash Appeal, there was insufficient understanding of the nature of the emergency and the Mexican administrative system. There was also a failure to appreciate the lack of preparedness of the UN agencies in the field. Although, the most important UN agencies in the country (6 of 21) worked closely with OCHA's field representatives, they would have played a more effective role if communication had been better with OCHA's HQ.

The most significant contribution of the UNDAC was its support for the establishment of the coordination centre in Tabasco. This particular action was praised by the government, which is now interested in following up an institutional transformation in order to turn such centres into a general action policy and to have a country member within the UNDAC.

The UN Coordination with Federal and State Governments

As has been already mentioned, the emergency in Tabasco and Chiapas was the first time in more than two decades that Mexico required international cooperation in a disaster. This put a pressure on both the UN System and the government. The

initial demands were for support in managing non-financial resources and for the RC to perform as an intermediary role between international agencies and the government. Needs assessments was also a critical issue. The risk of critical escalation of the disaster associated with the possibility of a collapse of the dam system in the upper Grijalva River, has to be considered when understanding the country’s request for international assistance. In addition, politicization of the assistance in a complex context where different administrations intervened and suspicions of corruption and deficient management were significant elements may have opened the door to external actors.

The operative rules of SINAPROC respect the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the focus point for international assistance. Nevertheless, work in the affected areas required coordination with state governments. Even though Mexico has various agreements on disasters management with other countries, there are none with the UN. The emergency was an opportunity to build a bridge between the UN and SINAPROC. In doing this, the RC sustained continuous communication and very quickly started to mediate with the international community. The formulation of the CERF and FLASH appeals were coordinated at federal level with information originating from state level; UNICEF, a UNDAC member and UNDP, facilitated this information. At the federal level, delays and difficulties in sustaining the need for it precluded the success of the FLASH appeal. Some problems during the implementation of SUMA may suggest that internal coordination of SINAPROC at the federal level was at times difficult, but the system was up and running, and appreciated by the Government.

On the other hand, UNETE collaboration with state authorities in both Tabasco and Chiapas during the implementation of assistance projects was fruitful and improved the results. In both states, the UNDMT faced limitations of information that had to be resolved in an expedite way. In each case, however, the emergency context was different and the coordination efforts varied.

In Chiapas, the extent and concentration of damage was limited to the eastern part of the territory. The Mexican Civil Protection System had reallocated communities

in emergency shelters. Federal authorities "had focused on the potential failure of the dam systems". Faced with this situation the UNDMT suggested providing technical assistance to the Mexican government. The domestic-resolution, for this issue was "*this kind of technical assistance, exceeded the UN responsibilities*"¹⁶.

Isolation was an obstacle for humanitarian attention. During the past fifteen years, Chiapas has been the scenario of a flourishing of social capital (local organizations, NGOs, research centres) and the presence of international agencies. In order to put up an assistance program in Chiapas inter-agency coordination was needed as well as coordination with both federal and state governments. In the first case, collaboration referred to the production of Needs Assessment, in which local organizations participated. The implementation of the psychosocial attention program in Chiapas required the training of 300 high school students. For this, federal education officials contacted a private institution close to the affected area to assist in the implementation of the plan. By the time, the expert contracted by UNICEF arrived in Chiapas, agency, school and government had been able to resolve various relevant problems such as accommodation, food and workshop materials, and financial aid for the collaborating students. Because the shelters were established in the primary schools, state authorities had also to allow the project to be implemented.

¹⁶ UNDMT meeting summary, November 14, 2007. .

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Since the 1985 earthquake, the Mexican Government has strengthened its capacity to respond to different events based on the fact that the country is prone to numerous natural hazards. The 2007 floods demonstrated that Mexico has developed significant response capacity for this type of disasters, as exemplified by SINAPROC. During the 2007 floods, we found signs that SINAPROC responded promptly to relief needs of the affected population in the two southern provinces.

For the UN system, the 2007-floods were a wake-up call and a reminder that emergencies strike anywhere, also in middle-income countries like Mexico. The government demonstrated strong financial and human capacity in the 2007 floods having a well-organised response system, and the UN needs to be organised and prepared to respond to these events in a coordinated fashion. Most UN agencies were present in Mexico in 2007, but given the circumstances, they had never previously worked with the Government on any emergency response. Lack of prior experiences, coordination and collaboration with the Mexican Government affected UN's response to the 2007 floods.

In the first days following the government's request for 'international solidarity', the UN's response had to be organised almost from the outset. In 2007, the UN's 'response' was characterised by untrained staff, there was a lack of interagency coordinating mechanisms and absence of individual agency or system-wide emergency and contingency plans. Critical time was therefore spent on mounting the response. The present exercise found that closing these gaps has affected the timeliness of the response. This becomes more evident when comparing the timeliness of UN's response with that of the government; thus, while the Government was thinking in terms of recovery, UN agencies were still engaged overtly in relief activities.

