

OCHA ORIENTATION HANDBOOK ON COMPLEX EMERGENCIES

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
August 1999

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1. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose and Scope of the Handbook

What does the Security Council have to do with UN humanitarian assistance in the field? To whom do you turn if you have problems with your contract? Whom will you be working with in the field? How do you deal with a journalist asking you politically sensitive questions? The answers to frequently asked questions such as these can be found in this handbook, the purpose of which is to help prepare you for fieldwork with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

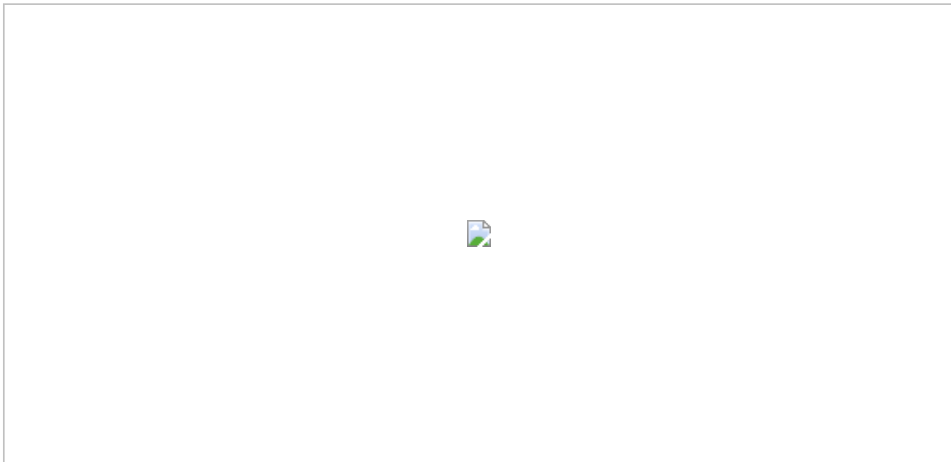
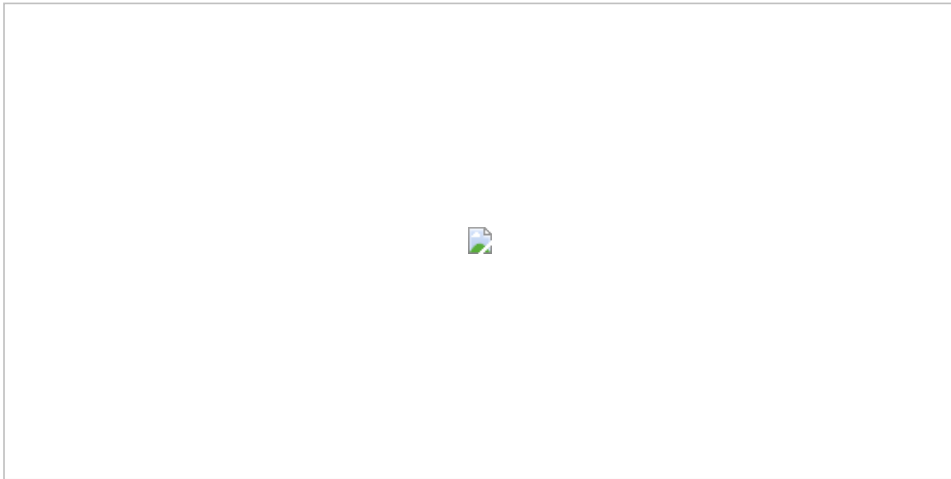
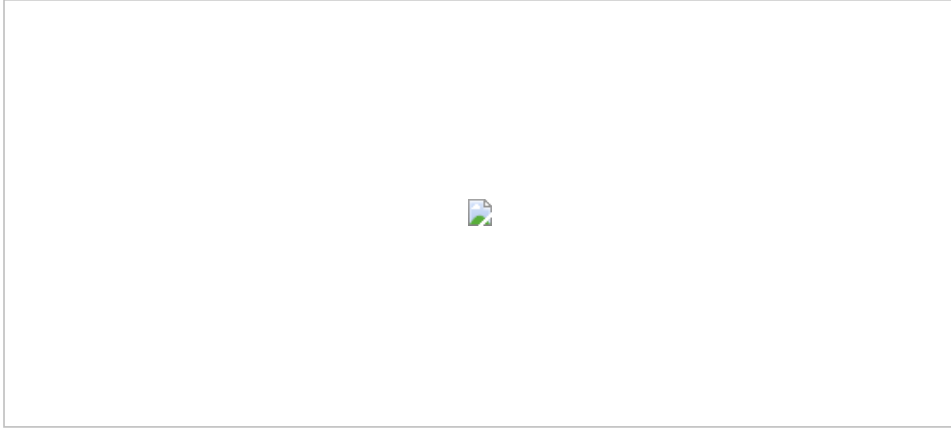
The first aim of the handbook is to provide a better understanding of OCHA's role in coordinating the response to complex emergencies (that are primarily man-made, often with conflict as a major cause), and how it relates to the rest of the humanitarian community. Its second aim is to demystify the links between UN headquarters and operations in the field. The approach is essentially a practical one, offering information on a

variety of issues from administrative matters to how to deal with policy issues in the field. Since the handbook is intended as an aid to orientation in the field, and not as an exhaustive field manual, it provides numerous reference points for further sources of detailed information.

Since this is the first such handbook prepared since DHA was transformed into OCHA in 1998, we expect that it will need to be revised and updated in the year 2000. As such, we would appreciate any comments and queries that you may have on any aspect of this document. You can send your comments and queries to Ms. Tes Dimalanta-Smith, Information Management Services Branch, by e-mail (dimalanta@un.org) or by fax at (212) 963-1040.

B. A Word From Some Colleagues

A good understanding of OCHA's role in the context of complex emergencies, of how policy translates into practice and how to overcome administrative hurdles may help to minimize frustrations upon arrival at an OCHA field duty station. Throughout the handbook OCHA staff members give their personal comments on problems that may be encountered in the field, and how they could be resolved or avoided altogether. Here are some in the way of introduction:



C. What is a complex emergency?

The official definition of a complex emergency is “a humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/ or the ongoing United Nations country program.” (IASC, December 1994).

