

SUMMARY OF AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT ON THE PREPAREDNESS OF NADMO TO MANAGE DISASTER IN GHANA

What the report is about

The report is about the Preparedness of the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) to Manage Disaster in Ghana. Concerned with the increasing incidence, severity and duration of disasters, the U.N. General Assembly declared the period 1992-2001 as a decade for disaster reduction. The focus was to ensure that there was an integrated system for co-coordinating both international and internal efforts to deal with disasters.

Following the United Nations General Assembly's declaration of the period 1992 to 2001 as the International Decade for National Disaster Reduction, and the series of floods that hit parts of Ghana in 1995, the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) was established in 1996, by an Act of Parliament (ACT, 1996, ACT517), to manage disaster and similar emergencies in the country.

Why we did the audit

The abundant media reports on incidence of disasters coupled with the public perception that NADMO exists only to distribute relief items necessitated the audit to assess how prepared NADMO is to manage disasters in the country.

What we found

We found that NADMO was constrained by the following major challenges in its preparedness to manage disasters:

- i. limited oversight role of Disaster Management Committees in the Regions and Districts
- ii. low collaboration/coordination between NADMO and its key players
- iii. ineffective warning/information dissemination system
- iv. absence of formal structure to employ and inadequate training of staff
- v. ineffective monitoring and evaluation.

- vi. inaccurate data on the incidence of disasters
- vii. insufficient and inappropriate relief items at the regional and district warehouses and
- viii. inadequate office accommodation, tools and equipment.

Tackling the Problem

In order to improve upon the preparedness of NADMO to manage disaster in Ghana, the Auditor General recommends the following:

Improve upon oversight role of DMCs in the regions and the districts

- a. ensure that DMCs become operational. In doing so, NDMC should direct all regional and district offices to prepare a meeting time tables, based on which the various NADMO coordinators, as secretaries to the committees, will constantly remind the chairmen of the committees to convene regular meetings;
- b. ensure that DMCs constantly assist NADMO at all levels to prepare Disaster Management Plans (DMPs) and Hazard Maps. The plans should be reviewed and up-dated regularly to ensure that they are exercised and understood by trained NADMO staff and
- c. ensure that NADMO regional offices facilitate planning, tailored to the specific risks and needs of their regions the risks faced and the type of preparedness necessary.

Improve upon collaboration/coordination between NADMO and the key player

- a. create an inter-agency coordinator and develop a more systematic framework for coordination and working together with the key players. This can be done by developing an inter-agency agreement through the

coordinator to enhance coordination with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the private sector

- b. strengthen the regional and district offices, particularly in the areas of leadership and logistics to provide coordination and assist in planning, training and exercising emergency preparedness and response activities; on the specific risks and weaknesses identified at the regional level
- c. work with the bodies such as other governments, NGOs and voluntary organisations in both local and the international community to raise awareness of their proposals and
- d. develop a standardised National Operation Plan that would involve emergency management professionals and other response personnel from the private sector.

Improve upon warning/information dissemination system

- a. include private sector media in emergency response planning. The warning/communication systems should be kept operational through periodic rehearsals, radio and television announcements and the use of mobile vans, particularly before the onset of rains or bushfires
- b. create emergency operation control centres in all regions, equipped with a number of telephone wireless sets, with arrangement to make them operational at all times and
- c. implement plans including securing information from key players such as Defence and the Police for obtaining post disaster situational awareness when there is notice of potential major disaster.

Improve upon structure to employ and train staff.

- a. develop a structure showing job qualification and entry requirements based on which applicants will be interviewed and employed
- b. ensure that less experienced officers having lower qualifications work under experienced ones with the requisite qualifications
- c. ensure that employees with direct technical and operational responsibilities during disasters are individuals with emergency or crisis management knowledge, training and experience and
- d. advise the National Security Council to ensure that regional and district coordinators have significant experience in crisis management and leadership experience, whether in the public or private sector (since they are political appointees).

Improve upon monitoring and evaluation

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- a. prepare a monitoring and evaluation matrix showing set targets and performance indicators for the regional and district offices and
- b. conduct quarterly regular monitoring on NADMO's activities and analyse monitoring reports to determine the areas of shortcoming and the need for correction.

Improve upon disaster data collection and storage

- a. well trained and experienced members of staff to do data collection on disasters, and
- b. data is stored on both electronic and on hard files so that it could be retrieved easily.

Improve upon the quantity and type of relief items at the regional and district warehouses

- a. identify types of disaster common with the various geographical locations (regions), create warehouses and stockpile them with appropriate relieve items which take time to perish (i.e. roofing sheets and cement) and purchase the easily perishable items when the need arises, and
- b. conduct needs assessment in times of emergencies so as to identify the victims, and the relevant items that are most needed.

Improve upon office accommodation, tools and equipment

- a. develop a strategic plan and a management structure that recognises the unique nature of NADMO. This should include providing resources to equip staff, improve transportation, logistics and communication capabilities;
- b. assist NADMO to acquire modern gadgets such as computers, Internet facilities, vehicles and telephone facilities; and
- c. collaborate with the Assemblies to acquire more office accommodation for NADMO at the regional and district levels.

Conclusion

In conclusion, NADMO only reacts to disasters rather than being proactive in planning an effective response to future disasters.

The organisation does not have the capacity to respond to large-scale disasters and it is not prepared to coordinate the resources of the key stakeholders to respond to situations where several thousands of Ghanaians are rendered homeless and may need medical attention