Despite being caught fairly unprepared, the system managed to establish mechanisms that coordinated and implemented part of the international relief- and recovery assistance. At the local level, some agencies managed to direct support to affected populations through and in collaboration with local contacts. Much of this support was directed towards meeting unattended needs of the affected population, e.g. protection and sanitary kits for women living in shelters, psychosocial activities for affected children, mechanisms for dealing with international aid, etc.

The deployment of the UNDAC team was generally appreciated by most parties. This exercise however found that applying the ‘normal’ procedures, according to established OCHA-guidelines can be questioned in terms of adequacy and aptness. Upon OCHA’s arrival in México, the national relief mechanisms were already being scaled down for recovery operations and support.

Hence, despite strong Mexican relief capacity, the UN managed to complement national response in particular areas, particularly addressing the needs of women and children. Generally, however, a well-defined and tested system-wide response plan would most probably have given the UN response a more proactive character as opposed to its reactive character, as discovered in the present analysis.

Recommendations

Strategic Level

1. Clearly define the UN’s role and the adequacy of response mechanisms in emergencies within Middle-Income Countries, such as Mexico.
2. Development of a clearly laid out strategic interagency document that highlights the value added of UN assistance, types of assistance that should be made available—particularly expertise and methodologies, and not so much material and financial support. Negotiation and discussion of this with government (the cluster approach could be used as an outset, but needs to be adapted to the Mexican context and existing capacities).
3. Strong agency experiences and territorial presence, particularly UNDP and

UNICEF, should be used for strategic planning in case of emergencies, i.e. identification of different risk scenarios, contacts and opportunities for channelling the aid.

4. Contingency plans should be prepared by each agency.
5. Clearly identify the phases in which the UN supports emergencies in the case of Mexico – prevention/mitigation, emergency response and/or reconstruction/recovery
6. Work closely with SINAPROC. Develop the conditions for the implementation of a country-specific operative frame in the context of the cluster approach.
7. Creation of a permanent interagency roster of trained staff that can be accessed in emergencies – knowledge of Mexico’s existing capacity and potential needs must be part of the roster training.
8. Opportunity to apply a geographical clustering mechanism to replace or compliment the sectorial or thematic approaches.

Operational Level

9. Developing interagency collaboration protocols for coordination between national, regional, and even the HQ agencies levels. The definition the needs, deployments, processes, monitoring and evaluation in the contingency plans. Regarding the preceding, this task should point out the agencies roles in case of emergencies.
10. Simulation exercises of emergency situations with the new UNETE plan and also by sectors or themes-communications, human resources, acquisitions, all for strengthening UN staff skills
11. Relevance of local programs as bridges that enhance capabilities and permit better allocation of assistance. Accessibility and opportunities to collaborate on risk prevention/mitigation at local level.
12. Apply UN humanitarian reform’s mechanisms for Rapid Needs Assessments.

9. Annexes

Interviews

Name	Responsibility	Organisation
Aminta Elizabeth Natarén Córdova	Deputy Secretary of Social Affairs	Chiapas Government
Ana María Güemes Perera	Social Policies Officer	UNICEF
Andrés Ramírez	Assistant of Communication Department	UNICEF
Comité de Planeación para el Desarrollo del Estado de Tabasco		Tabasco Government
Daniel Camazon	Projects Coordinator	UNICEF
Juan Carlos Rivas Valdivia	Economist Economic Development	ECLAC
Julio César Santos Puón	Chiapas Representative	Deputy Secretary of Education. Federal Government
Laura Gurza Jaidar	General Coordinator of Civil Protection	SEGOB
Lorenia Garza Ponce de León		Tabasco Government
Magdy Martínez-Solimán	Resident Coordinator	UN
María Teres Angulo	Chief of Administration Section	ECLAC
Marcelo Roberto García Mazzoli	Education Officer	UNICEF
Martha Ruth Cortés del Rivero	Deputy Secretary of Education	Chiapas Government
Mónica Sayrols	Communication Department	UNICEF
Muriel Obón Maricaca	Director of the Resident Coordinator Office	UN
Pedro López	Operations	ILO
Roberto Benes	International Public Policy Officer	UNICEF
Susana Sottoli	Country Representative	UNICEF
Yolanda Osuna Huerta	General Coordinator of COPLADET	Tabasco Government

Tables

Percentage of economic losses per disaster, period 1999 – 2007.