Such “complex emergencies” are typically characterized by:

- extensive violence and loss of life; massive displacements of people; widespread damage to societies and economies
- the need for large-scale, multi-faceted humanitarian assistance
- the hindrance or prevention of humanitarian assistance by political and military constraints
- significant security risks for humanitarian relief workers in some areas

D. The changing nature of conflict

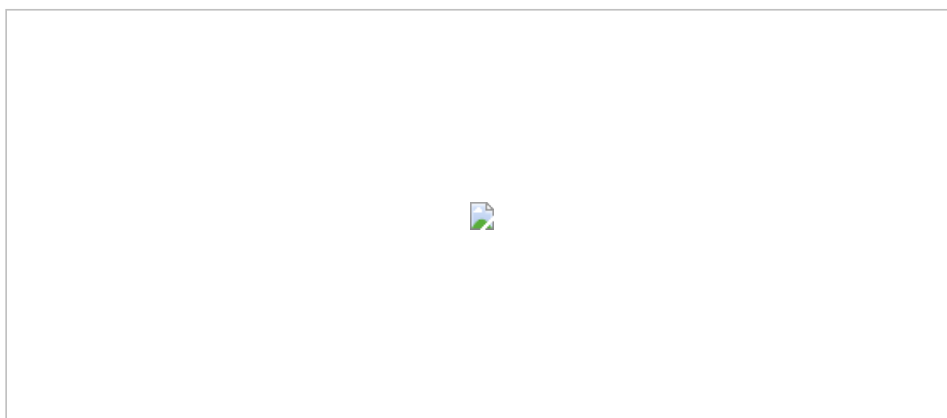
In the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, the number of armed conflicts around the world increased – particularly those within State borders. According to one widely quoted source, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), in 1992 a total of 55 armed conflicts were recorded in 41 locations. This number declined to 33 armed conflicts recorded in 26 locations in 1997. (SIPRI can be accessed at www.peace.uu.se).

Statistics on refugees and other uprooted people are often inexact and controversial, with different sources citing conflicting statistics. According to just one source, the UNHCR, the total number of people of concern to them rose from 17 million in 1991 to a record 27 million in 1995. This figure includes refugees, returnees and certain IDPs. Until the Kosovo crisis in 1999 however, this number had been in decline, dropping to 22.3 million at the beginning of 1998 (a figure that still represents one out of every 264 people on earth). It is widely agreed that the proportion of IDPs within this figure had increased throughout the 1990s.

The amount of resources provided for international humanitarian assistance efforts continues to decrease. In 1994 the total requirements for the UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal (CAP) amounted to US\$2,778 million, of which 75.8% was met, whereas in 1998 only 53.9% of the US\$2,163 million requested was met. (See Chapter 5 on Funding and the CAP).

In today’s wars, typically over 90% of the victims are civilians. At the same time assisting affected civilians in war zones has become increasingly dangerous. Between 1993 and 1999 more than 150 UN personnel lost their lives while on duty.

The nature of contemporary armed conflict is described in the following briefing to the Security Council by the head of OCHA in January 1999:



2. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – An Overview

A. What is OCHA and what does it do?

A Brief Background

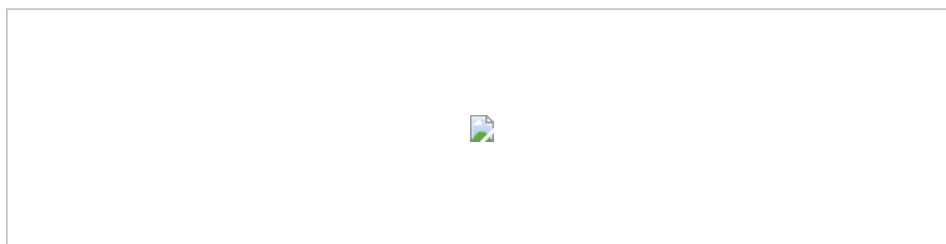
The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is part of the United Nations Secretariat and has the mandate to coordinate the provision of humanitarian assistance (particularly that of the UN system) in complex emergencies and natural disasters. Where a humanitarian crisis goes beyond the mandate or capacity of a single agency, OCHA works to ensure a rapid and effective response by all parties involved – including governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and UN agencies.

By 1991 the increasing number of protracted internal conflicts that required a sustained international response - such as those in Afghanistan, Iraq and the Sudan - signaled a pressing need for more effective coordination. There was by then a growing recognition that the absence of proper coordination could lead to chaotic and ultimately ineffective responses to a humanitarian crisis, with the result that efforts were duplicated whilst some needs might be overlooked.

This resulted in the establishment of the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) in 1992, as a support body for the newly appointed Emergency Relief Coordinator. By the same resolution (46/182) the UN General Assembly established the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), that would become the main forum for consultation and decision-making between humanitarian agencies.

As part of the UN Secretary-General's reform program the Department was restructured in January 1998 and renamed the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Its coordination functions were strengthened, partly by the transfer of operational functions such as mine clearance to other entities within the UN system. Policy development, on issues such as the protection of internally displaced persons, as well as advocacy of humanitarian issues, were retained among OCHA's core functions.

As a non-operational organization, OCHA is widely regarded as more impartial and more objective than operational agencies whose primary concern is with their own particular field. Secondly, due to its strong links with the political, peacekeeping and human rights components of the UN, OCHA is well-placed to promote a more holistic, integrated approach to complex crises and to peace-building, reconstruction and longer term development.



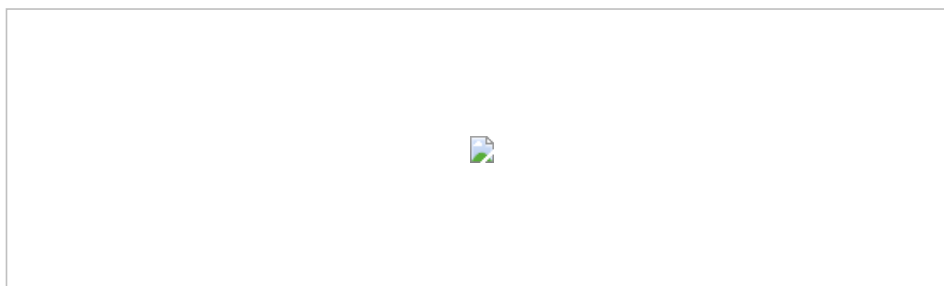
An Outline of OCHA's Core Functions

OCHA has three core functions:

1) *The coordination of humanitarian emergency response*

Coordination in the field takes place through the work of Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinators, who lead the UN Country Teams. Where appropriate, Field Coordination Units (staffed largely by OCHA) may be established to support the Coordinator. In complex emergencies, OCHA representatives in the field must cooperate with a broad range of actors, in addition to humanitarian organizations (Humanitarian Coordination In-Country will be discussed at length in Chapter 3).

At Headquarters level, the head of OCHA (currently Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello) has dual responsibilities as Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs (USG), and as Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC). In his role as ERC, he chairs the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), that brings together most of the major humanitarian players, both within and outside the UN system, and is the most important forum for reaching consensus on coordinating the international humanitarian response to emergencies. As USG, the head of OCHA is the principal adviser to the Secretary-General on humanitarian issues, and Convener of the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA). The ECHA provides a forum for the humanitarian community and the political and peacekeeping departments of the UN Secretariat to share perspectives on humanitarian crises and issues (see Chapter 4 for further explanation of coordination at the headquarters level).



2) **Policy development and policy coordination**

In close collaboration with its humanitarian partners, OCHA seeks to ensure that appropriate policies are adopted and applied within each emergency or disaster, and that important issues falling between the existing mandates of humanitarian organizations are addressed. Examples of OCHA's priorities in this regard are:

- How to handle the issue of assistance to and (more sensitively) protection of Internally Displaced Persons.
- The reinforcement of humanitarian ground rules, e.g. the need for practical guidelines on how and when to intervene, how to resolve "humanitarian dilemmas", and when to suspend assistance or withdraw.
- The related priority of trying to define the relationship between human rights and humanitarian action. For example, how should the need for humanitarian access be reconciled with the need or obligation for human rights advocacy in the face of glaring human rights abuses?
- How to address the "development gap" – i.e. the transition from relief to development (see Chapter 7 on policy issues in the context of field work).

