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PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION ON
CROSS BORDER FACILITATION MEASURES FOR DISASTER RELIEF

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1 Recommendation No. XX: For Cross-Border Facilitation Measures 2 for Disaster Relief

3 A. Introduction

4 This high-level policy recommendation advocates to governments the importance of building national
5 capacity and capability to cope with a large influx of humanitarian relief. The sudden onset of a disaster
6 sees both relief providers and national administrations being unclear around the importation
7 requirements and procedures for needed relief items, including lifesaving relief goods for distribution to
8 households and communities impacted by a disaster as well as specialty cargo such as medicines and
9 medical equipment, telecommunications equipment and search and rescue animals and equipment.
10 This uncertainty can add undue pressure to an already difficult post-disaster situation, leading to delays
11 in getting relief goods and services to disaster affected people.

12 B. Purpose and Scope

13 This policy recommendation supports governments by providing key considerations and practices for
14 implementing preparedness measures for the facilitation of a large influx of humanitarian relief after a
15 disaster. Specific attention is provided to the immediate emergency response phase of a sudden onset
16 disaster scenario. For the purposes of this recommendation and as a high-level indicator, this has been
17 defined as 0 - 15 days following a disaster. This recommendation focuses on the affected country
18 leadership and coordination required as well as import, transit, and temporary admission scenarios for
19 the movement of relief goods¹ and equipment² in response to a sudden-onset natural disaster.³ This
20 recommendation is provided for situations when a country has made a request for international
21 assistance or accepted international assistance. This may occur in situations when a state of emergency
22 has or has not been declared by the affected state.

23 C. Objectives

24 This recommendation recognizes cross-border regulatory agencies as key actors that need to be
25 involved in disaster management preparedness and relief planning and implementation. There are
26 many existing international conventions and non-binding instruments that require or recommend
27 national administrators to adopt specific facilitation measures for disaster relief. The most recent and
28 relevant international legal materials are detailed at Annex I. These guidelines extend beyond this
29 current international legal framework to provide more specific technical guidance for cross-border
30 regulatory agencies and describe what ideal measures for disaster relief border control can look like.

31 D. Benefits

32 There are numerous benefits to enhancing preparedness to receive a large influx of relief in the
33 aftermath of a disaster. Through implementation of the relevant policy and practices in this
34 recommendation and its accompanying Guidelines, governments can enable disaster relief to rapidly
35 reach disaster-affected people and communities, leading to lives saved and minimized losses of
36 livelihoods. With the severity and frequency of natural disasters likely to increase as a result of climate
37 change, the need for legal and institutional preparedness has never been greater.⁴

¹ For the use of this recommendation and its accompanying Guidelines and Annexes, the term 'relief goods' means physical supplies intended to be provided to disaster-affected communities for their relief or initial recovery. These goods are to be provided free of charge as a donated 'gift.'

² 'Relief equipment' refers to physical items, other than goods, that are necessary for disaster relief or initial recovery assistance.

³ This policy recommendation and associated guidelines does not specifically consider complex, protracted or slow-onset crises.

⁴ IPCC, 2012, *Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation*, available from <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/managing-the-risks-of-extreme-events-and-disasters-to-advance-climate-change-adaptation/>

38 The measures recommended in this document will also support government efforts in achieving
39 Agenda 2030 targets, and particularly Sustainable Development Goal 11 which prescribes the
40 implementation of integrated policies that build resilience to disasters. Enabling efficient and effective
41 facilitation measures for disaster preparedness and response will also increase the accountability of all
42 stakeholders involved in managing disaster relief at border entry points.