Phenomenon	Year								
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Hydro meteorological	75	99	99	97	60.2	85.4	99.3	92.8	97.6
Geological	25	1	1	0	18.5	0.1	0	0	2.1
Chemicals, health hazard	-	-	1	2	21.2	14.5	0.6	5.6	0.3
Others	-	-	-	1	0.1	0	0.1	1.7	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Note: Chemical phenomenon includes leaks, spills and fires

Source: CENAPRED

Source: Impacto socioeconómico de los principales desastres ocurridos en la República Mexicana en el año 2007.

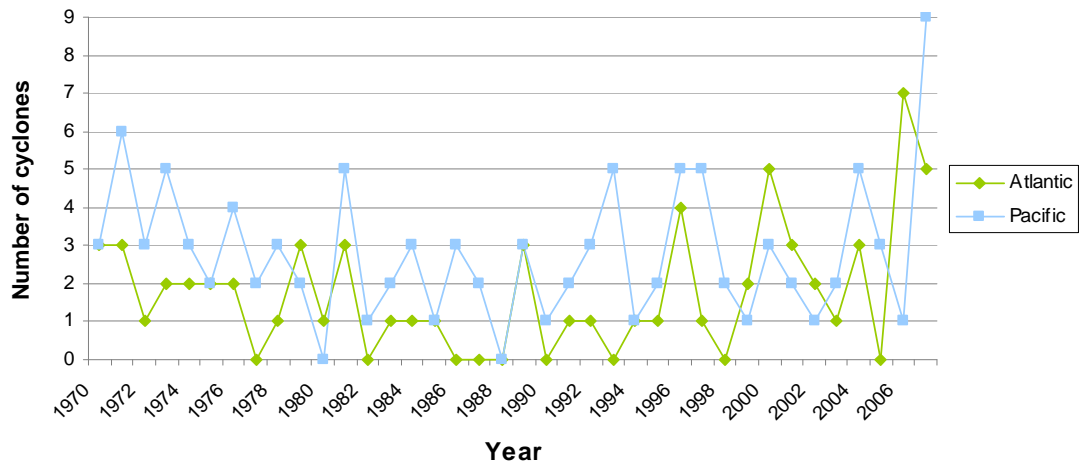
México: SNPC-CEPREP-SEGOB, 2009 p.8

Marginality in municipalities affected by natural disasters, period 2000 – 2006.

State	Range	Marginality Index	Standard Dev
Chiapas	High	0.723	0.613
Chihuahua	Medium	-0.534	1.205
Guerrero	Very High	1.078	0.943
Nuevo Leon	Medium	-0.090	0.668
Oaxaca	High	0.645	0.870
Veracruz	High	0.240	0.886

Source: Elaborated with information from: FONDEN and CONAPO

The number of Tropical Cyclones affecting Mexico, period 1970 – 2007



Source: Impacto socioeconómico de los principales desastres ocurridos en la República Mexicana en el año 2007. México: SNPC-CEPRED-SEGOB, 2009 p.20

Expanded Timeline of UN response

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
NATIONAL RESPONSE	27/10/2007 Saturday	Heavy rains began with a cold front causing the Grijalva, La Sierra, Carrizal and Puxcatan rivers to burst their banks			
	28/10/2007 Sunday	Rainfall up to 700 millimetres in the bordering sub watersheds of Chiapas and Tabasco, causing increase in storage level in the reservoirs, Chicoasen, Nezahualcoyotl (Malpaso) and Peñitas, located in Chiapas	Emergency declaration in 17 municipalities of Tabasco The Government has established the Contingency Operations Center (COC) in Tabasco under the State Governors office. SINAPROC Interinstitutional group meeting to analyze the situation.		
	29/10/2007 Monday	Rainfall up to 305 mm	Emergency declaration in 17 municipalities of Chiapas. Emergency declaration and FONDEN Fund made operational.		
	30/10/2007 Tuesday	Rainfall up to 250 mm	DN III Plan activated in Tabasco. National Army, Navy and SINAPROC, attended the emergency.		
	31/10/2007 Wednesday	Intense rains	President Calderon visits Villahermosa.		