3) **Advocacy of humanitarian issues**

The advocacy of humanitarian issues is an increasingly important activity of the humanitarian community. Its main aim is to give voice to victims and ensure that humanitarian issues and concerns are taken fully into account in all relevant fora (political, peacekeeping, developmental, human rights and humanitarian). There has been an increasing disregard in recent years for fundamental humanitarian principles, serious violations of international humanitarian law, and threats to the safety and protection of civilians and relief personnel. This has highlighted the need to enhance awareness among all involved in complex emergencies of humanitarian concerns and objectives.

OCHA's advocacy function is carried out on one level through its briefings to inter-governmental bodies, in particular the Security Council, and through its strong links with other components of the UN Secretariat (such as the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations). Topical issues include sanctions, security of humanitarian staff, the proliferation of small arms and landmines. In terms of broader outreach OCHA is working towards coordinating advocacy campaigns on issues of concern to the humanitarian community, such as the protection of civilians in armed conflict and greater respect for international humanitarian law (see Chapter 7 on advocacy of humanitarian issues in the field).

OCHA also provides information on humanitarian needs and response to the international community on which to base sound policy, advocacy and decision-making. This is done through the support of emergency information systems aimed at early warning and preventive action, as well as through web sites and electronic mail (see Chapter 8 for OCHA information platforms).

Guiding Principles

In carrying out the above functions, OCHA is guided by a number of fundamental humanitarian principles (that form the basis of international humanitarian assistance in general). These principles are especially relevant for OCHA work at the field level, where OCHA representatives (through the leadership of the UN Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator) are meant to promote their application on behalf of the affected population, and the wider humanitarian assistance community (see Chapter 7, Policy & Advocacy Issues in the Context of Field Work). Their relevance is increased by the fact that in most contemporary conflicts, international humanitarian law is overlooked, making the delivery of humanitarian assistance more problematic and sometimes dangerous. But while it is important to be familiar with such principles, knowing how to actually apply them when faced with a problem or dilemma in the field can of course prove to be far from straightforward, and several examples of this will be given throughout the handbook.

The main principles are summarized below, drawing from the General Assembly resolution 46/182 and some generally recognized principles of international humanitarian law. These include the Geneva Conventions relating to the protection of victims of war, and the two additional 1977 protocols to the 1949 Conventions dealing with the protection of victims of international and internal armed conflicts.

Humanitarian assistance is of fundamental importance for the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies.

Humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance with the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality:

Humanity: Human suffering should be addressed wherever it is found. The dignity and rights of all victims must be respected and protected

Impartiality: Humanitarian assistance should be provided without discriminating as to ethnic origin, gender, nationality, political opinions, race or religion. Relief of the suffering of individuals must be guided solely by their needs and priority must be given to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality: Humanitarian assistance should be provided without engaging in hostilities or taking sides in controversies of a political, religious or ideological nature.

The sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of the State must be fully respected in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

Each State has the responsibility first and foremost to take care of the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies occurring in its territory.

Primary responsibility for the protection and well-being of a civilian population rests with the government of the state or authorities that control the territory in which the population is located. Insurgent groups and militias should be held to the same standard of responsibility as governments.

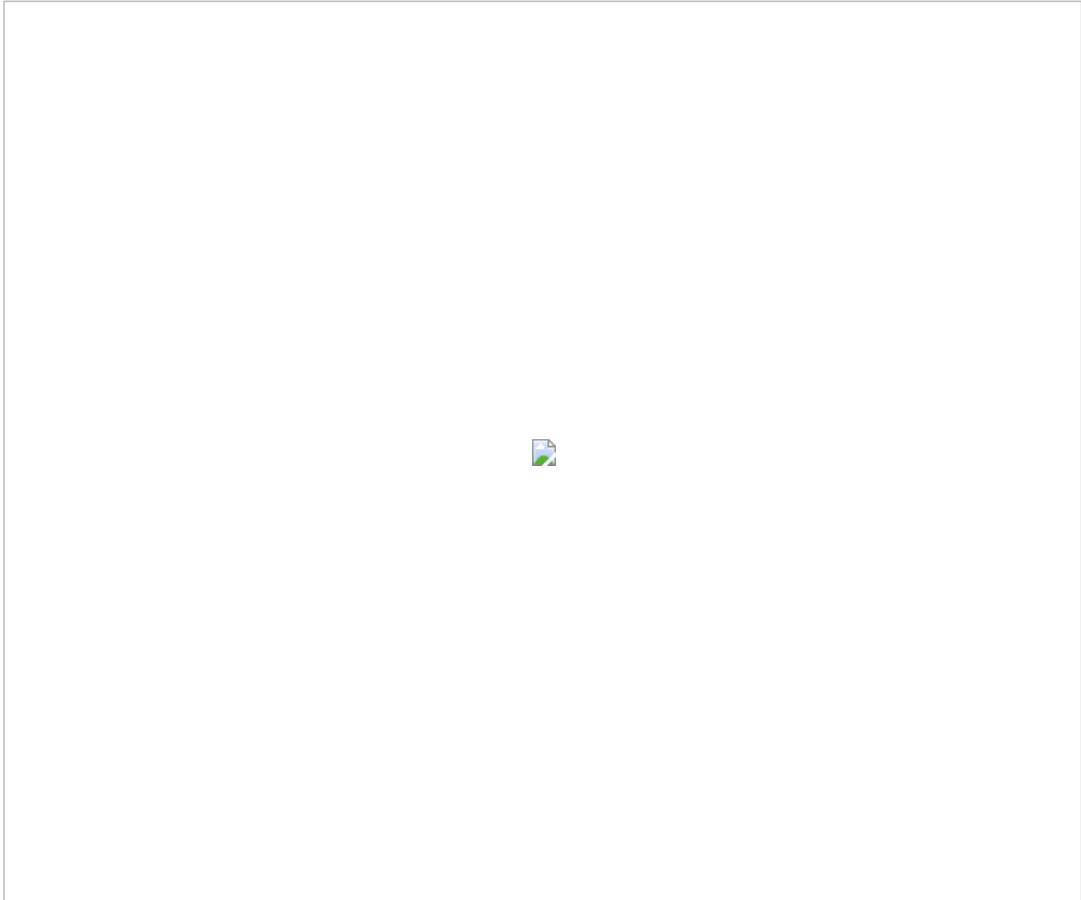
Free and unimpeded access for humanitarian assistance activities must be granted by all parties concerned.

Every effort should be made to ensure security and protection of UN and associated personnel engaged in humanitarian assistance activities. Protagonists shall be held directly accountable to the UN and the international community for attacks on UN staff and others connected with the UN's humanitarian operations.

In situations of armed conflict, civilians are protected under international law against attacks, torture and other violations of international humanitarian law and human rights.

States in proximity to countries in crisis are urged to help facilitate, wherever possible, the transit of international humanitarian assistance.

