

**HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE POLICY:**

**A FRAMEWORK FOR RESPONSE TO NATURAL AND MAN-MADE DISASTERS**

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HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE POLICY:  
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 80s were ushered in by the mass exodus of refugees from Indochina, Ethiopia and Afghanistan on a scale of crisis proportions. Public concern has been heightened by the alarming increase of victims of natural and man-made disasters throughout the world. In the first two years of this decade alone, a one-third increase in the number of third world disaster victims has resulted in no less than 46 million affected people. Appeals for humanitarian assistance launched by international institutions recorded a corresponding increase amounting to \$500 million, bringing their total relief efforts to more than \$2 billion a year.

The escalation of political tensions and natural disasters has many analysts asking if this is not indicative of a future trend towards sustained humanitarian requirements. These events led the Canadian Government to strengthen its capacity to respond to disasters. In 1981, Parliament reaffirmed its commitment to humanitarian assistance by more than doubling the allocation to CIDA's International Humanitarian Assistance Programme.

It is against this background that the Agency decided to clarify its policies regarding humanitarian assistance and to strengthen the mechanisms in place to respond to disasters. Accordingly, the development of this policy framework was called for in the Strategic Overview exercise. This discussion paper and policy statement presents, for the first time, a comprehensive framework for humanitarian assistance. The recommendations were approved by the management of CIDA on May 5, 1983.

The paper does not provide details on the emergency food aid programmes coordinated by the Food Aid Coordination and Evaluation Centre (FACE) and implemented by Bilateral, Multilateral and Special Programmes, since a comprehensive food aid policy paper already exists. The recommendations given in the present paper deal primarily with non-food aid humanitarian assistance, and in no way alter existing food aid policies.

A summary of policy decisions contained within the paper is given here.

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15) <u>Unearmarked</u> IHA programme support for a programme in its entirety will be the norm, but <u>restrictions and conditions</u> may be applied to IHA funding to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of operations where warranted.	30
16) To ensure the flexibility needed by an emergency response mechanism, the policy of providing <u>untied IHA programme grants</u> will be maintained; however, grants may be tied to the provision of Canadian goods and services where these are deemed appropriate.	31
17) CIDA will strive to ensure improvements in the <u>effectiveness of the delivery mechanisms</u> of international humanitarian organizations and will press for increased <u>coordination of international efforts</u> to provide humanitarian assistance.	31
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## 1.2 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY PAPER

The purposes of this policy paper are:

- (a) to record established humanitarian assistance policies and to propose new policy guidelines for better coordination and implementation of Canada's response to appeals for humanitarian assistance;
- (b) to establish the relationship between the various phases of humanitarian assistance and CIDA's development assistance mandate; and
- (c) to define the roles of each of CIDA's delivery channels through the various phases of a disaster.

Most of the humanitarian assistance provided by the Canadian Government is classed as Official Development Assistance (ODA) and as such plays a complementary role to normal economic and social development activities. In this context, the various situations where humanitarian assistance is provided, the phases that describe a disaster cycle and, finally, the aid mechanisms available to respond to particular humanitarian requirements, are illustrated in this paper.

Throughout the paper, the victims of natural and man-made disasters referred to include: displaced persons (those who leave the disaster area but remain within their native country); refugees (those who have left their native country to avoid the effects of a disaster); and affected populations (a general term referring to displaced persons, refugees and disaster victims who remain in their community at the site of the disaster).

## 1.3 DEFINITION OF A DISASTER

"Disaster" is a term used to describe a traumatic event or situation befalling an individual, family, community, area, country or region. Briefly, a definition would include three elements: destructive change, duration and degree of impact.



In general terms, a disaster is a catastrophe bringing about an unfavourable, destructive and often life-threatening change to the victims' environment. The duration of a disaster can vary according to the "disaster event". A hurricane happens rapidly, for example, allowing recovery from the "disaster situation" left in its path to begin immediately. Other situations are the cumulative result of a combination of disaster events, e.g., refugee movements caused by conflict and drought. In such cases, the disaster situation can last for many months or even years. The impact of a disaster will vary according to the magnitude of the event, the vulnerability of the victims and their ability to cope with the resulting disaster situation. Naturally, disaster events and situations which are at the top of the scale for all three variables will be of greatest concern to the international community.

#### 1.4 DEFINITION OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Humanitarian assistance can be defined as:

- temporary assistance to populations affected by a natural or man-made disaster of a magnitude that surpasses their capacity to cope.

Humanitarian assistance can take a variety of forms:

- assistance in alleviating human suffering as a result of a disruption in the normal socio-economic patterns of development;
- measures applied in a given time-frame to bring temporary relief and protection to victims of disasters, particularly to more vulnerable groups such as urban and rural poor, women, children, the elderly, the handicapped and refugees;
- activities to prevent or mitigate loss of life, injuries or sickness that are directly linked to a disaster situation; and
- activities aimed at a return to self-sufficiency and conditions conducive to further development.

## 1.5 GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

### (a) Alleviating Human Suffering

Humanitarian assistance needs no other justification than the fact that it responds to a natural human instinct and duty to help people affected by disasters. Therefore, humanitarian assistance activities are designed to alleviate human suffering resulting from disasters abroad. It is provided impartially without regard to the racial, religious, cultural or social background of the victims.

### (b) Interfacing with Canadian Foreign Policy

The overseas activities of various government departments are pieces of a larger mosaic that represents the multidimensional interests of Canada abroad. Humanitarian assistance is not primarily motivated by political, commercial or other non-humanitarian considerations. As a channel of the Canadian ODA programme, however, it necessarily interfaces with broader Canadian foreign policy concerns.

### (c) All Developing Countries Eligible

Humanitarian assistance should be made available to the disaster victims of any country where the needs of the victims cannot be met without outside help and where a demonstration of Canadian compassion for the victims is judged appropriate. Since developed countries normally have the capacity to address such needs, the focus of support is on developing countries.

(d) Responding to Real Identified Needs

To maximize the effective use of limited resources, the real needs of the victims must be identified first. Only then can the most appropriate resources be determined. Obviously "needs assessment" is subject to the availability of adequate and accurate information. Emphasis must be placed on the collection of pertinent information from a number of sources and the assessment of this information bank with a view to linking assistance to precisely identified needs.