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
	01/11/2007 Thursday		<p>The General Coordination of Civil Protection of the Secretary of Government issued an Emergency Declaration.</p> <p>Health Ministry announces, 20,000 Hepatitis A vaccines sent to Tabasco.</p>		
ADJUSTMENT	02/11/2007 Friday		2nd Visit of President Calderon to Tabasco	<p>Sitrep 1. UNETE was activated and the Resident Coordinator is consulting with the Government counterparts and has offered the support of the United Nations.</p> <p>OCHA Regional office (Panama) was in contact with Resident Coordinator’s Office and is closely monitoring the situation in Mexico (sitrep elaboration).</p>	<p>UNETE was formed by 6 agencies. At this time, there were 21 agencies formally present in Mexico.</p> <p>(The agencies were; UNFPA, FAO, UNDP, UNHRC, UNICEF & WHO/PAHO).</p>
	03/11/2007 Saturday	<p>Intense rains; floods in 34 Chiapas municipalities and 50% of Tabasco. Stabilization of river flow but the emergency continues.</p> <p>34 municipalities flooded in Chiapas.</p>	<p>Health secretary of Federal District sent 20,000 Hepatitis vaccine doses.</p> <p>SRE circulated an official notice to the international community in Mexico indicating that there is no call for international aid.</p>	<p>Sitrep 2. UNETE continues activated for developing of Sitrep’s and the Resident Coordinator was in close coordination with the government.</p> <p>OCHA’s sitrep 1.(each team</p>	<p>In press release and after floods, UNISDR was urging governments and the international community to better protect people against “predictable” disasters, and do more to reduce risk and vulnerability to hazards...</p>

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
			<p>Nevertheless, the Mexico Government is thankful for the solidarity of the towns and friendly governments.</p> <p>Mexican Government upset by UNISDR declarations.</p>	publishing their own report)	
	04/11/2007 Sunday	Intense rains; Peñitas dam at 88%. Landslide in San Juan Grijalva, village located between Peñitas and Malpaso dams.	<p>CENAPRED request to CONAE, activation of the International Charter, Spaces and Major Disasters.</p> <p>Offer of International Aid, (Canada, España, Peru, Cuba, United Kingdom and others, WHO, FAO).</p>		
	05/11/2007 Monday	<p>Cold front number five</p> <p>The water levels go down in all Tabasco rivers, 43 Chiapas municipalities affected.</p>	<p>Emergency declaration in 11 municipalities in Chiapas</p> <p>Request for international <i>solidarity</i> by President Calderon for Tabasco.</p> <p>Mexican press emphasizes the UNISDR director declarations.</p>	<p>Sitrep 3. UNCT Resident coordinator activated the UNDMT team and met with the government focal point for natural disasters (SRE), with the purpose of finding out the official position and the actions to take after the international call by the President.</p> <p>UNDMT, will request Cash grant for US\$100,000</p>	UNDMT was formed by 6 agencies. (The agencies were; UNFPA, FAO, UNDP, UNHRC, UNICEF & WHO/PAHO).
	06/11/2007 Tuesday	The water level goes down in all Tabasco rivers.	Visit of President Calderon to Chiapas	Sitrep 4. UNDAC, Resident coordinator and OCHA Regional	PNUMA, FAO, HABITAT & UNESCO did not have enough staff to support UNETE activities.

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
			<p>SEDENA is coordinating 33 temporal shelters, 28 in Tabasco and 5 in Veracruz.</p> <p>CNA director announces the beginning of the pumping of the water in Tabasco.</p>	<p>Director met with Civil Protection representatives to offer assistance and technical support for Federal Operations Centre in Tabasco.</p> <p>Resident Coordinator, met again with representatives of the SRE to inform them about the mobilization of an UNDAC team and to agree upon the manner in which SRE and UNCT will work jointly on coordination and the international aid mobilization.</p> <p>Meeting UNETE - OCHA (15 agencies participated).</p> <p>UNETE team established a sub-team for producing the Situations Reports. Concurrently, UNCMT Communications team was activated for support and monitoring to CR and UNCMT. Cash request issued.</p> <p>UNDMT. With Cluster Approach, the headquarters should provide resources to lead</p>	<p>PAHO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR, CINU & ECLAC; will support part-time (and in some cases virtual) the UNETE activities.</p> <p>UNICEF will support with their own projects.</p> <p>UNDP will send disaster zone diagnosis to UNDAC and UNETE teams.</p> <p>PAHO/SUMA had 6 experts in field. FAO sent a logistical expert.</p>