43 **E. Recommended practice**

44 In the light of the above and the need to preserve the well-being and livelihoods of people affected by
45 disasters, UN/CEFACT at its XX##XX Plenary session on XX date XX in Geneva, encourages national
46 administrations to:

- 47 1. Develop preparedness plans and procedures to facilitate the cross-border movement of
48 prioritized disaster relief utilizing existing mechanisms to the extent possible to mitigate risks
49 and ensure the smooth return to business as usual based on current international standards
50 and legal framework (refer to Annex I).
- 51 2. Align common preparedness measures for the cross-border movement of disaster relief across
52 government authorities and key stakeholders while applying proportionate border movement
53 controls.
- 54 3. Support the reduction of administrative and financial burdens on the cross-border movement
55 of disaster relief goods and equipment.
56

57 **Guidelines: For Cross-Border Facilitation Measures for Disaster** 58 **Relief**

59 **A. Introduction**

60 In a changing and increasingly complex world, governments are facing pronounced challenges such as
61 an increasing incidence of natural disasters, threats to peace and security as well as disease and
62 environmental incidents and accidents. When affected by disaster, government agencies are charged
63 with the responsibility of ensuring timely importation of necessary relief goods as well as accurate
64 application of tax exemptions for humanitarian responders, whilst at the same time mitigating risk by
65 protecting their borders from dangerous or illegal traffic. The pressure at borders is further accentuated
66 by increasing numbers and diversity of national and international relief actors responding to large scale
67 disasters. Enhancing preparedness to effectively manage international disaster relief requires an
68 assessment of how procedures and policy controls governing the movement of goods across national
69 borders can be adapted to reduce processing times, prioritize needed relief, reduce costs and maximize
70 efficiency, all whilst safeguarding legitimate regulatory objectives.

71 **B. General principles and context**

72 This section introduces some general principles that are important to set the context for more specific
73 guidelines covered in the remaining sections. These principles echo existing international standards and
74 legal frameworks (refer to Annex I) and include:

- 75 • It is first and foremost the responsibility of the government of the affected state to address the
76 humanitarian needs caused by a disaster within its borders.
- 77 • Governments should provide specific types of legal facilities to assisting actors so that they can
78 do an effective job of responding to humanitarian needs.
- 79 • The administrative burden of the relief effort should be kept to a minimum.
- 80 • Administrative actions regarding the control of goods shall endeavor to strike a balance
81 between mitigating risks and meeting the urgent needs of disaster-affected people.
- 82 • Some legal facilities should be conditional on assisting actors being committed to, and having
83 ongoing compliance with, certain minimum standards.

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- Administrations shall adopt appropriate measures to strengthen their resilience and preparedness to face disaster situations.
 - Proactive advance planning and consultation with stakeholders is highly recommended to ensure that opportunities to reduce the administrative burden can be identified and implemented.

89 **B.1. Exceptional circumstances in a post-disaster operating environment**

90 These guidelines promote the strategic value of instilling resilience across border regulatory agencies
91 and border entry points when dealing with a disaster that surpasses national capacity. The sudden
92 mobilization and surge of humanitarian assistance offered by the international community may quickly
93 create bottlenecks at border entry points that are critical hubs for large scale disaster response
94 programs. Border entry points may receive up to ten times the usual amount of cargo to support
95 disaster relief efforts. While relief goods are dispatched and shipped during all phases of the disaster
96 cycle, including to pre-position in transit and high-risk countries before a disaster occurs, it is typically
97 when national authorities have made an emergency declaration and requested international assistance
98 that the need to prioritize the rapid importation of emergency relief items and equipment is greatest.
99 These guidelines specifically focus on situations in which international assistance is requested or
100 accepted.

101 Special operating procedures are necessary to enable border agencies to efficiently receive the sudden
102 influx of cross-border disaster relief shipments, especially considering they may be operating with
103 reduced capacity in the cases where infrastructure, personnel and IT systems have been affected by a
104 disaster.

105 Not preparing ahead to minimize the risk of blockages and congestion at borders is likely to negatively
106 affect the fast reception and delivery of needed humanitarian assistance as well as regular cross-border
107 operations and trade, disrupting business and populations not initially affected directly by the disaster.

108 A proactive and inclusive approach to preparing to work under exceptional disaster response conditions
109 is required so all cross-border regulatory agencies can effectively work with each other to ensure relief
110 reaches disaster affected people while maintaining necessary national controls. Using learning
111 extracted from previous disaster events, preparedness should focus not only on the visible national
112 cross-border agencies but also consider the whole system of national legal and regulatory frameworks
113 across government agencies. To facilitate this, pragmatism is a key principle in embedded in
114 institutional disaster resilience. The most effective strategies to support the immediate response to a
115 disaster are unlikely to depend on a fully operational technical environment or automated information
116 systems such as electricity, telecommunications, office buildings and transport infrastructure which
117 may be impacted. Instead low-tech mechanisms and processes prepared in advance through strong
118 collaborative efforts and able to be activated quickly are required.

