

Disaster Assistance and Response Team (DART)

In order to enhance and complement the efforts of GAIN to meet the needs of people affected by emergencies, the concept of a Disaster Assistance and Response Team (DART) has been developed. It is supposed to complement the regular work of GAIN through providing quick and flexible professional help in disaster areas. This short manual gives an overview over the different disaster response phases, the tasks of an Assessment Team and the DART, their composition, financial issues and the chain of command within GAIN.

Disaster Response Process

Pre-Disaster (before new disaster):

This is the time for recruitment, preparation and training. Also, the equipment should be maintained and funds raised.

Decision I (within 24 hrs after a disaster):

GAIN Worldwide directors should schedule a phone conference where they decide about sending an Assessment Team into the affected area. Once a positive decision has been made, the Assessment Team needs to be determined.

Pre-Engagement Assessment (day 2/3-5):

The Assessment Team tries to gather as much useful information as possible to determine the disaster's impact and the need of external help. The team can start to provide some initial humanitarian aid. Fundraising starts with the help of its material.

Decision II (day 5/6):

GAIN Worldwide has to decide whether it wants to get further involved in the disaster area. First financial commitments and a guideline should be issued.

Emergency Relief (from day 6-9 up to several months):

With this phase begins the engagement of DART in the disaster area after an affirmative decision by GAIN Worldwide. (GAIN directors should wait with a visit to the disaster area until the DART is sent, if they desire to do so.) Depending on the need of relief, its size and the tasks it is entrusted with, it may consist of people with varying responsibilities. The DART should aim to keep its mission as short as possible and to seek a smooth handover to the Lead Agent.

Post-Engagement:

The exit of the DART can take three different forms:

1. Complete Exit: No further engagement of GAIN related to the disaster.
2. Complete Transfer: to either
 - a) a Project Office (local partner), or
 - b) a Field Office.

After any mission, individual debriefings are indispensable and medical and psychological check-ups of and, if necessary, the respective care for, each team member. Returnees are explicitly encouraged to do fundraising.

The team as a whole will have to finalize the project in this phase, hand in all reports and evaluate its mission. The reports of recent missions should immediately be used for aiming at new donations towards future disasters.

Human Resources

a) The **Assessment Team**

The Assessment Team will only stay for a very short period of time in order to do an initial assessment of the impact of the disaster and the needs of the people affected by it. The

information gathered by the Assessment Team will provide the basis for the decision of GAIN Worldwide about further action. Ideally, it will consist of three experienced people:

Leading the future DART:

In the Assessment Phase, the Leader will assume the tasks of finding accommodation for the team members, managing the finances and establishing contacts to trustworthy local authorities and local Agape/CCC staff, alongside the responsibility for coordination with other humanitarian aid and UN organizations, as well as embassies. He will be the main responsible for doing the assessment of the disaster's impact and the security of the team members.

Communication:

This person will be responsible for gathering documentation material about the disaster. It should be sent to the Lead Agent as soon as possible. Interviews, individual stories, and pictures are important to raise funds for the further work related to the disaster.

Humanitarian Aid Distribution:

The Assessment Team may take some basic humanitarian goods with them if their capacity (time and space) allows it. The responsibility of the Distributor lies in finding and purchasing humanitarian goods, and in supervising their distribution. He should primarily look for possibilities to make local (or at least regional) purchases and try to find logistical opportunities to bring more goods into the disaster area.

- b) The **DART** will consist of at least the following functions (of which several can be covered by one person):

Leading:

This means the full authority in decisions for the DART. All actions should be approved by this person and (s)he will be the mediator in case of any problems. All DART-relevant information has to be made known to him/her. (S)he is responsible for the entire team and plans and coordinates the work. (S)he will achieve this through daily briefings with the team members. He is furthermore responsible to care for the security of the team members.

Communication:

Similarly to the responsibilities of the Assessment Team's communicator, he will gather material which can be used for fundraising. He should document the DART's work, write journalistic texts and take pictures. The results should always be sent to the Lead Agent, where other GAIN offices can request the use of the material for their purposes.

Accounting:

He will be responsible for all financial issues, be it the payment of bills for accommodation, food etc. of the DART as well as documenting all expenses. It is also his job to care for sufficient cash in the local currency in advance of the arrival in the disaster area.

Distribution:

Depending on the amount and type of humanitarian goods, the distributor will be in charge of handing them out to people in need and keep track of their distribution. Local purchases have a priority.

Spiritual Guidance:

This person will care for the spiritual well-being of the DART, organize prayer and worship times, accompany all activities by prayer and forward prayer issues to the DART secretary. It may also be up to him/her to care for recreational activities. (S)he should further envisage opportunities to share about GAIN's motivation to provide humanitarian aid: to demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ for every human being. At the same time, it is his/her task to make sure, that all aid is distributed unconditionally and needs-oriented. Therefore, (s)he will coordinate the activities of GAIN-related teams with those of the DART.

Medical Proficiency:

A person with professional medical knowledge is required to be a member of the DART. The primary task is to care for health issues of the team members. For example, this can be someone with nursing experience who at the same time takes the function of the staff coordinator or spiritual guide.

IT:

Because of all the technical equipment (satellite phones, computers, ...) , it is important to have someone on the team who knows how to deal with them and their problems/failures.

c) These can be complemented by the following:

Logistics Coordination:

He will especially be needed in case of container shipments. It will be his responsibility to get involved with the customs and the storage of the goods inside the container, as well as the management of the container after its usage. For example, when it was rented, to make sure it is sent back to its origin or to take account of its future location in case it stays in the disaster area/target country maybe as a storage unit.

Construction/Engineering:

A person with engineering skills is needed when the DART becomes involved in the construction of facilities, e.g. for sanitation purposes, warehouses etc. He should be able to manage the plans up to the handover of the key, including the purchase of material.

Construction Coordination:

(S)he has to coordinate construction teams, the work connected to the construction project and the employment of workers.

Medical Coordination:

In case of attendance of medical experts to the disaster area, be it through GAiN or in cooperation with a respective organization, a person might be needed to coordinate their activities, facilities and patients, and to mediate between them and the DART Leader. If a team of trauma specialists is sent to the disaster area, he will also coordinate their work. (S)he has to prepare everything for the medical experts, but doesn't need to be one.

Staff Coordination:

The more members there are on the DART, or in case of the attendance of further teams and individual experts on the scene, e.g. of volunteers, for medical purposes, translation, etc., a person can be helpful who is responsible of coordinating them. The tasks may include airport pickups, the search of adequate board and lodging, and many more.

Water Initiative Coordination:

In disaster areas without access to clean water, an expert might be needed who can install and handle appropriate filtration systems. He needs to teach their usage and maintenance to the recipients in order to ensure long-term water security in the disaster area.

Finances

Applicants will have to pay for the initial training, before they enter the database. GAiN will cover the costs for accommodation, food, transportation and insurance during missions. In general there will be no salary. Each person will be encouraged to build a network of financial and spiritual supporters and to use the experience to raise funds for GAiN's disaster work after any mission.