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
				<p>agencies to support the clusters coordination.</p> <p>UNDMT. If the government has sectorial capacity, there is no need to activate the Cluster.</p> <p>OCHA’s sitrep 2.</p>	
	07/11/2007 Wednesday	The water levels go down in all of Tabasco	<p>The Unit for Economic Affairs and International Cooperation from SRE has officially requested the assistance from the UN for Tabasco and Chiapas.</p> <p>Emergency website; UN had a link.</p>	<p>Sitrep 5. A UNDAC team of experts has arrived to Mexico (one in DF, one in Chiapas and another in Tabasco) in order to provide technical assistance and preliminary joint work with federal and local authorities and international assistance organizations. OCHA team has arrived in the country.</p> <p>OCHA’s sitrep 4 (No OCHA’s sitrep 3)</p> <p>UNDAC team training in Flash Appeal and CERF formulation at UNETE team.</p> <p>UNDAC agreements; UNDP-DRMP forms used for the diagnosis.</p>	<p>UN projects in the area are profiting from ongoing working relationships with local and international NGOs, as well as with government institutions.</p> <p>UN projects in the states, in those days, worked the relationships with local and international NGOs, as well as with government institutions.</p> <p>WFP was mapping the disaster zone.</p> <p>OCHA Mission said; Red Cross and OXFAM are the best work allies and they will have contacts, (local organisations on field).</p> <p>UNDP/PLRM reports that zones that are not that low in Chiapas report heavy damages due to landslides and over flooding rivers.</p> <p>UNDP did a Rapid Needs Assessment in Tabasco.</p>

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
				<p>UN team efforts to establish the relationship with SRE and CP.</p> <p>OCHA sent money for emergency supplies (50,000USD).</p> <p>Leader: Area: WHO/PAHO Health PAHO, UNICEF WatSan UNICEF Education FAO, UNICEF Nutrition UNDP Early Recovery & Coordination</p> <p>UN Call to international NGO's to formulate the Flash appeal.</p> <p>Flash appeal and CERF formulation starts.</p>	

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
	08/11/2007 Thursday	The water levels go down in all Tabasco	<p>CNA report Grijalva river flows dropped under the critical level.</p> <p>Road under SCT charge are repaired.</p> <p>The business community has established a coordinated front “Junto por Ellos” to raise and coordinate private sector support, (Chiapas).</p> <p>The government has 54 health centers and 18 health brigades in Chiapas</p>	<p>Sitrep 6. The Foreign Affairs Ministry has sent to the United Nations Organization, the official request for international assistance to support national efforts to face the emergency of the states of Tabasco and Chiapas.</p> <p>UNDAC field mission to Tabasco and Chiapas provide inputs to the Flash Appeal and OCHA Cash Grant</p> <p>OCHA needs to know the agencies decision, if request or not request the CERF and Flash Appeal funds.</p> <p>OCHA. The CERF must beneficiate to International and national NGO’s.</p> <p>OCHA. UN agencies must work in areas (assigned on Nov 7) for CERF and Flash Appeal.</p> <p>CERF funds - must apply to save lives.</p> <p>The UNCT is preparing a Flash Appeal focused in humanitarian</p>	<p>UNDAC team in collaboration with RRDMP - UNDP in Chiapas visits the affected zone and evaluates the relief efforts capacity.</p> <p>WFP, UNICEF, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNFPA are mobilizing emergency resources for humanitarian assistance.</p> <p>SUMA been installed in Tabasco. (PAHO).</p> <p>ECLAC joints to Early recovery team in CCC.</p> <p>Expert of UNFPA Humanitarian Affairs Office arrived.</p> <p>UN-HABITAT; SEDESOL requested support for Urban Restructuring and relief projects.</p> <p>UNESCO wants to work with UNICEF in Safe School Program.</p>

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
				<p>aid.</p> <p>UN are mobilizing emergency resources for humanitarian assistance to provide aid to the areas affected by the floods</p>	
	09/11/2007 Friday	<p>Over 50% of Villa Hermosa city is still under water. Most rural communities in the lower areas of Chiapas and in all Tabasco are no longer isolated and water levels are slowly receding.</p> <p>SSA committed to initiate the process of fumigation to prevent illnesses; dengue, yellow fever, etc. the situation is under control but the health risk prevails.</p>	<p>Civil Protection Chief accompanied by UN Team, visited the affected areas in Tabasco and Chiapas.</p> <p>Mexico’s president announced a US\$650m federal fund for reconstruction (FONDEN).</p> <p>Mexico’s president visited the region and assessed the latest developments</p>	<p>Sitrep 7. UNDAC field mission to Tabasco and Chiapas provide inputs to the Flash Appeal.</p> <p>OCHA and UNDAC mission teams reported a complex situation, unclear organization and scarce information flow.</p> <p>UN previewed the emergency politicization.</p> <p>UNDP received the Cash Grant Approval; US\$ 50,000.00.</p> <p>UNDSS Team in Tabasco OCHA’s sitrep 5</p>	<p>UNICEF coordinated with UNDP and UNDAC on charge of visit to Chiapas has affected zone and provided inputs to the flash appeal.</p> <p>WFP, UNICEF, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNFPA are mobilizing emergency resources for humanitarian assistance.</p> <p>WFP Emergency Centre in El Salvador sent nutritional cookies to feed 70,000 persons for 5 days.</p> <p>Specialists, PAHO/WHO Representative, SUMA experts and CEPIS regional advisor are in the disaster zone.</p> <p>SUMA/PAHO had a coordination problem, and the Army sent SUMA staff of the warehouse.</p> <p>UNDP/ BCPR reports that most rural communities in the lower areas of Chiapas and in all Tabasco are no longer isolated and water levels are slowly receding.</p>