The parties to the conflict must respect and apply the spirit and letter of international humanitarian law and human rights, and established principles relating to humanitarian assistance.



OCHA Priorities in 1999

Structure at headquarters in New York and Geneva



OCHA Structure at Headquarters (refer to organigram above)

OCHA's structures and roles in the field will be explained in Chapter 3.

At Headquarters, OCHA's presence in both New York and Geneva reflects the two aspects of humanitarian action. A presence in Geneva is strategically important for support to the field, and for consultation and negotiation with operational agencies, whilst OCHA's presence in New York is due to the fact that humanitarian action is inseparable from political and peacekeeping issues.

NEW YORK is the seat of the Head of OCHA, who occupies the Office of the Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Humanitarian Affairs and, simultaneously, that of Emergency Relief Coordinator, (ERC). These functions are described in Chapter 4 on humanitarian coordination at the international level. The USG is supported by the Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, also based in New York, and assisted by his Office.

The secretariat of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and of the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA) is based in New York (see Chapter 4).

The Executive Office in New York assists the USG in his financial, personnel and general administrative responsibilities. It serves OCHA as a whole and coordinates the administration of the New York and Geneva offices within a framework accepted by the two sides. The Office also assists the ERC in administering the Central Emergency Revolving Fund (see Chapter 5) and manages trust funds and accounts under its responsibility.

The Emergency Liaison Branch (ELB) in New York is one of two branches of OCHA that are responsible for the coordination of complex emergency response (the other being the Complex Emergency Response Branch, CERB, in Geneva – see below).

The ELB is divided into two sections – Africa, and Asia, Europe and Latin America – and is responsible for support to the Emergency Relief Coordinator and field coordinators on cross-cutting policy issues with humanitarian, political, security and military dimensions. ELB interacts with UN Secretariat departments (particularly the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the UN Security Coordinator), as well as with inter-governmental bodies and relevant actors on complex emergency situations and issues. It also provides reports on the humanitarian aspects of emergencies to the Secretary-General, the Security Council, other inter-governmental bodies and relevant fora (services provided by ELB and CERB to support the field are described in Chapter 6).

The Policy, Advocacy and Information Division (PAID), also based in New York, consists of two branches: the Policy Development and Advocacy Branch (PDAB) and the Information Management Services Branch (IMSB).

The PDAB is primarily responsible for supporting the head of OCHA in two of the three core functions identified for his Office: the development of generic humanitarian policy (through the Policy Development Unit), and the advocacy of humanitarian issues (through the Advocacy and External Relations Unit).

The IMSB also consists of two Units: the Information Analysis Unit (IAU) and the Information Technology Unit (ITU). The IAU facilitates inter-agency early warning monitoring of potential new complex emergencies, and promotes in-country contingency planning and preparedness measures. Another portion of IAU operates OCHA's two Web sites (ReliefWeb and OCHA Online – see Chapter 8) as well as activities regarding Geographic Information Systems. The ITU manages and supports OCHA's headquarters and field computer systems, and supports the publication and dissemination of OCHA documents.

GENEVA is a key humanitarian center, and is the OCHA focal point for support to the field. Geneva is strategically located for access to the headquarters of humanitarian organizations based there, as well as to other UN humanitarian agencies, major non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and European donors.

The Director of the Geneva Office is responsible for OCHA's activities in Europe. He represents the USG to governments and organizations based in or with offices in Europe. He also manages the Geneva Office with its responsibilities in both natural disasters and complex emergencies. In his capacity as Assistant ERC, he chairs the IASC-Working Group (see Chapter 4) and is often required by the USG to travel to countries in crisis to undertake negotiations or review coordination arrangements.

The IASC Liaison Unit both supports the Director of the Geneva Office as Chairperson of the IASC-WG and liaises with IASC members in Europe, ensuring that their positions are adequately reflected in the agendas and discussions of both IASC and ECHA.

The Finance and Administrative Section (FAS) meanwhile assists the Director of the Geneva Office in his financial, personnel and general administrative responsibilities. It also provides administrative support to field personnel, as well as program budget support for humanitarian operations in the field and for various projects in the areas of natural disasters and complex emergencies.

With regard to the coordination of complex emergency response, the Complex Emergency Response Branch (CERB) in Geneva is the principal focal point for day-to-day support to the field. It is responsible for all issues of field support to promote coordination and strategic field-based planning. CERB also issues appeals and other documents to the donor community (for example, it is responsible – together with OCHA field staff – for the preparation, launch, and monitoring of the Consolidated Appeals Process). It is also responsible for the promotion and negotiation of funding for OCHA's own requirements, as well as for the promotion of UN operations in complex emergencies (see Chapter 6 for further detail of field support provided by CERB).

OCHA headquarters in Geneva are also home to entities dealing with natural disasters, such as the Secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) and the Disaster Response Branch (DRB). Within the DRB, field support services such as the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team and the Military and Civil Defense Unit (MCDU) may be deployed in complex emergencies where appropriate (see Chapter 6 on 'Services & Tools Available to Support the Field').

B. When and how does OCHA respond?

The complicated nature of contemporary armed conflicts causing large-scale humanitarian crises is such that it may be difficult to identify when a "complex emergency" actually starts and when it is truly over.

The most obvious starting point for the international humanitarian community is when the need for assistance significantly exceeds the capacity – both of the local population and of humanitarian aid agencies - in a particular country. OCHA's multifaceted response begins before this point is reached however, and includes the following activities (many of which will be described more fully in subsequent chapters):

Early Warning

OCHA plays a leading role in inter-agency early warning of potential new complex emergencies. Much of this involves the work of the Information Analysis Unit within the Framework for Coordination mechanism that includes OCHA, DPA, DPKO, UNDP, UN Human Rights, FAO, UNICEF and WHO. The Framework Team consultations on countries of concern include promoting in-country contingency planning for higher risk countries, as well as actions that could help prevent or mitigate the conflict.

Contingency Planning/Forward Planning

Prior to the onset of a complex emergency, the Information Analysis Unit, working closely with ELB and CERB, is responsible for working with the UN Resident Coordinator and agencies in-country to carry out contingency planning and preparedness actions. Some components of this work include developing common inter-agency planning scenarios and assumptions, agreeing on the division of labor in advance of the start of a relief operation, and identifying and positioning standby relief items. A document describing the "Key Elements of Inter-Agency Contingency Planning" is available from IAU.

Once a complex emergency has started, the same type of early warning and contingency planning – termed "forward planning" in this phase - is a crucial part of the ongoing work of the Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator and his/ her coordination support staff in-country. It is essential that they do not get so preoccupied by the immediate relief needs that they fail to closely monitor changes, identify new trends, project alternative scenarios for different directions the emergency may take, and make preparations for the changing needs and operating conditions that may arise. It is precisely because OCHA is not an operational agency that it has this responsibility in the field. OCHA's ability to provide the leadership and vision to keep the relief operation ahead of the curve of fast changing events is crucial. The failure of a relief operation to carry out such strategic planning and preparedness will be laid squarely on OCHA.