(e) Flexibility and Effective use of Available Mechanisms

To be effective, a humanitarian assistance programme requires the flexibility to respond quickly to disasters. This flexibility is obtained by using a wide range of instruments and streamlined administrative procedures. The primary instrument for responding to disasters abroad is the IHA programme, but major catastrophies often require the resources of a combination of CIDA channels and even resources of other government departments.

(f) Coordination of Canada's Response

To ensure a well coordinated and comprehensive response, the Coordinator of the IHA programme is the focal point and lead agent responsible for developing, in consultation with all concerned parties, an appropriate Canadian response to a disaster. In such cases, the IHA programme Coordinator will ensure overall coordination and determine specific implementation responsibilities.

(g) Coordination of International Response

When disaster strikes, the diversity of responses from intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental donors around the world can itself pose major problems. It is universally accepted, therefore, that priority should be given to participating in the coordination of all such efforts into an integrated or complementary programme of assistance for the affected country.

(h) Strengthening the International Capacity to Assist

To further this multilateral coordination function, support should be given to international humanitarian institutions fostering effective and efficient delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Intergovernmental and voluntary organizations have been established to meet an increasing demand for humanitarian assistance. As disasters have increased in frequency and complexity so has the need to develop and maintain a strong network of specialized institutions that can act on behalf of the international community in times of disaster.

(i) Strengthening National Capacities to Cope

To prevent death, human suffering and destruction are the key principles motivating any humanitarian activity. The devastation caused can set back a developing country for many years, thus interrupting its march towards development. In countries that are disaster-prone, therefore, support should be intensified for efforts to strengthen their capacity to mitigate the effects of disasters.

## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1 EVOLUTION OF GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE POLICIES

The present policy paper has been prepared against the background of an evolving and multidimensional environment which is determined by humanitarian requirements, CIDA corporate management orientations, Canada's role in the international community and Canadian foreign policy.

#### (a) Humanitarian Requirements

Catastrophes of previous eras were as devastating as many present day disasters. Nonetheless, both the frequency and magnitude of disasters tend to be increasing. This is in large measure due to greater population density in disaster prone areas - most of which are located in the third world.

Improved communications has resulted in greater world concern for the plight of the affected populations. This concern for disaster victims runs parallel to a growing awareness of the problems of the third world generally and the inequities created by the world's political and economic structures. But the emotional life-and-death concerns associated with disasters capture the attention of the public more than any other problem faced by developing countries. This has resulted in calls on governments to increase support for humanitarian assistance.

The response is often directed to the provision of a few basic but essential needs such as food, water, temporary shelter, clothing, protection from warring parties and the provision of health and basic education services.

Some disasters seriously disrupt normal life and drain resources that could otherwise be used for development. Disasters often extend beyond the national borders of a state, affecting and

destabilizing entire regions. In some cases, a combination of natural and man-made disasters further complicates efforts to render assistance. There is broad international agreement, therefore, that the relief efforts of the various donors be coordinated with maximum cooperation in pursuing common humanitarian goals for all victims in the affected state or states. Public demands that humanitarian needs be handled effectively have served to influence the international community into taking a multilaterally coordinated approach to assistance.

While earlier attempts to cope with disasters were made on an ad hoc basis, the trend has moved towards establishing permanent mechanisms within the United Nations and other international agencies to deal with emergency situations. Canada's humanitarian assistance programmes have evolved similarly, moving from an ad hoc approach to strengthening permanent international and Canadian response mechanisms able to respond quickly, professionally and effectively.

(b) CIDA Corporate Management

In parallel with the changes taking place at the international level, the Agency's capacity and effectiveness in responding to appeals has also undergone improvements. In keeping with the demands of the Policy and Expenditure Management System, the bulk of Canada's humanitarian assistance is now grouped under the IHA vote and support for the regular programmes of humanitarian institutions is planned on a multi-year basis. As a result of this corporate planning process, humanitarian assistance has been more clearly defined and placed within the broader Agency policy framework. Consequently, the humanitarian assistance mechanisms contained in the Bilateral, Multilateral, Special Programmes, Food Aid and International Humanitarian Assistance programmes are exercised in concert and therefore can be examined here as a single sector.

(c) Canada's Role in the International Community

For years Canada has played an active role in the international community in promoting peace, human rights and humanitarian law. Canada's aid programme, and more precisely its humanitarian assistance programme has reflected these goals.

Canada continues to participate actively in the development of the humanitarian policies and programmes of international institutions it helped establish over the past 30 years. These institutions possess a combination of expertise, coordination capacities as well as the means to focus considerable financial resources that complement Canada's efforts. An important element of CIDA's role in these endeavours is to share the international responsibility not only for funding of humanitarian programmes undertaken by these institutions but also to ensure that they are effectively carried out.

There has been mounting interest on the part of the Canadian media, groups of individuals and voluntary agencies in seeing the government respond to the humanitarian needs abroad. Members of the Canadian public themselves have become personally involved in helping disaster victims through service in the field, through sponsorship of refugees in Canada and through fund-raising campaigns to finance refugee assistance and relief projects overseas. The evolution of government policies concerning humanitarian assistance has been (and continues to be) influenced by this public support and commitment.

(d) Canadian Foreign Policy

Humanitarian assistance operates within the framework of overall Canadian foreign policy. Our ability to effectively respond to disasters is in part determined by the extent and nature of the Canadian presence within the affected country or the Canadian government's international stance vis-à-vis the policies and practices of that country's government. There is a need for

government departments to respond in a coordinated fashion to situations abroad. Broader Canadian interests do occasionally fashion our response and at times limit our ability to assist.

By the same token, Canada's involvement in humanitarian assistance efforts overseas has lead to modifications in its foreign policies and has opened up new areas of partnership with the affected countries and the international community.

Although not a component of Canada's international humanitarian assistance, the immigration programme for refugees should be noted, since it interrelates with CIDA's support for refugees overseas and broader foreign policy considerations. In recent years, greater efforts have been made interdepartmentally to coordinate common areas of refugee concern.

## 2.2 LEGAL BACKGROUND

When CIDA was established in 1968, the terms of reference transferred to it from the External Aid Office included "...coordination of Canadian efforts to provide emergency assistance in the case of disaster abroad and for this purpose, the achievement of necessary liaison with the Canadian Red Cross and other appropriate Canadian organizations".