119 **B.2. Key stakeholders**

120 There are numerous stakeholders that participate in the international trading system, as described in
121 the UNECE International Supply Chain Reference model (ISCRM).⁵ During the initial stage following a
122 disaster, there are generally five types of actors important to consider in the cross-border movement of
123 disaster relief amongst whom coordination is likely to be required:

- 124
- 125
- 126
- Beneficiaries
 - Assisting actors providing goods and equipment
 - Assisting actors providing services, technical advice and other assistance

⁵ UNECE, 2003, *International Supply Chain Reference Model (ISCRM)*, available from:
<http://tfig.unece.org/contents/ISCRM.htm>

- 127 • Governmental regulatory agencies
128 • Private sector economic operators that provide support
129 Annex II provides descriptions of these actors and respective roles.

130 **B.3. Common disaster relief goods**

131 Disaster relief goods are intended to be provided to disaster-affected communities for their relief or
132 initial recovery.⁶ Some states also have additional rules for which specific items are classified as relief
133 items during a disaster response. Several international organizations and United Nations entities who
134 frequently provide disaster relief have developed relief goods catalogues and detailed specifications.⁷

135 Annex III lists typical example types of relief goods and equipment imported during the initial
136 phases of a disaster response, including kits commonly distributed to households.

137 **B.4. Types of disasters**

138 A disaster is defined as a “serious disruption of the functioning of society, which poses a significant,
139 widespread threat to human life, health, property or the environment, whether arising from accident,
140 nature, or human activity, whether developing suddenly or as the result of long-term processes, but
141 excluding armed conflict.”⁸

142 Although all types of large-scale disasters lead to loss of life and major disruptions, there are nuances in
143 disaster preparedness and response depending on the disaster type (natural, conflict, population-
144 movement, etc.). These guidelines focus specifically on sudden-onset natural disasters defined as:

- 145 • **Disasters connected to natural phenomena and health crises in non-conflict settings:** Crises in
146 which natural processes (geological, hydrological, meteorological or biological) play a significant
147 part in increasing mortality, disease morbidity and damage to livelihoods, and where these
148 effects are not compounded by war or widespread armed violence.⁹
- 149 • **Sudden onset:** Catastrophic, rapid-onset events like tropical storms, earthquakes and tsunamis.

150 **B. 5. Disaster response phases**

151 A large-scale natural disaster can very quickly surpass the response capacity of any one country.
152 Following the request for or acceptance of international assistance by an affected government, assisting
153 actors can rapidly dispatch large quantities of relief to support response efforts.

154 Each disaster is a unique event and disaster response requires careful strategic assessment and
155 planning. The common stages of disaster response do not follow a neatly defined course or timeline,
156 however there are several phases that commonly unfold and can inform preparedness and response
157 measures.

⁶ International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, 2007, *Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance*, available from: <https://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/idrl/idrl-guidelines/>

⁷ For examples, refer to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Standard Products Catalogue <https://itemscatalogue.redcross.int/index.aspx>; World Health Organization Essential Medicines and Health Products publications <https://www.who.int/medicines/publications/en/>; United Nations Children’s Fund Supply Catalogue <https://supply.unicef.org/> and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Core Relief Item Catalogue, 2012

⁸ International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, 2007, *Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance*, available from: <https://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/idrl/idrl-guidelines/>

⁹ ALNAP, 2018, *State of Humanitarian System Report*, available from: <https://www.alnap.org/our-topics/the-state-of-the-humanitarian-system>