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
					<p>UN-HABITAT; commented the SEDESOL territorial reorganization request. In addition, not to intervene in issues of water and sanitation as a national security sector, where existing capacities.</p> <p>UNEP does not participate in Flash Appeal process, as situation was considered to be in a recovery process.</p> <p>UNHCR in spite of do not have mandate for being part of CERF and Flash Appeal requests, participated in the UNDMT meetings.</p>
	10/11/2007 Saturday	The water level continues to recede, pumps are being employed in a 24/7 effort, but the advance that is being obtained could be reverted due to the presence of a new cold front.	In Tabasco, Health authorities applied 25,000 vaccines: Hepatitis A, Influenza, tetanus and other diseases	<p>Sitrep 8. BCPR-UNDP arrived. The aim of these missions is to collaborate in the coordination of the international aid, along with Mexican authorities, international organizations and civil society.</p> <p>UNDAC has established the OSOCC under the COC has been integrated as part of the coordinated global response to the crisis.</p> <p>The UN, with OCHA technical knowledge, has established a presence in the Information</p>	<p>UNICEF, IOM, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNFPA are mobilizing emergency resources for humanitarian assistance.</p> <p>Under the coordination of local authorities and the support of SUMA experts, all donations arriving to Tabasco are being registered and classified in the Civil Protection general warehouse.</p> <p>Fumigation equipment and malaria treatments had been bought and sent to Tabasco by PAHO/WHO.</p> <p>UNDAC Mission was in Chiapas.</p> <p>ECLAC joints to CENAPRED in Recovery work.</p>

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
				<p>Management Centre at the Foreign Relations Secretary (SRE).</p> <p>The UNCT continues to support the local authorities focusing in identifying gaps in the assistance being provided. Early Recovery taskforce and BCPR-UNDP met in the OC.</p> <p>BCPR - UNDP. The Mexican context is very important as well as political situation; we must be very thorough with these delicate topics, this must be considered in the formulation of proposals.</p> <p>UNETE team meeting: Flash Appeal Draft for 8.6m USD.</p> <p>Flash Appeal review for lowering the cost.</p> <p>BCPR- UNDP proposes early recovery plan.</p> <p>Do we decide an interagency recovery plan?</p>	<p>UNFPA was looking for CONAPO coordination.</p> <p>IMO and UNICEF will work together on gender issues in shelters.</p> <p>UNICEF commented; trying of integrate Early recovery in other sectors for lower the Flash Appeal request.</p> <p>UNICEF; UNESCO project, looks like a duplicity.</p> <p>The Early recovery plan will be an interagency proposal.</p> <p>UNDP; commented is important the state governments in coordination.</p> <p>FAO was no present despite efforts to promote agricultural recovery. Lead Agencies leaved the Flash Appeal</p>

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
				OCHA Regional Coordinator sent draft of Flash appeal to OCHA headquarters.	
	11/11/2007 Sunday		The federal government has declared that the search and rescue phase has ended and are moving into rehabilitation and reconstruction.	<p>Sitrep 9. The UNCT continues to support the federal and local authorities focusing on identifying gaps in the assistance being provided.</p> <p>UNDAC has established the OSOCC under the Secretary of Planning (Tabasco) and has been integrated as part of the coordinated global response to the crisis.</p> <p>The UN has provided support in the establishment of the Information Management Center at the Foreign Relations Secretary (SRE).</p> <p>UNDMT coordinated a meeting with UN agencies to discuss project proposals to be included in the Flash Appeal. First draft of Flash Appeal doesn't include the NGO's.</p>	<p>UNICEF, IOM, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNFPA are mobilizing emergency resources for humanitarian assistance.</p> <p>3 additional PAHO/WHO experts on basic sanitation, solid waste management and veterinary public health sent to disaster areas.</p> <p>UNDAC team in Chiapas collaboration with DRRMP</p> <p>PAHO (at UNDMT meeting) is quoted for saying; In LAC, the Cluster approach is unappreciated.</p> <p>At UNDMT meeting, UNICEF mentioned the concern for the national stakeholders in early recovery issue. They aren't coordinated</p> <p>WFP; we must have a good liaison with International and national NGO's for avoiding the assistance politicization.</p> <p>PAHO; The Lead Agencies does not have to be exclusively the authority according to mandate, must demonstrate their capacity in</p>