Until recently, this has been realized through the existence of two major funds for humanitarian assistance: one for emergency relief and one for refugee-related situations. In early 1981, the Treasury Board approved a proposal to rationalize humanitarian operations by grouping Agency allotments for this sector under a single Programme Activity that would reflect its specific nature and distinguish it from development assistance. Thus was created the International Humanitarian Assistance programme.

Authority for the IHA programme is provided by the Financial Administration Act and by the Treasury Board approval of its Criteria, Terms and Conditions and attendant delegation of authority.



The humanitarian activities undertaken by CIDA do not relate only to Canadian foreign policy considerations and legislation. They also comply with the goals set for the international community by international instruments. Civilian and military victims of conflicts are accorded certain basic rights under a series of international agreements known as the Geneva Conventions. As the promoter of the Geneva Conventions, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) encourages respect for human life and dignity during armed conflict, develops and explains humanitarian law and upholds the humanitarian principles of the Red Cross. (See Annex A.)

In the case of refugees, their protection and support is assured through three principal international instruments: the UNHCR Statutes, the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. (See Annex A.) At present, similar humanitarian laws which would apply to victims of natural disasters are being explored.

As a signatory to these instruments, Canada fulfills its obligations through financial support for the programmes of these organizations and through active participation in fora dealing with such issues.

### 3. FRAMEWORK

#### 3.1 RANGE OF DISASTERS

Disasters range from individual tragedies to country-wide disruptions. However, in the context of this policy framework for Canada's humanitarian assistance programmes, the IHA programme will continue to give priority to disasters of such a magnitude that international assistance is required. These are disasters that would create severe disruptions in the normal socio-economic life of an area, a region or an entire country. If local resources are unable to meet the disaster needs, governmental authorities may seek foreign assistance or allow other national institutions to do so on behalf of the disaster victims.

#### 3.2 DISASTER MANAGEMENT CYCLE

The Disaster Management Cycle illustrates the linkages between the various phases of a disaster, the linkages between the IHA programme and other Agency programmes and describes the interrelationship of Agency activities at various levels. To illustrate this cycle, a schematic presentation is provided in the Annex (Tables I-IV).

##### (a) Preparedness

The first element of disaster preparedness is the creation of an awareness that the effects of disasters can be mitigated and that some can be prevented with proper preparation. Preparedness is designed to minimize loss of life and damage, as well as to organize and facilitate timely and effective rescue, relief and rehabilitation operations.

Preparedness is likewise concerned with forecasting and warning, and with the preparation and training of the population. It also involves organizing a disaster management mechanism which would see to the preparation of operational plans, the training of relief workers, the stockpiling of supplies and the earmarking of necessary funds.

Preparing for disasters, through a more efficient management of disaster relief, is a form of investment in human resources, technology and capital equipment with a view to saving lives and minimizing wastage caused by costly errors.

CIDA has been involved in providing limited support to disaster preparedness activities. To date, the IHA programme has supported regional disaster preparedness activities of international organizations such as the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the League of Red Cross Societies (LRCS) and the United Nations Disaster Relief Organization (UNDRO). IHA programme support for the disaster preparedness activities of international agencies will increase, particularly as such agencies provide the technical assistance required to upgrade regional and country capacities in dealing with disasters. In the current environment and scope of such programmes, the extent of support would not exceed 10 per cent of the IHA programme budget.

Furthermore, CIDA's bilateral programmes, on a selective basis, should include disaster preparedness measures in development projects of countries in disaster-prone areas where there is a clear indication of Canadian interest. The project design of many buildings, for example, could take into account that such buildings could serve as shelters for the local population as well as alternative storage spaces for relief goods in the immediate aftermath of an unavoidable disaster.

Likewise, Bilateral programmes are encouraged to support disaster preparedness projects that have been identified by recipient governments as priorities within national development plans.

(b) Prevention

Disaster prevention aims at reducing the risk of disasters occurring. Flooding of settlements or agricultural areas, for example, can be averted or the negative effects mitigated. This can

be done through the scientific analysis of the characteristics of floods and the planning and implementation of programmes (e.g., drainage canals, dikes and wave barriers) aimed at guarding against the effects of flooding.

The IHA programme was not designed to fund disaster prevention projects. This activity is best handled by other CIDA channels directly involved with development. As the major development channels of CIDA, bilateral and multilateral programmes should give due consideration to disaster risk analysis in project development in disaster-prone areas as a measure of disaster prevention. In general terms, disaster risk analysis involves the assessment of data on past or potential hazards, in a particular sector, in terms of their nature, cause, frequency and impact. The emphasis is not on information collection (since disaster profiles are often available), but rather on making decisions on project design taking into account the probability of future disasters.

This could prove to be beneficial and economical as the increased amount invested would be smaller than the cost of reconstruction. And of course, the prevention of human suffering is of primary concern. Structures built in hurricane or earthquake prone areas, for example, should follow building standards that are appropriate to these environmental conditions even though the host governments may not have adopted such standards.

In some cases, disaster prevention will require multilateral efforts, for instance, in the mitigation and eradication of tropical diseases or the control of crop pests. Such efforts could be undertaken by multilateral organizations and financed by Multilateral Programmes Branch or by Bilateral Programmes under co-financing arrangements.

(c) Relief

Regardless of prevention measures, a number of disasters cannot be avoided. In these cases, the third stage of the disaster management cycle - relief assistance - becomes necessary.

As far as humanitarian assistance is concerned, this is the heart of the cycle where people must be rescued and evacuated to secure areas and where basic needs (such as medical assistance, food, clothing and shelter) are required on a temporary basis. Emergency relief as well as care and maintenance on a longer term basis require effective operational mechanisms that preferably would have been set up in the previous preparedness phase. In the first instance, it is necessary for relief organizations to undertake four actions simultaneously, i.e., mobilize the population and the rescuers, assess the damage, analyze the requirements and determine the available resources.

Relief operations are generally of a short-term duration with the emphasis on restoring normal conditions quickly. However, some disasters such as droughts or man-made conflicts take many months to resolve, thus necessitating long-term relief assistance. In these cases, relief programmes may even be extended over several years.