158 Typical disaster response phases and likely cross-border movement scenarios are described below:

- 159 • **Early warning and early action:** Monitoring provides early warning of emerging risks which in
160 turn allows for early action, such as tailoring contingency plans and where possible taking
161 action that could mitigate the impact of the emerging risk. Relief organizations present in the
162 country or region may start to evaluate and preposition existing disaster relief supplies close to
163 areas expected to be affected. Potential assisting actors may start to apply for duty and tax
164 exemptions for some possible relief supplies. Early warning can at times lead to a price surge
165 from suppliers and service providers attempting to capitalize on the increase in predicted
166 demand.
- 167 • **Disaster impact:** Although not a formal disaster phase, this is the period in which the disaster is
168 occurring and immediate information about the disaster impact is gathered. This period may
169 last up to 48 hours or longer. It is usually the period in which people must seek safety and
170 carefully monitor and assess incoming information from a variety of sources and share
171 information about initial damage assessments such as operational status of air and seaports
172 and major road closures.
- 173 • **Disaster relief:** The relief phase represents the immediate, lifesaving response activities
174 undertaken after a disaster. This phase can last for hours, days or even weeks depending on the
175 situation. These guidelines use an indicative timeframe of the first fifteen days after initial
176 impact or declaration of disaster. This period requires rapid response actions to prevent the
177 loss of life from first responders such as search and rescue teams. Affected areas can suffer
178 from power grid failure, fuel shortages, road, water and other infrastructure damage. Disaster
179 response agencies usually conduct and communicate assessments of needs of affected
180 communities as well as develop strategies to physically access impacted areas. It is usually
181 during this phase, that the government of the disaster affected state may decide to request or
182 accept international assistance based on the needs identified and national capacity to fulfil
183 those needs.¹⁰ The agency responsible for disaster response should issue a preliminary list of
184 goods, equipment and services needed that can be communicated to all relevant cross-border
185 regulatory agencies to facilitate rapid importation of international donations and other support
186 provided by international assisting actors. Support from assisting actors may be provided as
187 financial contribution, physical goods and equipment or surge personnel. Emergency
188 coordination centers, telecommunications hubs, and additional airport reception centers are
189 usually setup during this stage as required. Frequently, both requested and unrequested
190 assistance and donated goods are received by the impacted state and need to be managed at
191 border entry points. Expedited procedures are critical to avoid bottlenecks or low priority relief
192 items being processed first.
- 193 • **Recovery:** When the initial onset and the shock of the disaster has abated and temporary
194 measures have meet immediate needs, a more stable period of transition can begin. Some
195 employment may resume, and children may go back to school. During medium to long-term
196 recovery, the work of building more permanent physical structures and rehabilitation of
197 infrastructure begins, along with restoration of social structures. Border points may usually
198 return to using regular processes during this phase.
- 199 • **Preparedness:** Preparedness involves the ongoing practice of systemic analysis and assessment
200 of readiness to respond to potential disasters. During this phase, regulatory agencies and
201 stakeholders should take actions to reduce the potential impact of disasters such as ensuring

¹⁰ For further information about the request for international assistance process refer to the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, 2007, *Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance*, available from:
<https://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/idrl/idrl-guidelines/>

202 necessary regulatory and legal frameworks are in place, making plans, practicing scenarios and
203 regularly testing equipment and procedures and implement lessons from past experiences.
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207 **Annex I: Key references to this document**

208 There are many existing international standards, legal frameworks and guidelines that are relevant to
 209 this document, and often cover more detail in their specific areas. These include:

