



# The role and tasks of non-governmental organizations in providing assistance to disaster victims.

The term "non-governmental organization" is used to refer to all entities that are not part of the state apparatus and at the same time their activities are not aimed at generating profit. Non-governmental organizations are called: social organizations, civic organizations, non-governmental organizations, non-profit organizations, social benefit organizations, charities, aid organizations, voluntary organizations, independent organizations, third sector or third sector organizations

## Typology of non-governmental organizations providing assistance to disaster victims

Volunteer Fire Brigades • Association of Volunteer Fire Brigades of the Republic of Poland • Volunteer Fire Brigades not associated with the union Social rescue organizations • Tatra Volunteer Fire Department • Mountain Volunteer Emergency Service • Water Volunteer Emergency Service • Water Rescue Service of the Republic of Poland • Masurian Rescue Service • Polish Red Cross • Malta - Service Medical

- Malta Medical Service - Malta Aid Charitable organizations and organizations with unique resources
- The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity Foundation
- Polish Humanitarian Action
- Polish Red Cross
- Caritas Poland
- Polish Aero Club
- Polish Amateur Radio Association

## Actions taken by organizations non-governmental

### Prevention phase

- preventive activities
- risk education
- **first aid education**
- defense education
- support for schools in implementing the subject of education for safety
- conducting social campaigns regarding threats
- support in identifying threats
- proposing local initiatives to reduce threats

### Preparation phase

- participation in the work of crisis management teams
- participation in the work of the district's security and order committee
- participation in the work of public benefit councils
- active participation in social consultations
- exchange of information between local government administration and
- preparing and adapting communication channels to alarm needs
- declaring one's strength and resources
- organizing communication systems
- participation in exercises

### Reaction phase

- securing areas at risk of the spread of the crisis
- organization of social and living assistance for injured people
- organization of additional communications in areas affected by the crisis
- organization of additional communications for services participating in the action

rescue • providing specialized equipment for the rescue operation • logistical support for services conducting the rescue operation • supporting the police in securing abandoned property • mobilizing and organizing the population to support the rescue operation • supporting the public administration  
Reconstruction phase • collection of cash and donations in kind • distribution of cash and gifts to people in need • direct support for people affected by removing the effects of a given disaster • cleaning works in public space • volunteering for public administration

## International humanitarian law

International humanitarian law (IHL), also known as the law of armed conflict, is part of public international law. It protects persons who do not and cease to participate in armed conflicts, and limits the methods and means of conducting these conflicts. The most important international agreements in the field of international humanitarian law include:

KG I - Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Active Armies, signed in Geneva on August 12, 1949 (Journal of Laws of 1956, No. 38, item 171);

KG II - Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Forces

[armed forces at sea, signed in Geneva on 12 August 1949 \(Journal of Laws of 1956, No. 38, item 171\);](#)

GC III

- Geneva Convention on the Treatment of Prisoners of War, signed in Geneva on August 12, 1949 (Journal of Laws of 1956, No. 38, item 171), GC IV - Geneva Convention on the Protection of Civilian Persons in War, signed in Geneva on August 12, 1949 (Journal of Laws of 1956, No. 38, item 171)

PD I - Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949, regarding [protection of victims of international armed conflicts \(Protocol I\), drawn up in](#) Geneva on June 8, 1977 (Journal of Laws of 1992, item 175)

PD II - Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949, regarding [protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts \(Protocol II\), drawn up in](#) Geneva on June 8, 1977 (Journal of Laws of 1992, item 175)

PD III - Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949, regarding [adoption of an additional distinctive mark \(Protocol III\), adopted at Geneva on 8](#) December 2005 (Journal of Laws of 1992, item 447)

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has been operating for over 150 years. It was established in 1863 and its initiator was Henry Dunant.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has presented several fundamental norms of international humanitarian law. According to them:

- protection of life and health, as well as humane treatment (without any discrimination) of all persons not participating in combat and those who cannot participate in it should be ensured;
- you cannot wound an enemy who surrenders or cannot participate in combat;
- the side of the conflict in whose hands the wounded and sick are located should provide them with care and protection;
- the signs of a red cross or red crescent provide protection for people and objects, you cannot attack people marked with these symbols;
- prisoners of war and civilians have the right to respect for their life, dignity, personal rights and religious and other beliefs, and the party in which they are in power should ensure protection against any acts of violence;
- everyone has the right to court guarantees and no one can be held liable for a crime he or she did not commit;

  

- there is a complete prohibition of physical or mental torture, corporal punishment and any other cruel and degrading treatment;
- parties to the conflict should always distinguish between armed forces and the civilian population, which is protected and cannot be attacked; furthermore they should always distinguish between civilian and military purposes;
- no one has an unlimited right to choose the methods and means of waging war - no weapons or methods can be used that could cause unnecessary losses or excessive suffering;
- Parties to armed conflicts should comply with all principles of international humanitarian law.