The most expedient way for CIDA to respond quickly during the relief phase is to provide cash grants to international humanitarian institutions, and international and Canadian NGOs that have a proven capacity and universal acceptability. This is because of constraints related to timing, availability of resources, distance, administrative resources and contractual practices. These organizations possess the expertise and ability to deploy relief in an efficient, effective and timely manner. They also command a large base of support which in turn gives them the measure of respect and credibility needed to operate within the affected countries.

Therefore, the principal emergency relief response of the Canadian Government to disasters abroad will be cash grants provided by the IHA programme in support of the relief programmes of international and Canadian humanitarian institutions.

Furthermore, the IHA programme will increase its support of international and Canadian NGO relief efforts, in response to their increased interest and expertise in providing relief to refugees and to other disaster victims. This would complete the Agency's involvement in all phases of NGO operations relating to the Disaster Management Cycle: relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. This would also respond to the call for greater flexibility and a broader range of instruments recommended by the Parliamentary Task Force on North-South Relations.

(d) Rehabilitation

Emergency relief is focussed on the immediate life-supporting and basic needs of the disaster victims. For humanitarian reasons, however, concern for the disaster victims rarely ends with the provision of these basic needs. Unless efforts are made to bring about recovery, continual dependence on emergency relief could result. Such a situation would be untenable for two major reasons: it would deny these people the opportunity to move to higher levels of human development and it would tie up the limited relief resources of donors, thus reducing the international community's ability to respond to the needs of future disaster victims. Consequently, rehabilitation is a necessary second phase of humanitarian assistance.

Rehabilitation is the term used to describe activities designed to bring about recovery by helping the victims to return to their pre-disaster standard of living and level of self-reliance. Rehabilitation activities are determined by the type of disaster,

the duration of the disaster (short-lived, e.g., earthquake; or long-term, e.g., refugees from a conflict) and the degree of impact on the victims. Accordingly, the design of rehabilitation projects should reflect the following considerations:

- to provide people with the "tools" that promote self-reliance (i.e., people-oriented recovery rather than infrastructure reconstruction);
- to build upon relief efforts in such a way as to speed the termination of emergency relief;
- to maximize the benefits that may result from the investment of personnel, resources, equipment, programme infrastructure and human effort during the relief phase;
- to facilitate the transition from relief to development;
- to be transferable to and operable by the disaster victims or their government without becoming a burden or financial problem for them; and
- in the longer term, to provide for the rehabilitation needs often associated with the search for durable solutions, e.g., in the case of refugees and displaced persons, projects in support of resettlement or repatriation schemes.

Rehabilitation activities should be initiated as soon as conditions are favourable, i.e., when there are minimal physical, legal or other constraints to self-reliance projects within an affected community. In fact, specific rehabilitation activities can start during the relief phase as these are not mutually exclusive and no clearly defined demarkation point between relief and rehabilitation can be drawn. Thus, while relief continues to be provided to more vulnerable groups of the affected community, other groups capable of economic activity can be made productive even if, at first, these efforts must be supplemented by relief.

There exists a gamut of possible activities . For instance, in some refugee situations a combination of relief and rehabilitation can coexist for several years with a gradual shift from the former phase to the latter. Other situations, such as recovery from floods or tropical storms may dictate a limited relief assistance period followed by a short rehabilitation period and a rapid return to reconstruction.

As the transition phase between relief and development, rehabilitation can be viewed as either a humanitarian or a development activity. The two CIDA channels that provide support for rehabilitation efforts are the IHA programme and the Special Programmes Branch.

To date, the IHA programme has supported primarily the relief efforts of intergovernmental humanitarian agencies which address the needs of refugees and displaced persons. Historically, and by Treasury Board authority, the IHA programme has been the unit within the Agency responsible for refugees. Until recently, the programme was not in a position to provide funds to NGOs other than the Red Cross. Nevertheless, in recognition of the worthwhile assistance provided to refugees by NGOs, Special Programmes Branch has filled this vacuum by providing financial support for these efforts.

Advances have taken place in the range of humanitarian assistance provided to refugees. Therefore, support will be given for the rehabilitation projects of intergovernmental humanitarian agencies, international NGOs and Canadian NGOs in favour of refugees and displaced persons. This would complete the range of humanitarian assistance being provided to refugees and displaced persons - protection, relief and rehabilitation.



Most NGOs concentrate on small-scale community-based projects. As a result, they often enjoy the confidence of local communities and indigenous NGOs in an on-going development partnership. When disaster strikes, it is a setback not only for the affected population but also for the development work of the NGO. It is natural, therefore, that these NGOs would introduce rehabilitation projects geared to getting their development activities back on track as quickly as possible. The NGO Division supports rehabilitation projects through its regular programme budget as well as through a special Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Fund.

Although its primary concern is development, the Special Programmes Branch will continue to support community-based rehabilitation projects that would help to bring about quick recovery of the disaster victims and return the affected community to a level at which development can once again be promoted.

(e) Reconstruction

Whereas relief and rehabilitation denote the emergency and temporary recovery phases of a disaster, the reconstruction phase relates to the steps taken to reach full recovery and, in some cases, to surpass the levels of pre-disaster development. This phase focusses on the repair of infrastructure, the restoration of production capacities and bringing about a better quality of life and security against disasters. Reconstruction plans should contain appropriate preventive components to minimize future losses, particularly in high risk areas.

The ability and effectiveness with which reconstruction will be carried out is a function of the level of existing resources and capabilities. This generally calls for a large input of resources, mass mobilization of the local population, a well planned approach and a long-term programme of development.

Reconstruction is clearly a development activity; one that falls within the normal development operations of Multilateral and Bilateral Programmes. According to the scale of reconstruction, Special Programmes Branch is also in a position to contribute to the reconstruction efforts of local communities assisted by NGOs.

### 3.3 CHANNELS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

In responding to natural or man-made disasters, CIDA has different channels through which humanitarian assistance can be made available to those in need. The channel to be used is determined by requirements of a particular disaster and the phase of the disaster to which Canada wishes to respond. This approach allows sufficient flexibility to ensure that the most suitable mechanism is used as circumstances dictate.

#### (a) International Humanitarian Assistance Programme

As the Agency's focal point for dealing with disasters, the International Humanitarian Assistance (IHA) programme is the channel through which emergency assistance is provided to alleviate human suffering. It is designed to ensure a rapid and effective response to the immediate relief and rehabilitation needs of disaster victims. Cash grants are provided to the programmes of international institutions and NGOs as a reflection of Canada's desire to participate in a collective international effort.

