



Supply Chain Strategies:

How Effective Supply Chain Management
Assists with Disaster Relief

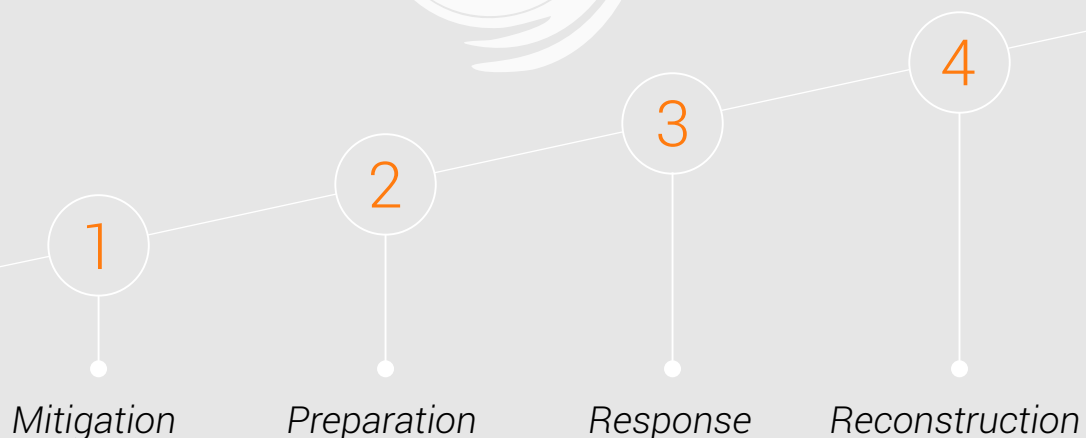


Supply Chain Strategies:

How Effective Supply Chain Management Assists with Disaster Relief

Speed and efficiency are the most important elements of an effective disaster relief effort. Aid materials and personnel need to be transported to victims as soon after the disaster event as possible. With human life at stake, efficiencies must be in place throughout the entire process, from the relief planning measures through distribution of materials and on-site operations.

There are four phases of the disaster management cycle:



Best-in-class supply chain companies can guide and facilitate efficient disaster relief efforts to help improve supply chain management in emergency situations and more successfully navigate these phases.

A 2014 study noted that emergency management logistics must transform beyond merely logistics to become **emergency supply chain management**. What makes emergency supply chain management different from commercial supply chains?

- *Demand is unpredictable.*
- *Disasters often occur suddenly, and response requires short lead times.*
- *Rapid and/or timely delivery of aid and supplies is necessary to mitigate the suffering of victims.*
- *Disasters sometimes damage key logistics infrastructure, requiring temporary replacement until repairs can be made.*
- *Sufficient resources are often lacking, such as transportation capacity, technology, equipment and personnel.*



Emergency response planners should identify areas in the commercial process that they can mimic in disaster management.

Supply chain management companies have been fine tuning their systems and methods for years, positioning successful commercial ventures to improve disaster response management.

The Key Points Along The Supply Chain For Review And Improvement Include:

- *Logistics Planning*
- *Materials Warehousing*
- *Fulfillment & Distribution*



Logistical Planning for Disaster Relief

The most crucial part of any supply chain is logistics planning, and this is especially true with emergency supply chains. Risk management is the first step in a comprehensive planning strategy.

Most disasters are caused by natural events such as incidents of extreme weather, and emergency planning efforts should first focus on mitigating the risk of harm in disaster-prone areas.





Logistical Planning for Disaster Relief

*For example, they can install weather monitoring systems, implement preemptive procedures for evacuating personnel and equipment that's hard to replace, create a network of backup suppliers, and practice with regular drills. Even the most rudimentary risk mitigation and pre-disaster planning can **significantly reduce the disaster impact.***

The steps of logistical disaster planning should cover the following areas:

- *Needs assessment and coordination between relief agencies and local, state and federal governments.*
- *Communication and collaboration between participating organizations.*
- *Incorporating disaster management protocols and procedures.*
- *Logistics and response training.*
- *Accounting for and respecting local capabilities, requirements and vulnerabilities (financial, social, economical, etc.).*
- *Ensuring the appropriate flow of resources based on need, frequency, and duration.*
- *Designing warehousing layouts and distribution activities for efficiency and speed.*

Warehousing Disaster Relief Materials

Emergency supply chain management should occur in an ongoing capacity with regard to the storage of disaster relief materials where possible. The more comprehensive the stockpile, the quicker aid can be delivered to disaster victims, thus reducing damage and loss of life.

Location is an important consideration for aid materials. The warehouses should be close enough to ensure the most rapid response after a disaster event, but not so close as to risk damage or destruction of the stored goods.

Supply chain companies often offer more experienced, timely and cost-effective warehousing solutions, in comparison to a relief agency managing the warehousing of its own stockpile.

Blankets and medical supplies aren't the only disaster relief materials that can be warehoused until a disaster event calls for their deployment.

Temporary field hospitals can be rapidly deployed from stockpiles around the world, with capability for **full medical support in as little as 72 hours.**

Fulfillment & Distribution of Aid

*Due to the necessity of both **speed and accuracy** in the emergency supply chain, in circumstances that are usually unexpected to some degree, the fulfillment process must operate at peak efficiency.*

By incorporating techniques that improve organization and workflow, disaster relief supplies and services are delivered to the victims as soon after the event as possible.

Techniques such as **slotting**, which identifies the most efficient placement for every item in the distribution center, ensures that the materials move as quickly as possible **without redundancies or disorganization.**

Rapid deployment of disaster relief supplies happens with collaboration between relief organizations and local governments, since roadways and other methods of transportation may offer limited access due to damage. The distribution process must include consistent communication between agencies and governments to direct relief materials to the most direct, speedy and passable route.

Emergency Supply Chain

Best Practices

With an emergency supply chain system that is both highly Integrated and scalable, disaster relief efforts can achieve the greatest success with saving lives, reducing damage, and mitigating the risk of additional catastrophes that can come as a result of delayed or ineffectual response.

The best practices for implementing an effective emergency supply chain:

- *Develop a strategic plan for disaster supply chain management before the emergency arises.*
- *Execute rapid procurement and delivery of disaster relief supplies and services.*
- *Implement efficient conversion procedures to quickly transform supplies into kits for survivors as well as responders.*
- *Apply an effective distribution chain for receiving aid materials, selecting and organizing them based on victim need, and packing and shipping to recipients.*
- *After the need for emergency relief has passed, have a plan for demobilization.*

About Hollingsworth

Hollingsworth is a leading provider of best-in-class logistics and supply chain management, offering fulfillment & distribution, assembly & sequencing, packaging & kitting, reverse logistics, program management, and warehousing services.

The company is headquartered in Dearborn, Michigan, with fulfillment centers located throughout the U.S. Hollingsworth prides itself on efficiency, accuracy, and cost-effectiveness, bringing greater opportunities for increased profits and improved customer satisfaction for its clients in the manufacturing and distribution communities.



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