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Requirements for emergency web work on the UNICEF site

10/16/2001

How could the webteam and website continue to operate under various emergency situations?

The webteam examined a number of scenarios and how we could continue to operate/the website could continue to function under an emergency situation.

Scenario A: The webteam must operate from 633 (3UN is evacuated)

Scenario B: We need to work from home (credible threats to UN facilities, Manhattan, the transit system etc)

Scenario C: The website needs to be maintained and updated from outside New York/the US

Based on this exercise, we drafted a list of recommendations and suggestions for measures to ensure the continuous operation of the UNICEF website. These steps would allow us to operate on either a 'minimal' or 'near-normal' basis. 'Normal' capacity would require additional software to that specified below plus access to all our files stored on hard drives on our office computers, Zip disks, etc. These recommendations are made pending significant ITD discussion and input.

To work at **near normal** capacity from anywhere outside our office (including 633, home, or anywhere else), the webteam would need:

- high speed internet and web browse access
- ftp access to both www.unicef.org (production server) and www3.unicef.org (development server)
- hardware: Windows machine with at least 500 Mhz processor, 128 MB RAM, in good working order
- software including Internet Explorer 5+, Dreamweaver, an ftp program, Photoshop, Lotus Notes for email, Microsoft Office.
- telephone

Near normal capacity would allow more extensive updates of various parts of the website, the addition of sections, pages and graphics but not multi-media files, PDF documents, advanced functionality, web development or anything requiring files which were not on hand.

To work at **minimal** capacity from outside our office (including 633, home, or anywhere else), the webteam would need:

- web browse access
- ftp access to www.unicef.org
- hardware: Windows machine in working order, probably at least 400 Mhz, 64 MB RAM
- software: web browser, ftp, image editor (possibly even Microsoft Paint), text editor (even Notepad).
- non-Notes email, phone, or some other means of communication.

Minimal capacity would be enough for quick updates to the home page, addition of mostly text documents, a little image editing (probably clumsy and slow, but doable).

This means that:

- Workstations at 633 need to be set up with the requisite profiles as outlined above and/or
- Laptops need to be set up with the requisite profiles as outlined above (we have one already set-up) and/or
- Home desktops/laptops need to be set up with the requisite profiles as outlined above.

We feel that the latter two solutions would offer far greater flexibility for operating in alternate locations (also given the relative proximity of 633 to 3UN and other potential targets) which is important in an emergency situation. Software licenses would need to be checked for multiple installation/single user provisions.

This raises the issue of FTP access via either the LAN or dial-up. We would need to clarify whether it would be possible to setup dial-up access via SITA which would allow the user to dial directly into the LAN and gain access FTP access. In this instance the appropriate software and username/passwords would need to be supplied to the webteam in advance and the setup tested.

and/or

Whether those with independent dial-up accounts and PCs at home need to determine the IP numbers (or range of numbers) from their ISP and pre-supply these to ITD to use for authentication when dialing into the server, also to be setup and tested.

It would be advised that both a home and mobile setup are undertaken as UNICEF laptops may not be accessible during an emergency/evacuation, rendering this solution useless.

Scenario C would require that an individual(s) elsewhere in the world be able to undertake the minimal operating capacity of the website. This could be a trusted UNICEF employee with proven web skill and experience who could make use of a PC with the relevant profile to take over the running of the website. They would need to be, or be supervised by someone who would be appropriately positioned to direct the type of content which should be published to the website under such a situation.

Perhaps this could be a pre-loaded workstation and person already sited and otherwise employed at the other organizational communications hub – Geneva. This would require that ITD organize for the username/password and other access information to be safely stored in Geneva and for a change control process to be instituted which would trigger the handing over of that information to such a person if the situation required. The webteam would also need to brief this person (and his/her replacement as time requires) on the current structure and elements of importance on the website.

What happens in the case of ISP problems?

A back-up ISP should be in place with a process for switching the server over in the event of a problem.

What happens in case of server problems?

Ideally the UNICEF site should be mirrored in a geographically opposite but well connected part of the world. Not only would this assist should the server, access to it and/or all backups be completely destroyed, but would also allow for load-balancing and failover provision as part of the day-to-day operation of the website.