#### (b) Food Aid Programme

In recent years, the provision of food to meet genuine emergency food needs as a result of natural and man-made disasters has received increased priority in the Canadian food aid programme. Canadian emergency food aid is provided through Bilateral, Multilateral and NGO channels.

Food provided on a bilateral basis is made available directly to countries for use in specific emergency situations such as refugee assistance or drought relief, with the foodstuffs supplied being distributed free of charge to the population affected. Multilaterally, Canada contributes to the International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR) which is administered by the World Food Programme. In addition, a portion of Canada's regular commodity pledge to the World Food Programme (WFP) is used by WFP in its emergency relief projects. A portion of Canada's WFP contribution is also used in the rehabilitation and reconstruction stages of the post-disaster relief cycle. Three mechanisms within the NGO channel can respond to relief and refugee needs - the Milk Powder Programme, the Volunteer Agricultural Development Aid (VADA) and the Mennonite Central Committee Food Bank (recently reconstituted and renamed the Canadian Food Grain Bank).

The nature of Canada's food aid response to emergency situations depends on the particular circumstances of the emergency in question, including how rapidly food aid can be deployed to the affected area. Food aid will continue to be required, particularly in the relief and rehabilitation stages of the disaster cycle. The continuing challenge for the Canadian food aid programme is to improve the efficiency of programming and administrative arrangements in order to allow Canada to respond in the most appropriate manner. Canadian emergency food aid will continue to be coordinated by the Food Aid Coordination and Evaluation Centre in conjunction with the Coordinator of the IHA Programme and implemented through bilateral, multilateral and NGO channels.

(c) Special Programmes

Three divisions of the Special Programmes Branch have been involved with projects arising from disasters or refugee assistance requirements. This has been in response to the interests and expertise of the Branch's constituents - the international and Canadian NGO communities.

The Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Division of CIDA provides support for the rehabilitation and reconstruction projects of Canadian NGOs that often operate in partnership with local NGOs within the affected country. The NGO Division does not support the relief work of NGOs, since that is the responsibility of the IHA programme. Instead, priority is given to assisting disaster victims in establishing conditions leading to self-reliance and a return to a normal community development climate.

The International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGO) Division supports the programmes of assistance to disaster victims of major international NGOs. Once again, support is focussed on rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes, but the extent of support provided by this division is minor.

A relative newcomer to the field of rehabilitation of refugees is the Institutional Cooperation and Development Services (ICDS) Division. With the financing of ICDS, two organizations particularly - CUSO and World University Service of Canada (WUSC) - are building up expertise in the operation of refugee programmes and education rehabilitation.

(d) Bilateral Programmes

Because of multi-year programme commitments and focus on priority development sectors, the bilateral channel is not the most appropriate for providing immediate disaster assistance. Bilateral input to humanitarian assistance is further constrained by its focus on a limited number of eligible countries. The complementary role of bilateral programmes with regard to the Disaster Management Cycle would be directed towards longer term activities (i.e., preparedness, prevention and long-term reconstruction).

To prevent a disaster is perhaps the most humanitarian act possible. And bilateral programmes make such a contribution in many development projects - afforestation, crop protection, pest control, and disease eradication, to name a few.

Bilateral could also increase its involvement in prevention and preparedness by helping to develop disaster plans and national expertise in disaster prone countries. In some cases this could be done on a regional basis (e.g., Sahel). In other cases, specific disaster prevention, preparedness or reconstruction programmes of United Nations agencies could be supported by Bilateral Programmes Branch through a "multi-bi" arrangement.

Until now, Mission Administered Funds (MAF) have been limited to development, rehabilitation and small-scale reconstruction projects to the exclusion of relief. Whereas the IHA Programme gives priority to larger disaster situations, Mission Administered Funds may be used for emergency relief for the victims of small-scale local disasters not normally conducive to an international appeal, at the discretion of the Head of Post.

(e) Multilateral Programmes

Besides the international institutions specializing in humanitarian assistance, there are other UN organizations whose mandates include the provision of emergency assistance (e.g., UNICEF, WHO, WFP). When they are able to respond quickly with the needed expertise and resources, part of their core funding provided by Multilateral Programmes Branch can be used for intergovernmental relief, rehabilitation or reconstruction activities.

An important component of humanitarian assistance to the victims of man-made disasters - refugees - is the search for durable solutions. Such solutions are more than not tied up with the search for peace between warring parties and the development of desperate poverty-stricken people. The financial support and active participation of the Multilateral Programmes Branch and other government departments in such multilateral pursuits of the UN family are other expressions of humanitarian assistance.

(f) Interrelationship

With the need to manage a disaster effectively through its different phases, a dynamic interrelationship exists between the various programme channels. This complementarity of programmes provides a full range of options, from relief to development. The preceding brief review of channels for humanitarian assistance, serves to show the roles that each channel plays (or could play) in the Disaster Management Cycle. A summary is given here.

Disaster preparedness could be promoted not only by the IHA programme, but by bilateral channels as well. Prevention should become a routine consideration in the designing of bilateral and multilateral development projects in disaster prone areas. The most expedient and efficient channels for responding to emergency relief needs are the IHA programme in the first instance and the various food aid programmes where time permits. Rehabilitation aimed at assisting refugees and displaced persons would be funded by the IHA programme, while, rehabilitation activities for other disaster victims would be supported by Special Programmes Branch. Reconstruction usually requires a large input of resources, mass mobilization of the local population, a well planned approach and a long-term programme of development. According to the scale of reconstruction activities and the sectors and countries involved, Special Programmes, Bilateral or Multilateral would play a role. The same three channels often carry on with development projects within the affected communities building upon their earlier reconstruction efforts.

3.4 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IHA PROGRAMME

(a) Regular programmes support

Grants are extended to the annual programmes of institutions which support over 10 million refugees and displaced persons throughout the world. In 1982-83, for example, this type of support

represented 27 per cent of the IHA programme budget. As the Agency's principal response mechanism for humanitarian assistance, the IHA programme will continue to provide core funding for the regular programmes of international humanitarian institutions.