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
				<p>The Cluster Approach has not been activated – meaning that each agency must channel their own resources for the assistance.</p> <p>John Holmes did comments about the Cluster Approach needs.</p> <p>FMIM Focal point – OCHA Headquarters; commented was a need for the cluster approach and sent back for re-write the request. Surprised for No NGO’s in the Appeal</p>	<p>situ.</p> <p>UNICEF; Government Health sector is strong UN support only with expertise.</p> <p>UNDP; The IMO project is similar to UNFPA project and will be complementing the FONDEN information gathering.</p> <p>UNDP; The NGO’s in Mexico are very far off humanitarian issues.</p>
	12/11/2007 Monday	Situation in the shelters is relatively well controlled.	<p>Civil Protection in Chiapas indicated that, of a total 3,508 people in shelters, an undetermined number have begun to return to their homes.</p> <p>First session of damages evaluation commitment of FONDEN for deliver of partial diagnosis.</p> <p>Mexican government requests the gathering information by SEGOB and CONAPO.</p>	<p>Sitrep 10. The UNCT continues to support the Federal and Local authorities by identifying the loopholes on the coordination capacities and the assistance distribution.</p> <p>UNETE coordinated a meeting with international NGO’s to discuss project proposals to be included in the Flash Appeal.</p> <p>Resident Coordinator met with SRE to present the proposals of</p>	<p>UNICEF, IOM, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNFPA are mobilizing emergency resources for humanitarian assistance.</p> <p>Map Action experts arrived.</p>

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
				Flash Appeal and CERF.	
ASSESSMENT INTERVENTION	13/11/2007 Tuesday		<p>Authorization of first FONDEN funds and the publishing of Emergency declaration in Chiapas and Tabasco in Official Journal of the Federation.</p> <p>CENAPRED realized a land cracks report in 5 municipalities.</p> <p>The Secretary of Social development (SEDESOL) has launched an Emergent Programme for the Reconstruction of Houses.</p> <p>SRE suggest some changes at financing proposals.</p>	<p>Sitrep 11. The UNCT continues to support the Federal and Local authorities by identifying the loopholes on the coordination capacities and the assistance distribution.</p> <p>OCHA's sitrep 6</p>	<p>UNICEF, IOM, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNFPA are mobilizing emergency resources for humanitarian assistance.</p> <p>UNICEF reached agreement with Tabascan DIF and the Ministry of Education for organizing psycho-emotional workshops according to standard methodology parameters.</p> <p>UNICEF is providing 1,000 family hygiene kits in order to meet the minimum standard for personal and family hygiene and will provide 4,5000 school kits for teachers and children, as well as basic supplies to equip the affected schools</p>
	14/11/2007 Wednesday			<p>UNDMT coordinated another meeting with international NGOs to discuss project proposals to be included in the Flash Appeal.</p> <p>UN Resident Coordinator sent the CERF request by USD\$ 2,2m</p> <p>Chief CERF – OCHA Secretariat; commented the proposal and sent back for changes. The</p>	<p>UNICEF and PAHO indicate that negotiation with ONGs was difficult as the budget increased and there were duplication of activities. The NGO's in the country do not attend emergencies, don't were having expertise, neither a proven ability for negotiation in theses cases.</p>

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
				<p>general comment was the weakness of request.</p> <p>CAP Section Chief – OCHA HQs commented the international NGO projects, faced their insistence for included them in the proposal.</p>	
	15/11/2007 Thursday		<p>Technical commitment of Trust FONDEN Tabasco, submitted the projects to develop by hydraulic and roads sectors.</p> <p>President Felipe Calderon and Local authorities of Tabasco stated that classes will be restored in order to get through the scholar year.</p>	UNDAC present to SRE a briefing of their emergency work.	UNICEF, IOM, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNFPA are mobilizing emergency resources for humanitarian assistance.
	16/11/2007 Friday	The water levels continues to recede, pumps and other equipment are still working on the drain mainly in urban areas.	<p>Aid distribution has been reinforced with the participation of DICONSA and SEDENA and civil organizations been increasing the coverage to reach isolated communities. 167,808 persons been assisted by National Health Service.</p> <p>In Chiapas, Civil Protection informed that Mal Paso dams fluent will be released in order to repair and clean parts of its infrastructure,</p>	Sitrep 12. UNDAC meet with SRE authorities. UNDAC recognized the efficiency of the Mexican Government response and suggests the experience to be documented and shared as best practice. It was emphasized the impressive solidarity shown by Mexicans in assisting the affected population.	UNICEF, IOM, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNFPA are mobilizing emergency resources for humanitarian assistance.