Inter-agency situation/ needs assessment

When a humanitarian crisis appears imminent, or is in the early stages, OCHA – through IASC consultations - often organizes and leads inter-agency assessment missions in order to determine humanitarian needs and put in place appropriate coordination mechanisms on the ground. Such assessment missions involve UN agencies such as UNHCR, WFP and UNICEF, as well as other humanitarian organizations and NGOs. Humanitarian needs can then be prioritized on the basis of a common strategy. Needs assessment is also an important ongoing feature of OCHA's field activities, not least for the purpose of fund-raising (see Chapter 5).

Field coordination mechanism

See Chapter 3 for details of humanitarian coordination in-country.

Resource mobilization

Crucial resources such as Consolidated Appeals will be explained in Chapter 5.

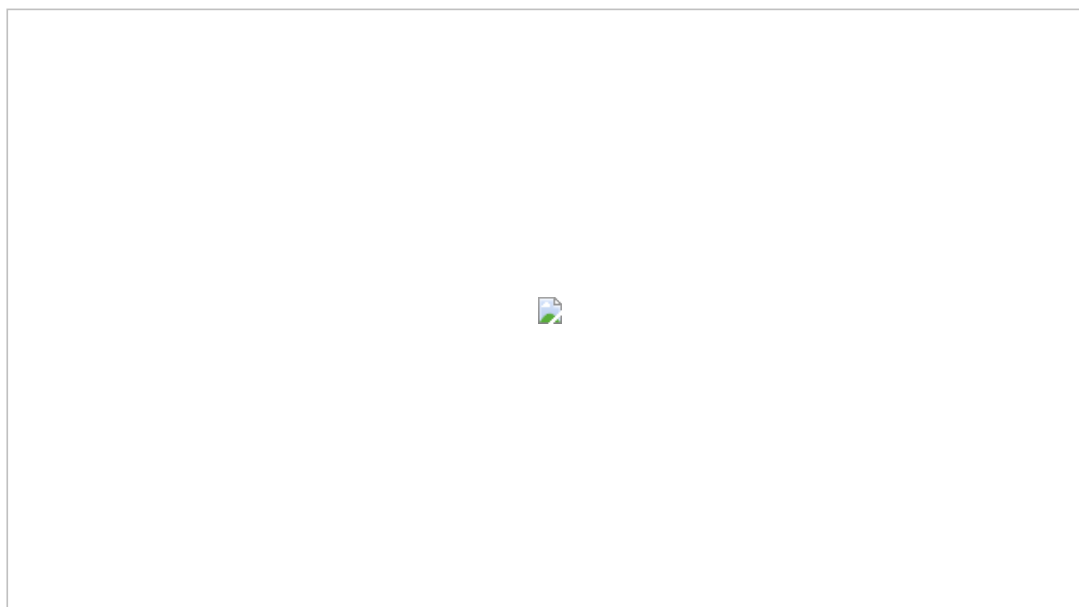
Post-emergency

When post-conflict rehabilitation becomes a realistic option, OCHA seeks to hand over most of its activities to other agencies that are mandated to coordinate such rehabilitation. These would normally include the UN Development Programme, and bodies such as the World Bank. OCHA would then resume responsibility for monitoring future humanitarian needs, through the UN Resident Coordinator in-country.

In practice the transition from relief to rehabilitation is rarely clear-cut. For example rehabilitation may be viable in some areas of a country whilst conflict continues in others. Sometimes a conflict may appear to have ended, but the lack of a lasting political solution causes it to erupt again (making it premature to dismantle relief capacities). For a variety of reasons, including political ones, some donors may be willing to fund a particular activity if it is defined as “relief”, or is funded within a humanitarian assistance appeal, but not if it falls under “rehabilitation” efforts. Lastly, the phasing-out of relief coordination efforts must be managed carefully, taking into consideration local political, economic and social conditions (e.g. the abrupt termination of food aid may be a threat to stability, and may require a gradual phasing-out).

*See the IASC Recommendations Related to the Review of the Capacity of the UN System for Humanitarian Assistance, October 1998 (Section 3: Local Capacities/ Relief and Development).

The difficulties involved in knowing when a humanitarian crisis has actually ended, and so when relief should end and the “development phase” should begin, are well illustrated by developments in the Republic of Congo:



3. Humanitarian Coordination in-Country

A. Who represents OCHA in the field ?

Establishing the Field Coordination Mechanism

OCHA field coordination mechanisms vary depending on the particular circumstances of each complex emergency. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) decides upon the appropriate mechanism on a case-by-case basis.

Coordination arrangements are continuously reviewed by the IASC, which will recommend change as and when appropriate. Following a 1998 IASC review on the capacity of the UN system for humanitarian assistance, the range of options for field coordination mechanisms includes three main mechanisms:

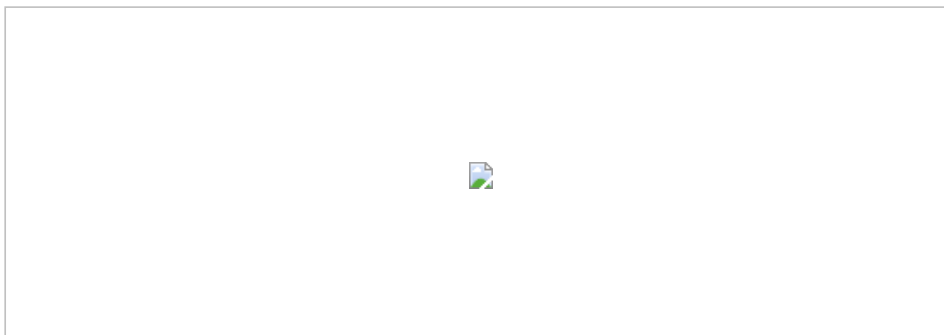
The Resident Coordinator as Humanitarian Coordinator

In most complex emergency situations the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) represents OCHA in the early warning and initial response phases of a humanitarian emergency. When managing and coordinating responses to complex emergencies, as well as natural and technological disasters, the RC is responsible and accountable to the ERC (whereas when dealing with natural disaster mitigation, prevention and preparedness, to ensure national capacity building, the RC reports to UNDP).

When faced with the threat of a full-blown crisis, the IASC may confirm the Resident Coordinator as the UN Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) for the emergency - if the individual has the appropriate skills and expertise. If not, a separate Humanitarian Coordinator with the necessary profile will be appointed. The Humanitarian Coordinator is accountable to the ERC.

The primary function of the Humanitarian Coordinator is to facilitate and ensure the quick, effective, and well-coordinated provision of humanitarian assistance to those seriously affected by the complex emergency in question (see Annex II for Terms of Reference).

The Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator is supported by field staff who, depending on the scale of the emergency, may be organized into Field Coordination Units (FCUs). These are usually staffed by OCHA staff, but may also include personnel from UN agencies or NGOs. Again, the structure of FCUs is dependent on the particular coordination support needs in-country (see Page 15/16).