UNHCR and UNRWA are the most important organizations in the intergovernmental system providing assistance which includes care, maintenance and protection for refugees (and for displaced persons under special mandate). Other organizations receiving financial support of regular programmes include the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), United Nations Education and Training Programme for Southern Africa (UNETPSA) and the United Nations Fund for Namibia (UNFN).

(b) Response to Appeals/Projects

The Disaster Relief fund provides a source for responding to appeals and special projects for disaster relief resulting from unforeseen situations which are not covered by the regular Canadian contributions to international humanitarian institutions. The fund also serves to support the disaster preparedness activities of such institutions. The response is usually in the form of grants to intergovernmental institutions and Canadian and international non-governmental organizations. The budget for the Disaster Relief Fund in 1982-83, for example, was \$25,240,000 or 73 per cent of the IHA programme budget. The IHA Programme will continue to respond to special emergency appeals and projects of intergovernmental institutions and international and Canadian non-governmental organizations.

Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations such as UNICEF, FAO, WFP and the International Red Cross provide relief, care and services to victims of natural disasters. The International Red Cross through its associated bodies, the League of Red Cross Societies (LRCS) and the International Committee of the Red Cross

(ICRC), provides protection and assistance to the victims of conflicts, to political detainees, to prisoners of war and to their families.

(c) Direct Government Assistance:

Grants may be extended in response to an appeal from the government of an eligible country. However, this will be done only in exceptional circumstances, since supporting the efforts of international humanitarian institutions allows donors to coordinate their efforts and to strengthen their capacity to respond to disasters globally.

(d) Country Focus and Eligibility

The IHA programme was established to give Canada a mechanism for responding quickly to disasters wherever they occur. The recent ODA Strategic Overview 1982/83-1986/87 (June 21, 1982) reaffirms the special responsive nature of humanitarian assistance.

The character and the intent of the IHA programme echo the special nature of humanitarian assistance as distinct from (but related to) development assistance. The Agency Programming Framework 1982/83-1986/87 states: "The country focus approach to programming is designed to maximize the effectiveness of programme impact through integration of activities in those countries that are recipients of direct Canadian development assistance." (p. 11.) The report goes on to specify that some channels are "country-focusable", while other channels complement such efforts. "The country focus approach is complemented by Multilateral channels, Food Aid, IHA and Special Programmes, which reinforce and extend the range of countries receiving Canadian development assistance." (p. 11.)



Multi-year planning and the focussing of development efforts on a limited number of countries limits CIDA's flexibility to respond to unplanned events in exchange for long-term commitments and good corporate planning. But humanitarian assistance rides tandem to development assistance. Disasters are usually unannounced and may strike when least expected causing serious setbacks to development programmes. Moreover, disasters can strike anywhere without respect for eligible country categories. Indeed, the importance of a mechanism able to respond quickly to non-planned, non-focussed emergency situations is even greater now since it complements the major country focus thrust of the Agency's development programmes.

In most cases developed countries will be able to provide emergency relief assistance to the victims of disasters occurring within their borders. Notwithstanding the need to respond to the humanitarian needs of disaster victims of all countries, priority consideration must be given to developing countries. Therefore, all countries recognized as developing countries by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) will be considered eligible for humanitarian assistance. Approval of assistance to non-eligible countries (Category IV of the CIDA "List of Eligible Countries") will rest with the Minister responsible for CIDA.

Coordination of country-specific humanitarian assistance activities will remain the responsibility of the IHA programme Coordinator in consultation with the concerned Country Programme Director.

(e) Earmarking

To allow maximum flexibility, IHA contributions have been unearmarked or earmarked to a general component of a disaster relief programme. The policy of providing unearmarked IHA programme support for a programme in its entirety will continue, but restrictions and conditions may be applied to IHA funding occasionally to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of operations.

IHA funds could be directed to a specific relief activity where the organization has a particular expertise or need for support for that activity.

(f) Untied Aid

Closely linked to the above is the issue of "tying" humanitarian assistance to the purchase in Canada of goods and services. Until now, IHA programme grants have been given untied, with the recipient organization having the option - almost never utilized - of purchasing the required supplies in Canada.

The IHA programme is foremost a responsive programme whose first purpose is to make every effort to assess the kinds of assistance required. In some cases, this may involve the provision of Canadian goods and services. In others it may involve cash.

To ensure the flexibility needed by an emergency response mechanism, the policy of providing untied IHA programme grants will be maintained. Where Canadian goods and services are deemed appropriate, the IHA programme will decide, in conjunction with relevant programme managers, whether a grant should be tied to Canadian purchases or what other channels or measures should be employed.

(g) Coordination Function

As indicated above, one of the objectives of the IHA programme is to achieve a coordinated and effective response to disaster situations. Through its financial support and participation in the development of policies and programmes of international humanitarian institutions, CIDA will strive to ensure improvements in the effectiveness of their delivery mechanisms. It will also press for increased coordination of international efforts to provide humanitarian assistance. An institutional appraisal is carried out every three to four years on those organizations receiving core

funding from the IHA programme. As well, reviews and appraisals of specific activities, programmes or institutions are conducted on an ad hoc basis.

As the focal point for Canada's response to disasters abroad, the IHA programme plays a coordinating role on three levels:

- (i) Agency level: the IHA programme ensures the distribution of information relating to disaster situations and takes the lead role in developing a coordinated response that is consistent with overall Agency objectives. This involves close liaison with the Country Programme Director concerned and, in consultation with other programmes, determining the most effective response mechanism for a particular situation.
- (ii) Interdepartmental level: the IHA programme seeks to ensure that overall Canadian interests and imperatives are observed, by sharing information on disaster situations with other interested departments, most notably External Affairs, Health and Welfare, Employment and Immigration, and National Defence. Similarly, clearance from External Affairs is sought where foreign policy considerations are involved. In certain situations, interdepartmental working groups are convened to develop a coordinated Canadian Government approach and response.

More interdepartmental consultations will result from an increase in direct involvement in the actual implementation of relief programmes. For example, this could involve agreements between IHA and DND for the use of military aircraft in the transportation of relief supplies, or with NHW for the provision and shipment of medical supplies.

- (iii) Outside the government framework: the IHA programme consults with other donors, international institutions, NGOs and Canadian missions abroad when a disaster strikes. This is to assess a disaster situation, to ascertain what other donors and

international institutions are doing, and to help ensure a coordinated and appropriate Canadian response to international efforts. This information is shared at the Agency and at the interdepartmental levels.