| Reference (ordered alphabetically) | Brief description |
|---|--|
| 1. <i>Convention on Temporary Admission, Annexes B.9 and D</i> , Istanbul, 26 June, 1990, available from: http://www.wcoomd.org/-/media/wco/public/global/pdf/about-us/legal-instruments/conventions-and-agreements/istanbul/istanbul_legal_text_eng.pdf?la=en | <i>Convention governing the temporary admission of goods, including relief goods.</i> |
| 2. Customs Cooperation Council, <i>Recommendation of the Customs Co-operation Council to expedite the forwarding of relief consignments in the event of disasters</i> , 9 June, 1970, available from: http://www.wcoomd.org/en/about-us/legal-instruments/recommendations/pf_recommendations.aspx | <i>Outlines recommendations for the management of relief consignments.</i> |
| 3. Customs Cooperation Council, <i>Resolution of the Customs Co-operation Council on the Role of Customs in Natural Disaster Relief</i> , June 2011, available from: http://www.wcoomd.org/en/about-us/legal-instruments/resolutions.aspx | <i>Resolution inviting members to implement the revised Kyoto Convention and make plans for the proper reception of relief consignments with capacity building assistance supported by the Secretariat.</i> |
| 4. Customs Cooperation Council, <i>SAFE Framework of Standards</i> , 2018 edition, available from: http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/facilitation/instrument-and-tools/frameworks-of-standards/safe_package.aspx | <i>The SAFE Framework provides and instrument for enhancing cooperation between customs authorities, relevant government agencies and economic operators.</i> |
| 5. Customs Cooperation Council, <i>The relevant key Principles of the Safe Framework of Standards, in further facilitating the process of clearing relief consignments</i> , undated, available from: http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/facilitation/activities-and-programmes/natural-disaster.aspx | <i>Examines the degree to which the key principles of the SAFE Framework of Standards may prove useful in further facilitating the clearance process for relief consignments.</i> |
| 6. Customs Cooperation Council, <i>Trade Facilitation Agreement</i> , Bali, 2013, available from: https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tradfa_e/tradfa_e.htm | <i>Agreement with respect to trade facilitation arrangements amongst members.</i> |
| 7. Customs Cooperation Council, <i>Trade Recovery Guidelines</i> , 2018, available from: http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/facilitation/instrument-and-tools/frameworks-of-standards/safe_package.aspx | <i>Provides guidelines for the recovery of trade following disruptions.</i> |
| 8. Inter-Agency Standing Committee, <i>Emergency Response Preparedness, Draft for Field Testing</i> , July 2015, available from https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/emergency_response_preparedness_2015_final_2.pdf | <i>The IASC developed this guide to support the international humanitarian system to apply a proactive approach to emergency preparedness.</i> |
| 9. <i>International Convention on the Harmonization and Simplification of Customs Procedures</i> (as amended), Brussels, 30 March, 1999, available from: http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/facilitation/instrument-and-tools/conventions/pf_revised_kyoto_conv/kyoto_new.aspx | <i>Key agreement for the global harmonization and simplification of customs procedures. Annex J5 specifically relates to prioritization of relief consignments and recommendation to waive import and export duties and taxes.</i> |
| 10. International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2011, <i>Model Act for the Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance (IDRL Model Act)</i> , | <i>The IDRL Model Act is built on and intended to supplement the IDRL Guidelines. It serves as a reference tool and example to lawmakers as they develop legislation on</i> |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>available from: www.ifrc.org/PageFiles/88609/Pilot%20Model%20Act%20on%20IDRL%20(English).pdf</p> | <p><i>managing outside aid in a manner appropriate to their national circumstances.</i></p> |
| <p>11. International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2011, <i>Model Emergency Decree for the Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance (IDRC Model Emergency Decree)</i>, available from: https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/12/Model-Decree_EN-LR.pdf</p> | <p><i>The IDRL Model Emergency Decree is specifically directed to those situations where a clear legal framework is not in place before the onset of a large-scale disaster, or where the adoption of more comprehensive legislation is not practicable.</i></p> |
| <p>12. International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, 2007 <i>Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance (IDRL Guidelines)</i>, available from: www.ifrc.org/what-we-do/disaster-law/about-disaster-law/international-disaster-response-laws-rules-and-principles/idrl-guidelines/</p> | <p><i>The IDRL Guidelines are a set of recommendations to governments on how to prepare their disaster laws and plans for the common regulatory problems in international disaster relief operations.</i></p> |
| <p>13. International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, 2017, <i>Checklist on the Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance (IDRL Checklist)</i>, available from https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/12/IDRL-Checklist-EN-LR.pdf</p> | <p><i>The IDRL Checklist is a tool to assist relevant actors to make use of the IDRL Guidelines, especially in relation to the development and review of laws, policies, plans and procedures.</i></p> |
| <p>14. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Response in Asia and the Pacific: A Guide to International Tools and Services, 2017, available from https://www.unocha.org/asia-and-pacific-roap/asia-disaster-guide</p> | <p><i>The Guide helps disaster managers in national Governments gain basic knowledge of how to mobilize and use international and regional tools and services for disaster response and preparedness efforts</i></p> |
| <p>15. <i>Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunications Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations</i>, Tampere, 18 June, 1998 available from: https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mt_dsg_no=XXV-4&chapter=25</p> | <p><i>The Treaty recognizes the essential role of telecommunications following a disaster and establishes arrangements for the request and provision of telecommunications assistance.</i></p> |
| <p>16. UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs, 1996, <i>Model agreement on customs facilitation in international emergency humanitarian assistance</i>, available from: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/230021?ln=en</p> | <p><i>Model agreement for use between States and the UN concerning measures to expedite the import, export and transit of relief consignments and possessions of relief personnel in the event of disasters and emergencies.</i></p> |
| <p>17. UNCTAD, <i>ASYCUDA Program</i>, 2020, available from: https://unctad.org/en/Pages/DTL/TTL/ASYCUDA-Programme.aspx</p> | <p><i>ASYCUDA is an integrated customs management system for international trade and transport operations in a modern automated environment. The ASYREC add-on will enable to identification and prioritization of humanitarian relief goods.</i></p> |
| <p>18. World Trade Organization, <i>Trade Facilitation Agreement</i>, July 2014, available from https://www.tfafacility.org/trade-facilitation-agreement-facility</p> | <p><i>The TFA contains provisions for expediting the movement, release and clearance of goods, including goods in transit. It also sets out measures for effective cooperation between customs and other appropriate authorities on trade facilitation and customs compliance issues. It further contains provisions for technical assistance and capacity building in this area.</i></p> |

