Accountability for Disaster-related Aid

In order to ensure long-term accountability and transparency, geospatial data should be immediately included in the information structure of agencies involved in disaster relief efforts. The added value of geospatial data for planning, co-ordination, monitoring, accountability and audit of disaster-related aid was also emphasised alongside pertinent lessons to emerge from a recent post-Tsunami study (2008) from the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI).

To ensure that geospatial data supports the ongoing emergency response in Haiti and the longer-term reconstruction and development, while enabling transparency and accountability of donated aid, INTOSAI recommends to implement the following 10 key points:

•Up to date geospatial base dataset: coordination will be improved if all agencies are using the same base data set, comprising regular coordinate system, data on infrastructure, administrative boundaries etc;
•Reliable, stable, and precise geospatial information of projects: project locations clearly identified with GPS derived coordinates will reduce location errors and enable efficient overview of all activities;
•Aid management and tracking systems driven by coordinate based geospatial data: enables easier project identification, reduces errors and confusion typically associated with name based location systems, and supports activities and coordination at international (UN OCHA) or agency levels;
•Integration of geospatial data in accountability reporting; knowing where the support went shows gaps, overlaps, possible monopolies of contractors or local fraud;
•A longer-term (5-7 years) commitment to the acquisition of geospatial data: will assist in providing information on efficiency and effectiveness of the aid in the longer term;
•A one-stop-shop data delivery mechanism: will allow for efficient, effective and timely data distribution to the aid community, since disaster response is dynamic and time critical;
•Data delivery mechanism open and accountable to data providers, donors and recovery community;
•Data availability known to the aid and recovery community; the recovery community can only use data if they know if and where it is available;
•Freely accessible geospatial data: Access to the geospatial data at no cost, or data reproduction cost only, with unrestrictive licensing so the aid budget is not wasted on paying for the same data multiple times;
•Collected data supported by complete accurate information about the data: Without accurate, consistent, metadata the geospatial data is only useful to the creator of the data and cannot be shared.

INTOSAI are continuing to focus on methods how to improve accountability and transparency of disaster related aid and look forward to any feedback or further cooperation on this topic.

https://www.gim-international.com/content/news/accountability-for-disaster-related-aid