To ensure well coordinated responses, the Coordinator of the IHA programme will be the focal point and lead agent responsible -- in consultation with other interested CIDA channels and government departments -- for proposing appropriate responses and for overall coordination of joint efforts.

## ANNEX "A"

### INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

#### 1. Geneva Conventions and Protocols

In 1864, one year after the founding of the Red Cross, a diplomatic conference was held in Geneva and a brief, ten-article treaty, "The Geneva Convention of August 22nd 1864 for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded in Armies in the Field" was adopted. By 1929, a convention had been adopted regulating the conditions of prisoners, life in the camps, the work that could be demanded of prisoners, and the means of maintaining discipline.

In 1949 a diplomatic conference adopted a new convention protecting civilian internees, defining the rights and duties of an occupying power and forbidding reprisals and deportations. The same conference also revised existing conventions, which now bear the date August 12, 1949. These are:

- Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field;
- Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea;
- Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War; and
- Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

These conventions give the ICRC extensive rights on which to base its programmes.

Despite the care taken in drafting the four Conventions, they did not cover all the suffering caused by the various kinds of conflicts. Thus two Protocols were adopted on June 8, 1977: Protocol I which deals with international armed conflicts, and Protocol II which deals with non-international armed conflicts.

## 2. Refugee Conventions and Protocols

The principal international instruments on which the protection of refugees is based are the UNHCR Statute, the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees which define the basic rights of refugees and lay down standards for their treatment. They also give the UNHCR or any successor agency the responsibility of supervising the application of the Convention.

The Refugee Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, adopted by the Organization of African Unity in 1969 reaffirmed the instruments in place, particularly the role of the High Commissioner for Refugees.

High Commissioners have themselves, over the years, inspired or participated in the elaboration of a number of instruments having to do with the protection of refugees, including:

- Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (1974);
- UN Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (1961);
- The Hague Agreement Relating to Refugee Seamen (1957);
- European Agreement on Abolition of Visas for Refugees (1959).

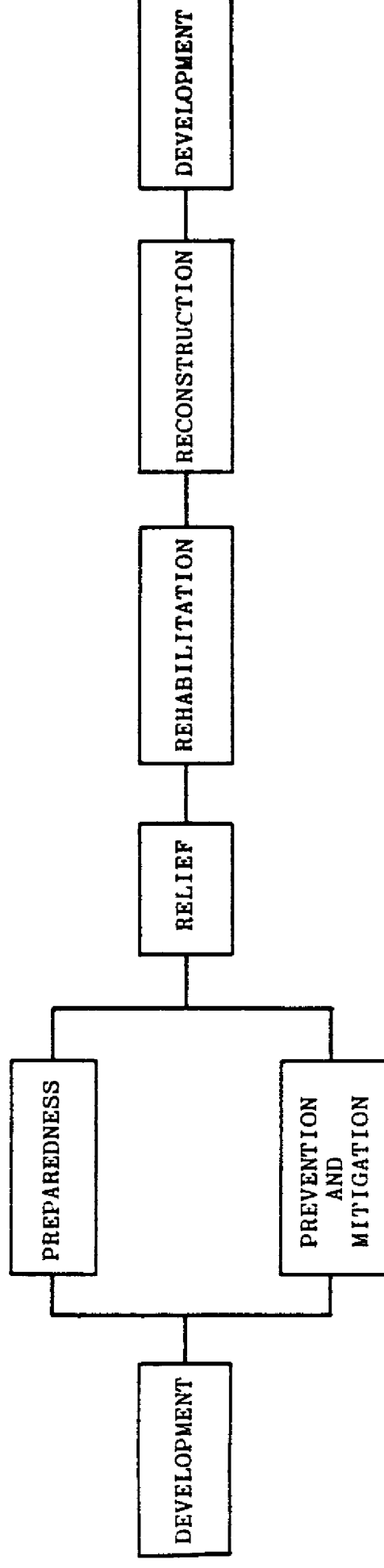
Some instruments, applicable only to the nationals of the signatory states, have been extended to cover refugees as well, at the instigation of the UNHCR:

- Protocol No. 1 to the Universal Copyright Convention (1952);
- European Social Security Agreements;
- ILO Convention Concerning Equality of Treatment of Nationals and Non-nationals in Social Security (1962).