211 **Annex II: Key stakeholders**

212 The list below outlines the key stakeholders that have a direct role the cross-border movement of
 213 disaster relief and should ideally participate in the design and/or implementation of facilitation
 214 measures.

| Stakeholder | Description |
|---|---|
| 1. Beneficiaries | Disaster affected people and communities, including internally displaced people. The impact of a natural disaster on people, communities and livelihoods can be reduced through connected and streamlined preparedness activities and response processes. Beneficiaries needs must be properly assessed by disaster management agencies to determine priority disaster relief goods and equipment. |
| 2. Assisting actors providing goods and equipment | Any assisting international or domestic humanitarian organization, assisting state, foreign individual, foreign private company providing charitable relief or other foreign entity responding to a disaster in the affected state or sending relief goods or equipment. Assisting actors providing goods and equipment will require assistance with the cross-border movement of relief consignments. They may or may not be the 'importer/exporter on record.' |
| <i>2a. Registered actor or donor</i> | Assisting actors or donors who have been approved by the government as a provider of goods that will be distributed free of charge or to be used by or under the control of such organization. An approved / registered donor may also represent other actors (who are not approved/registered) as 'implementing partners' to support relief efforts. |
| <i>2b. Unregistered actor or donor</i> | Assisting actors or donors that do not have prior approval from the government to donate goods in the country. These organizations may need to transfer the ownership of goods over to approved / registered donors in order to benefit from special simplifications and facilitations or request a 'fast tracked' registration process during disaster response or undertake both processes in parallel. |
| 3. Assisting actors providing services, technical advice and other assistance | Any assisting international or domestic humanitarian organization, assisting State, foreign individual, foreign private company providing charitable relief or other foreign entity responding to a disaster in the affected state by providing services to the affected state to assist disaster relief operations. This encompasses advice and technical assistance which is not necessarily linked to the donation of goods or money. Many non-government organizations (NGOs), INGOs, UN entities and others offer essential human services, expertise and technical assistance. Like donors of physical goods assisting actors providing services can also be classified as either registered or unregistered. |
| 4. Governmental regulatory agencies | |
| <i>4a. National disaster management coordinating body</i> | A government agency whose primary purpose is to coordinate response to natural or man-made disasters and for capacity-building |

in disaster resiliency and crisis response. This body is often referred to as the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA).

Whilst many countries do have separate dedicated disaster management agency, others may have responsibilities delegated across different governmental bodies. Coordination and preparedness measures are even more critical in these scenarios.