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
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			40 communities have been evacuated due the fluent will flood-surrounding areas.	<p>UN missions continue to be on field such as UNDAC and staff from several Agencies.</p> <p>UN CR had a meeting with representatives of foreign governments in Mexico in SRE to discuss and coordinate international cooperation and aid in this stage of the emergency.</p> <p>UN Focal point in SRE information centre (UNESCO).</p>	
	20/11/2007 Tuesday			<p>OCHA Regional Office and UNCT elaborated a CERF, total amount was USD\$ 2.22m. Sent to OCHA headquarters in Geneva.</p> <p>UNCT Formulated a draft of Flash Appeal amounting to US\$ 14.8m. The call elaborated in coordination with international NGOs in the country. Sent to SRE for approval.</p> <p>UN Focal point (UNESCO) in SRE information centre</p>	
	21/11/2007 Wednesday	Villahermosa, the capital of Tabasco, 95% of floodwaters – 2.6	SRE held a meeting with all representatives of the diplomatic	Sitrep 13. Concerning agencies’ activities	UNICEF, IOM, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNFPA are mobilizing emergency

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
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		million liters –been pumped out of the city.	<p>missions in Mexico to inform the joint efforts between the Government and UNCT in the establishment of a communication Centre to coordinate international support to the emergency and to discuss the present situation and reiterate the call for international cooperation.</p> <p>Mexican army, through its “Comedores Comunitarios” (mobile community kitchens), continues to provide three hot meals a day to individuals and families staying in the shelter system, as well as residents affected by the floods not registered in shelters. Approximately 80,361 individuals are being served by these mobile kitchens.</p> <p>In Chiapas, the Civil Protection agency continues to evacuate communities in and around the municipality of Ostuacan, as they too, remain at high risk for continued floods and mudslides.</p> <p>In Chiapas, mosquito fumigation is ongoing in 62 municipalities.</p>	<p>OCHA’s sitrep 7.</p> <p>The UNDAC team met the Ministry of Foreign Affairs authorities to report on the establishment of the Information Management Centre at the SRE, as well as to provide an interim report on the UNDAC missions in Tabasco and Chiapas.</p> <p>A meeting with representatives of diplomatic missions was also held by the RC at the UN office. Information was provided on the support provided by the UN to the Government in response to the emergency.</p> <p>UN Focal point (UNESCO) in SRE information centre</p> <p>No news on CERF</p>	resources for humanitarian assistance.

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
			SRE do not sent Flash Appeal comments.		
	22/11/2007 Thursday			UN Focal point (UNESCO) in SRE information centre	

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
LOCAL INTERVENTION	23/11/2007 Friday			<p>UN Focal point (UNESCO) in SRE information centre</p> <p>CERF Projects Approved (US\$ 1,693,550):</p> <p>07-IOM-021-A - “Provision of shelter and non-food items in Tabasco” US\$ 401,700</p> <p>07-IOM-021-B – “Provision of shelter and non-food items in Chiapas” US\$ 281,900</p> <p>07-CEF-087-A – “Family protection for Malaria and Dengue in shelters” US\$ 99,510</p> <p>07-CEF-087-B – “Provision of hygiene inputs and awareness campaign” US\$ 175,480</p> <p>07-FPA-031 – “Restore and strengthen the capacity of the local primary health system to provide emergency Reproductive Health services” US\$ 170,000</p> <p>07-WHO-070 – “Reduce the health risks of the population affected by floods in the Mexico’s states of Tabasco and Chiapas” US\$ 564,960</p>	

Response	Date	Event	Intervention		
			Government	UN System	UN Agencies
	25/11/2007 Sunday			UNDAC Team leaves the country.	UNICEF, IOM, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNFPA are mobilizing emergency resources for humanitarian assistance.
	28/11/2007 Wednesday				<p>UNICEF facilitated the initial delivery of 4,500 school kits for teachers and children. These kits from preschool to secondary and are part of a larger shipment of 65,000 locally produced kits. The decision to procure the kits locally was based on the need to equip students with culturally appropriate supplies.</p> <p>In coordination with PAHO/WHO, UNICEF is procuring 20,000 insecticide treated bed nets. UNICEF has also procured 16,000 jerry cans of ten litres to ensure safe water storage to families still in the shelters and those returning to their flooded communities. Providing too, 1,000 family hygiene kits in Chiapas in order to meet the minimum standard for personal and family hygiene</p>
	05/12/2007		Official confirmation recovery projects of SRE		
	27/01/2008			ECLAC Evaluation mission, start	Agencies was part or the ECLAC mission
	03/02/2008				ECLAC Evaluation mission, ends

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