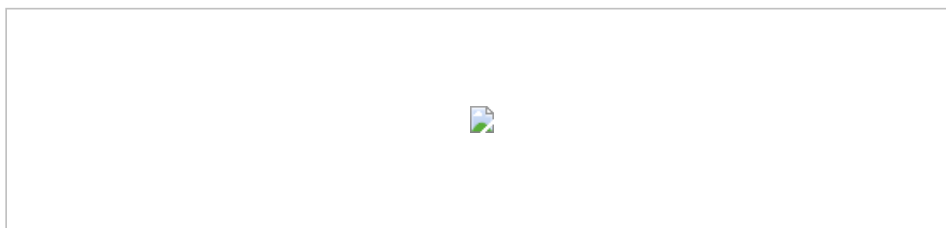
The Lead Agency

The IASC may – where appropriate - designate a lead agency to assume the responsibilities of humanitarian coordination. Factors influencing the designation of a lead agency are that the various sectors of assistance being delivered are closely related to the mandate of the agency; the assigned agency has the capacity to undertake strategic coordination needs and to establish and maintain both sectoral and common operational support mechanisms, while at the same time executing the operations specific to its mandate; and the agency has a presence on the ground and/ or is able to mobilize rapidly.

The lead agency is selected from among IASC members, and its country-director is appointed as Humanitarian Coordinator. This person is accountable to the ERC for his/ her responsibilities as Humanitarian Coordinator, while continuing to be accountable to his/ her own Executive Head for activities within the agency's mandate.

Humanitarian Coordinator distinct from Resident Coordinator or Lead Agency

In special circumstances the ERC may appoint a Humanitarian Coordinator where there is no Resident Coordinator in place, or where the IASC agrees that the in-country situation means it would not be viable for the Resident Coordinator or a lead agency to carry out the humanitarian coordination functions. As soon as the situation permits, however, arrangements should be made for the Humanitarian Coordinator and the Resident Coordinator functions to be carried out by the same person or, as necessary, for a lead agency to be appointed



Types of Coordination

When considering the types of field coordination mechanism established in different countries or regions, it should be noted that there are two aspects of humanitarian coordination in the UN system: strategic coordination and operational coordination.

Strategic coordination includes the overall direction and setting of goals of the humanitarian program; allocating tasks and responsibilities and ensuring they are reflected in a strategic plan in accordance with agencies' mandates; the advocacy of humanitarian principles and negotiating access; ensuring that resource mobilization for the program responds to priorities as agreed in the strategic plan; monitoring and evaluating the overall implementation of the program to ensure that changing circumstances and constraints are identified and responded to; and liaising with the military and political participants of the international community, including that of the UN.

Operational coordination comprises substantive coordination in relation to specific sectors, geographical areas, and beneficiary groups. Agencies may play a coordination role within a particular area of expertise – for example, UNICEF often takes the lead in water and sanitation programs within the larger inter-agency coordination process. It may also involve providing common services for humanitarian participants in areas such as security, communications, and common logistics systems.

Field Coordination Units

Although their structure, size and precise activities vary depending on the nature of the complex emergency (as well as on adequate funding by donors), the primary role of Field Coordination Units (FCUs) remains essentially the same: to support Resident/Humanitarian Coordinators in carrying out their coordination responsibilities at the field level. Thus, they play a crucial part in ensuring common programming among humanitarian actors in the field.

In support of the Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator, the FCU's responsibilities include liaising regularly with government counterparts, NGOs and UN Agencies on humanitarian programs and related requirements; analyzing and disseminating information on the humanitarian situation, including on access, to humanitarian partner and donors; planning, facilitating and monitoring the Consolidated Appeal (CAP); organizing field assessments to affected areas for the UN, NGOs, governments and donors, and ensuring appropriate follow-up; and supporting UN Agencies' efforts to build institutional capacity at national and local levels for adequate response to and management of humanitarian crises and disasters.

In 1999 FCUs were present in 19 countries and regions in Africa, Asia and Europe (see map in Annex III).

There is no rule of thumb as to the structure and size of FCUs. Instead, the makeup of FCUs is determined by local circumstances and current needs – as illustrated by the following three examples:

The FCU in the **Russian Federation** is very small, consisting of just one international humanitarian affairs officer and two local support staff.

The economic difficulties in that country, exacerbated by winter, led to a request in 1998 from the government for humanitarian assistance in certain sectors. OCHA deployed, for a six-month period, a humanitarian affairs officer to support the Resident Coordinator in responding to this request, by leading a series of inter-agency assessment missions throughout the country. The assessment process sparked debate between agencies both within and outside the UN system as to who might take the lead on different tasks, due to the overlapping mandates of some agencies.

If an assistance program for the Russian Federation is recommended and subsequently approved by the IASC Working Group, it is possible that an expanded FCU may be established in the future.

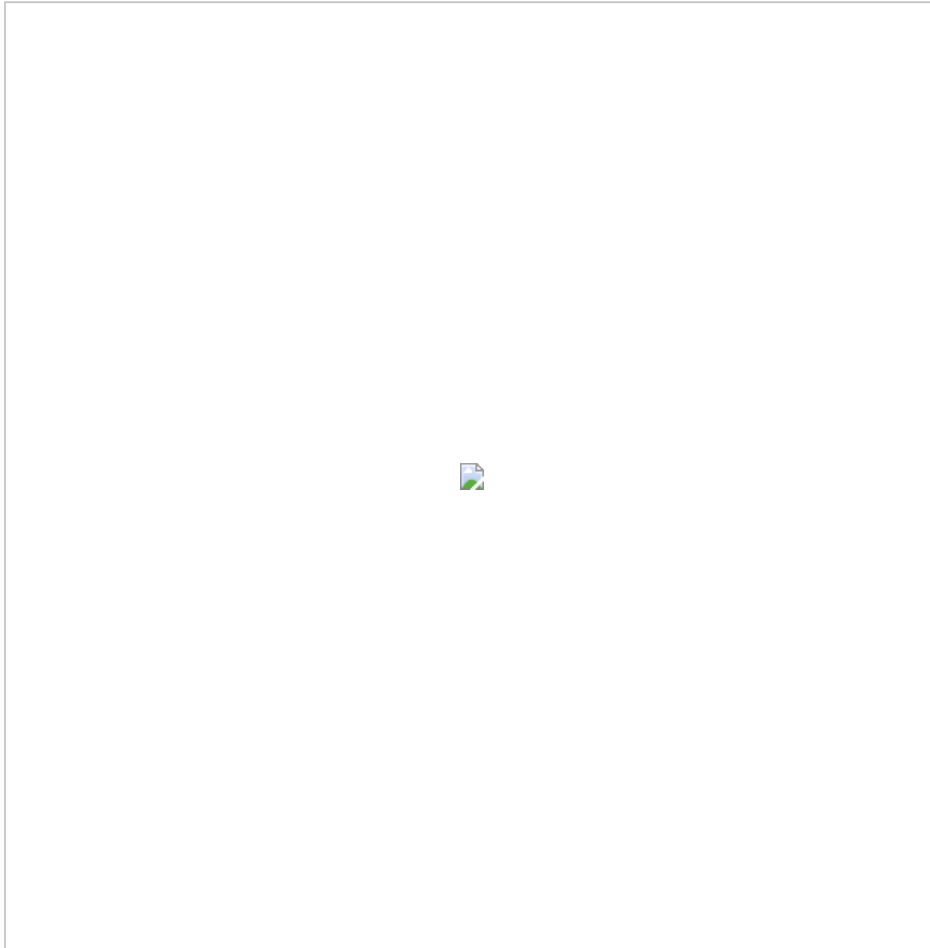
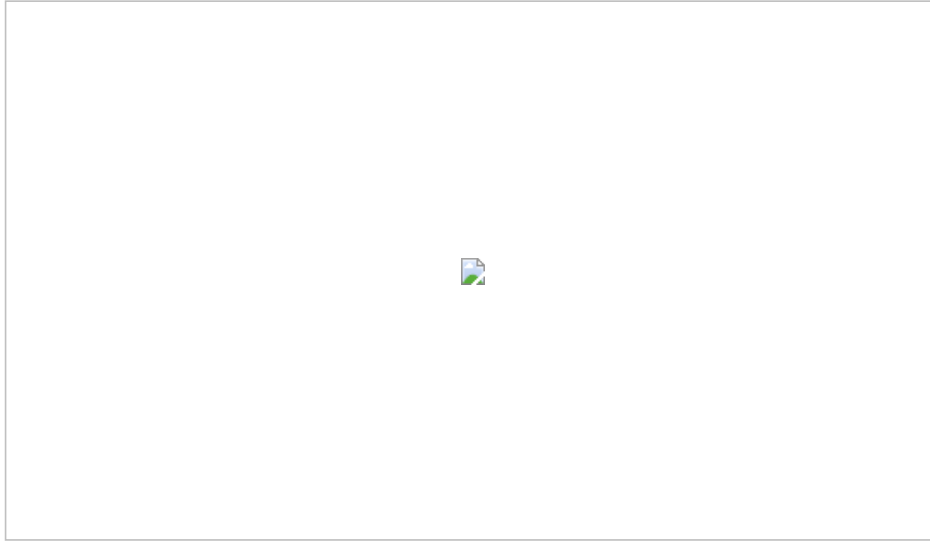
In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**, fighting across the country in 1998 exacerbated an already serious humanitarian situation with a regional perspective. The fighting resulted in the displacement of an estimated 500,000 people, serious human rights abuses, destruction of infrastructure and the near-complete devastation of an already crippled economy. DRC's proximity to war-ravaged Angola and the Republic of Congo created an additional source of instability, as well as an influx of refugees. A well coordinated, multi-sectoral response to the humanitarian disaster became essential.