4b. Cross-Border regulatory agencies

Governments legislate to give different regulatory bodies the authority and resources to ensure compliance with border controls. The functional responsibilities embedded in these agencies vary from one country to another and may include cooperation with cross border agencies of neighboring transit countries. The facilitation of disaster relief spans across various agencies responsible for the control of goods, people and vehicles. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Authorities responsible for health
- Authorities responsible for duties and taxation
- Authorities responsible for sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) controls
- Authorities responsible for food and drugs
- Authorities responsible for disease control
- Authorities responsible for standards and metrology
- Authorities responsible for border clearance
- Authorities responsible for immigration
- Authorities responsible for security and interior affairs
- Authorities responsible for the fight against fraud
- Authorities responsible for trade policy, foreign affairs and international relations
- Authorities responsible for civil aviation authorities

4c. Partner government agencies (in the country of origin of the shipment)

When the necessary agreements have been put in place, cross border regulatory agencies can receive documentation or information from governmental regulatory agencies in the countries from which shipments originated. Partner government agencies can impact the effectiveness of relief facilitation through accurate and timely information such as export declarations or certificates of origin. Partner government agencies can also help provide early notifications through inter-agency coordination and expedite relief logistics by prioritizing relief consignments.

4d. Militaries (local and foreign)

Military airports, other facilities and transport assets may provide essential support for the movement of disaster relief shipments, both during export from donor locations as well as at arrival into destination country. Regular clearance procedure may not be foreseen in such places, which may cause some problems since some countries require a proof of exportation for fiscal reasons in the country of departure in order to not be liable for the value added tax, for example.

5. Private sector economic operators providing support

5a. Customs clearing agents / brokers

A person or a company who is licensed by the local customs authority, after passing an examination, to act as a professional agent for an importer or exporter, prepare and submit all documents for clearing

goods through customs, and who is paid customs brokerage for his/her service.¹¹

Often, they also fulfill this same role with cross-border regulatory agencies that are not customs. Some countries require all clearance procedures be performed by customs agents/brokers.

5b. Other private sector economic operators

Private sector operators who assist with the border clearance process that may provide support, inputs or expertise during disaster response include:

- Vehicle, route and terminal transport service providers, including shipping agents
 - Airport terminal operators
 - Trade / community systems that support regional information sharing
 - Regional and local community leadership
 - Stevedores
 - Cargo handling agents
 - Electronic systems providers
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5c. Local suppliers of disaster relief goods and equipment

Businesses in the disaster affected country may seek to rapidly import needed goods and equipment for sale to responding disaster responders and assisting actors. These businesses may or may not be determined eligible for import tax and duty waivers or priority facilitation arrangements depending on the local regulation and circumstances. However, more disaster relief agencies and assisting actors are recognizing that purchasing needed goods and equipment locally from businesses within a disaster affected country has added benefits, such as assisting economic recovery.

¹¹ UNECE Trade Facilitation Terms: An English-Russian-Chinese Glossary, third revised edition, 2019, pp 60-61.

216 **Annex III: Typical types of disaster relief goods and equipment**

217 *While needs must always be assessed following a disaster, typical types of disaster relief goods and equipment*
218 *requiring cross-border facilitation during the initial 0-15 days following a sudden onset natural disaster*
219 *include:*

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| blankets | battery generators | clothing | foodstuffs |
| household kitchen sets (pots, pans, cutlery, etc.) | household hygiene items and kits (soap, sanitary napkins, etc.) | laboratory equipment | latrines |
| medical equipment | medicines | mosquito nets | other means of transport |
| prefabricated houses | plastic sheets (also known as tarpaulins) | search and rescue trained animals | shelter repair tool kits (hammer, nails, rope, etc.) |
| solar lights | surgical equipment | telecommunications equipment | tents |
| vehicles | water purification units | water storage (buckets, jerry cans, transport bladders, tanks, etc.) | |

Relief items are commonly distributed as pre-packed kits with multiple products, for example kitchen kits, medical kits, shelter repair kits, hygiene kits, etc.

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