

Aryeh Teller

COPUOS: Topic #2 - Space Disaster Mitigation and Relief

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As global warming continues to impact our world negatively, COPUOS has embraced the call to action in mitigation and relief efforts. One such measure is the program known as UN-SPIDER.

The United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) was formed in 2006 by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) to assist less-developed countries in receiving and implementing disaster management technologies and mitigating the risks of tragic catastrophes.

Some key features of UN-SPIDER include remote sensing for earth observation, global navigation satellite systems, and satellite-based telecommunication. “Disaster managers and emergency responders can use the information satellites gather in all stages of the disaster management cycle,” reads the official website. “Reliable and timely information is essential when it comes to dealing with disasters, especially when infrastructure is hindered or made ineffectual. Space applications and space-based information provide this information in a number of ways. Remote sensing for Earth observation, satellite-based communication and global navigation satellite systems all contribute to more effective disaster management.”¹ Through using our global platform in COPUOS, we can effectively offer these vital technologies to all countries, big or small.

The UN SPIDER’s Knowledge Portal is how COPUOS gathers information for UN SPIDER². Countries with developed disaster mitigation and management technologies can place all their systems in this Knowledge Portal, allowing for easy and efficient access for small, less-developed countries.

The goal of UN SPIDER is not limited to helping less developed countries. Just as important a goal is the seamless flow of information on disaster risks and impacts on all populations involved. “The communities involved are quite heterogeneous... and so are the approaches for being a knowledge broker for these stakeholders.”³

¹ <https://www.un-spider.org/space-application>

² <https://www.un-spider.org/>

³ <https://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/un-spider/knowledge-management.html>

I would like to offer some guiding questions:

- How can we continue to develop UN SPIDER?
- Are there other technologies that should be taken into account for disaster management and mitigation?
- Can we work with private companies and their technologies to aid UN SPIDER?

These are just a few questions and should not be the only points you investigate. If you have any further questions or comments on this topic, feel free to email me at ateller1@mail.yu.edu. A friendly reminder: plagiarism of any kind is strictly prohibited! Please submit your papers on Turnitin. Also please remember that you are representing your country's opinions, not your own. I look forward to reviewing your position papers and seeing you in person soon!

Aryeh Teller

Chair, COPUOS

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