The FCU in DRC is of medium size, but remains subject to change in light of prevailing security conditions. In 1998 the Humanitarian Coordination Unit (a joint venture with UNDP), in support of the Humanitarian Coordinator, comprised three international and four national staff members:

- Chief of Unit (UNDP), based in Kinshasa: responsible for managing the office, developing a work program, overall supervision, donor liaison, liaison with the government aimed at enhancing state capacity to establish its own humanitarian coordination office, and promoting concerted rehabilitation schemes.
- Humanitarian Affairs Officer (OCHA), based in Kinshasa: responsibilities include liaison with UN agencies and NGOs, collecting humanitarian data to establish a data base, organizing inter-agency assessment missions, and consolidating monthly inter-agency situation reports.
- Information Officer (OCHA), based in Goma: responsibilities include monitoring and analyzing the situation in the eastern provinces, preparing weekly situation reports, and liaising with local authorities, NGOs and UN agencies.
- Rehabilitation Officers (UNDP), based in Goma and Bukavu: responsibilities include monitoring and reviewing rehabilitation activities, and enhancing local capacity for crisis preparedness.
- National Expert (UNDP), based in Kinshasa: responsibilities include UNDP-related rehabilitation projects in DRC.
- Information Assistant (OCHA), based in Goma: responsibilities include assisting the Information Officer in Goma as required (for example, by compiling press reviews, monitoring radio news, and liaising with local NGOs and representatives of civil society).

In addition, a Senior Humanitarian Adviser was temporarily deployed and given the task of travelling throughout the country to define strategic issues and recommendations for future involvement in the DRC. This adviser reports to the UN Humanitarian Coordinator.

One of the largest Field Coordination Units is the **UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (UNOCHA)**, with 16 international and 58 national staff. Two decades of war and civil strife, exacerbated by several natural disasters, contributed to the creation of a complex emergency of the highest magnitude. The roles and responsibilities of UNOCHA are described below, in order to illustrate both the possible structure and strategies of OCHA in the field.



B. Whom does OCHA work with?

In complex emergencies, the Humanitarian Coordinator, with the support of field staff, must cooperate with a wide range of actors, in addition to the humanitarian organizations. In some cases it may be necessary to deal not only with the host government but also with opposition groups, in order to obtain access to needy people in disputed areas. Major donor governments are also often present in-country, as well as numerous international NGOs delivering assistance. There may also be a peacekeeping mission, either under the auspices of the UN, or a regional organization or a multinational force; a Special Representative or Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General; and other special negotiators representing regional organizations or important countries. Lastly, security issues are especially critical for humanitarian staff and operations, and the UN Designated Official for Security in-country is a key partner.

OCHA's main partners in the field may be summarized as follows:

1) The Affected Population

Since the UN's main goal in humanitarian action is to help civilian victims of conflicts and natural disasters, OCHA's relations with the affected population, or beneficiaries, are of prime importance.

The bulk of resources used to alleviate the impact of a complex emergency come from those people directly affected by it. These people are forced to cope with the emergency from an early stage. Indeed it is often only after they have exhausted much of their own resources, and have to turn increasingly to outsiders, that a substantial international response is initiated. In the last decade there has been increasing recognition of the difficulties and dangers associated with assisting people in camp settings, and a corresponding increase in efforts to provide assistance earlier, and of a type and scale that will allow people to remain in their own homes and communities, or if displaced, to be taken in by host families.

For international relief workers, factors such as perceived pressure for quick action and language difficulties may make it difficult to maintain an extensive and ongoing dialogue with the affected population. Such dialogue is however crucial for a number of reasons.

One reason is to help with forward planning and early warning of major changes in future humanitarian needs, such as new flows of displaced persons. The affected population themselves are often particularly well informed and astute regarding the impact of military and political factors. A second reason is in order to best plan and implement ongoing assistance. The affected population is well placed to identify priority needs, and effective mechanisms for distributing and utilizing the aid provided. Lastly, outside assistance must be provided in such a way as to ensure that the affected population maintains a sense of empowerment and control, and to avoid forcing them into a state of dependency. A process of consultation and information-sharing from the grass roots level up is important in achieving this.

Care must however be taken in evaluating who are bona fide leaders among the affected population, and in obtaining reliable and broad-based information. Often, those claiming leadership may be self-appointed or designated by a particular group, and may have a heavily political or personal agenda. Even more seriously, as in Eastern Zaire and Rwanda in 1994, mass murderers or other criminals may hide among the affected population in refugee and IDP camps.

Furthermore, international relief workers often obtain a high percentage of their information about the affected population, and the complex emergency in general, from their local staff. However, such staff tend to have a higher than normal proportion of young, educated men who can speak the expatriate language, and who are not necessarily representative of the wider population.