# I DISASTER CYCLE

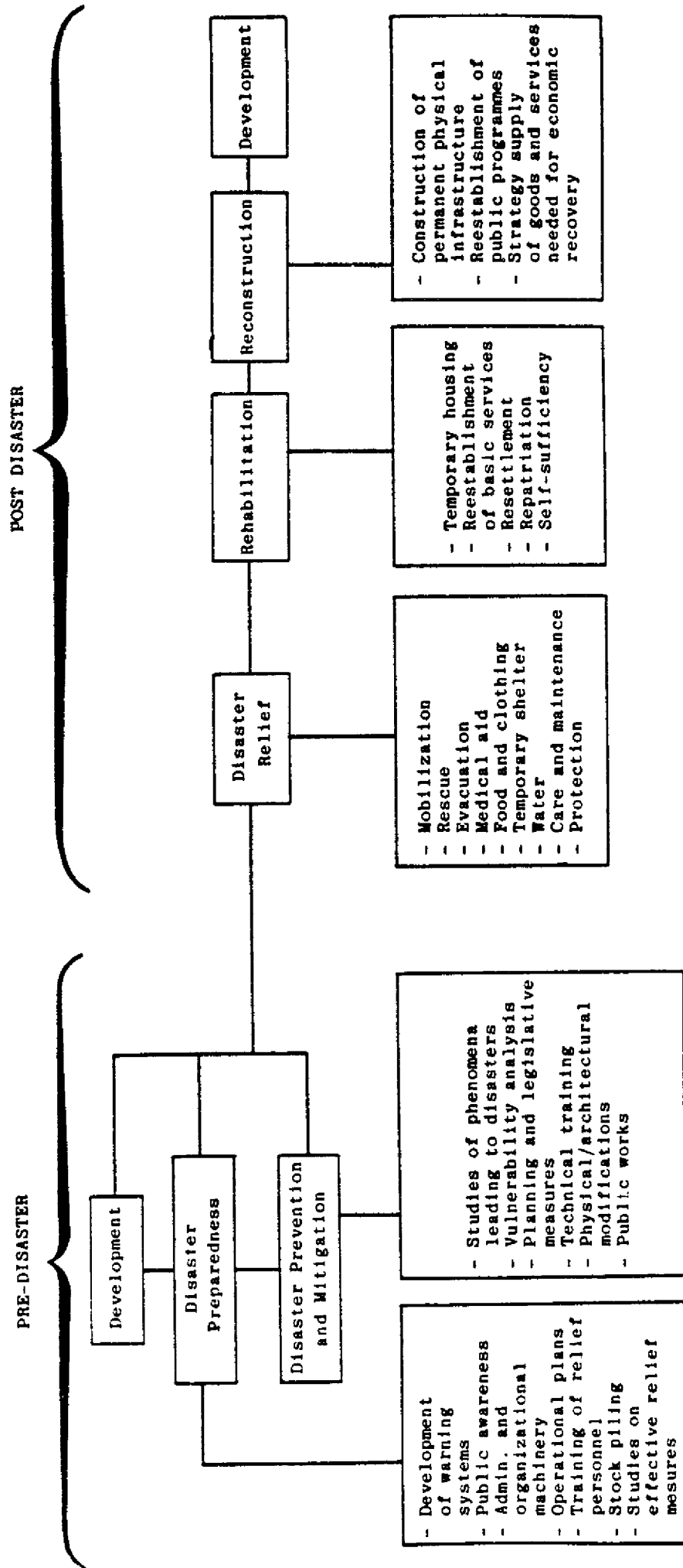
PRE-DISASTER

POST DISASTER

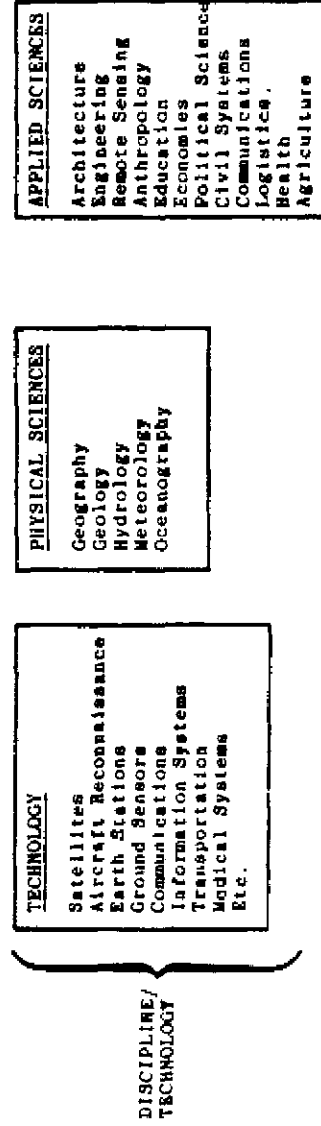
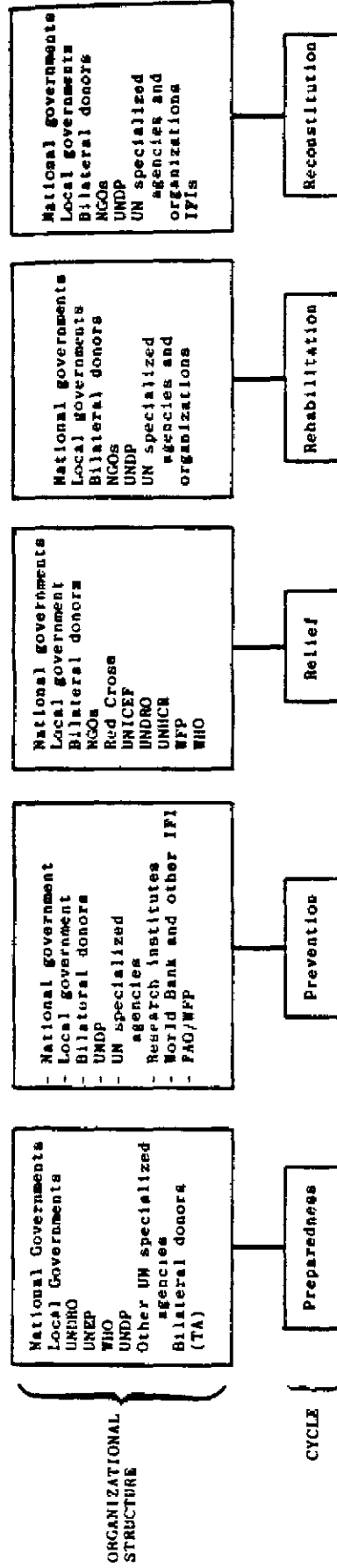




## II DISASTER CYCLE: COMPONENTS



### III DISASTER CYCLE: MANAGEMENT



# IV CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

## POTENTIAL RESPONSES TO NEEDS ARISING FROM DISASTERS - RELIEF, RECONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION

DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS	ROLE AND MANDATE	LEVEL OF INTERVENTION	AVAILABILITIES
International Humanitarian Assistance (2% of CIDA's budget)	Alleviate human suffering caused by man-made and natural disaster abroad	Relief - preparedness	Funding of up to 10% of appeals for programmes and projects of a relief nature
Bilateral (41%)	Direct economic, technical and social development assistance to developing countries	Reconstruction, rehabilitation, development (preparedness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Programme funds-little availability.</li> <li>- Mission administered fund up to \$25,000 per reconstruction and rehabilitation project</li> </ul>
Food Aid (15%)	Responds to the nutritional needs of the poorest segments of recipient countries' population	Humanitarian relief and economic assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bilateral Emergency food aid</li> <li>- Multilateral Food Aid (WFP)</li> <li>- WFP International Emergency food reserve</li> </ul>
Special Programmes Assistance (7%)	Support to Canadian and international NGOs in development assistance undertakings	Development, reconstruction and rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- matching funds of up to 50% of NGO reconstruction and rehabilitation projects</li> <li>- VADA funding for transportation of food provided by the provinces</li> <li>- MCC food bank</li> <li>- milk powder programme to NGOs</li> </ul>
Multilateral (32%)	Financial development assistance to international development institutions	Development - but also relief to smaller extent	- UNICEF