These limitations can be balanced to some extent by also consulting with traditional leaders. However, in many countries these tend to be older men who may have their own limitations, such as an inability to give high priority to some needs seen as important by women in their community. It is therefore important to promote ways of sampling views from a representative cross-section of the community, through culturally appropriate survey techniques as well as dialogue with official and traditional leaders. NGOs are often well experienced in such techniques.

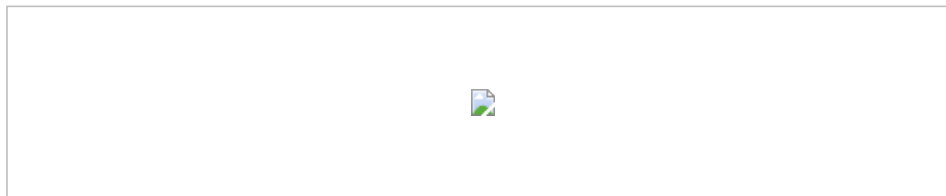
2) Government and Local Authorities

In most complex emergency operations, the main UN counterpart in-country is the government, with the exception of countries like Somalia where there is no national government in existence. In most countries, the government will establish a special ministry or other body charged with overall coordination of government humanitarian assistance, and with liaising with international assistance agencies. When such a government coordination structure exists, this is an important counterpart for UN humanitarian coordination staff. Other important government ministries for coordination staff typically include Foreign Affairs, Interior (which usually includes police and security forces, and sometimes the military), and Defense. In addition, UN agencies normally have close links with the line ministries dealing with their speciality, for example UNICEF and WHO with the Ministry of Health.

At the field level, it is not unusual for local authorities, such as Regional Governors or local military commanders, to have considerable authority and some degree of independence from the capital. An important task of OCHA field staff is to ensure that such authorities are well informed about the objectives, principles and implementation of humanitarian assistance, both of the UN and the international community as a whole.

In many relief operations, UN assistance may be provided to populations outside government-controlled areas (for example those held by opposition or militia groups). In such cases, the provision of humanitarian assistance does not confer political legitimacy on such opposition

groups. OCHA field staff working in such areas must ensure that they remain well briefed by the Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator and relevant senior staff on the political sensitivities of the particular situation. Dealing appropriately with the political realities on the ground may not be so easy in practice, however, as attested to by one former OCHA humanitarian officer in the field:



3) United Nations

a) *UN Disaster Management Team and the UN Agencies*

The Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator works closely with, and provides leadership to, the UN Disaster Management Team (DMT) in the field, which includes representatives of the UN humanitarian agencies present in the affected country (the Team may also be expanded to include others as appropriate).

Part of the responsibility of Resident Coordinators and UN agency heads in-country is to ensure that their DMT is already in place and functioning at the early warning phase of a complex emergency.

During complex emergencies, the DMT is the main in-country mechanism for UN agencies to work out their common humanitarian aid policies and programs, and to coordinate their specific actions. The DMT should regularly convene joint meetings with representatives of the larger humanitarian assistance community, e.g. NGOs, the Red Cross Movement and international organizations such as IOM. These larger meetings generally lead to the establishment of sectoral sub-committees, for example on health and water/ sanitation. Often the relevant UN agencies chair such sub-committees, and play a leading role in sectoral coordination. One important role of OCHA Field Coordination Units is to provide the necessary secretariat support to the DMT's work.

There are six UN agencies that are normally part of a UN relief effort: UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, FAO and WHO. With the exception of UNHCR in most situations, these agencies generally have development-oriented programs in-country prior to the emergency. Their official roles in complex emergencies, in a nutshell, are as follows:

UN Development Programme

Although UNDP manages a wide range of programs in furtherance of its broad goal "to support all national and international efforts to achieve sustainable human development for the world's peoples" it also plays a role in humanitarian emergencies. UNDP can often provide administrative, logistic, communications and other support for OCHA, the international relief community and the UN's Disaster Management Team. The Emergency Response Division of UNDP is responsible for coordinating such UNDP assistance.

UNDP plays a significant role in the transition from relief to development, helping prepare the foundation for coherent recovery programs. In the post crisis-environment, UNDP helps to develop programs for rehabilitation. UNDP's work also includes building national government's capacity to prepare for, mitigate, manage, and respond to crisis. In performing these functions, UNDP supports the efforts of transitional authorities, governments and special interests, as well as donors and the relief and development community.

UNDP also contains the UN Volunteers Programme. UNV is mandated to assist the UN system in collaboration with various UN agencies. Originally focusing just on development support, and thus coming under the auspices of UNDP, UNV in recent years has also given special attention to providing experienced volunteer specialist professionals to work in relief operations, including within governments of developing countries, UN agencies and NGOs.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees

UNHCR is mandated to lead and coordinate international assistance and protection for refugees. UNHCR's primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees – i.e. people who have fled their country due to a well-founded fear of persecution.

The organization strives to ensure that everyone can exercise the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge in another state, and to return home voluntarily. By assisting refugees to return to their own country or settle in another country, UNHCR also seeks lasting solutions to their plight. International refugee law provides an essential framework of principles for UNHCR's humanitarian activities.

In some cases UNHCR also undertakes assistance programs for internally displaced persons.

UN Children's Fund

UNICEF is mandated to advocate and work for the protection of children's rights, to help the young meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. In this it is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF works to ensure special protection for the most disadvantaged children – victims of war (including child soldiers), disasters, extreme poverty, all forms of violence and exploitation, and those with disabilities.

In emergencies, UNICEF's Office of Emergency Programmes is the focal point for emergency assistance, humanitarian polices, staff security and support to UNICEF offices in the field, as well as strategic coordination with humanitarian partners both within and outside the UN system – including OCHA. UNICEF's New York-based Operations Center provides a 24 hour emergency communications system, that may be accessed by UN agencies when there are concerns for staff security in the field.

World Food Programme

WFP provides food to sustain victims of emergencies and disasters, to improve the nutrition of the most vulnerable people, and to promote the self-reliance of poor people and communities. WFP's dual relief and development mandate allows it to play a major role in the continuum from emergency relief to rehabilitation and development, where priority is given to disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation, as well as post-conflict rehabilitation activities. WFP's large-scale food aid operations has led it to develop a highly specialized and cost-effective logistics capability, including conventional surface and air transport, as well as barge and airdrop operations. In complex emergencies WFP plays an important role in the coordination of food aid and logistics, through the collection and dissemination of information on global food aid deliveries and requirements and through in-country coordination structures. WFP also has a high level of expertise in the area of emergency telecommunication, in particular "deep-field" connectivity, and may in certain situation be in a position to address the telecommunications needs of other UN agencies in-country.

World Health Organization

The WHO is essentially a development organization, but one that may play an important role in emergency situations. The WHO Division of Emergency and Humanitarian Action is responsible for assisting in the coordination of the international response to complex emergencies and natural disasters in the health field, in close cooperation with other agencies. In this context, WHO provides expert advice on epidemiological surveillance, control of communicable diseases, public health information and health emergency training. Other emergency relief activities include the fielding of emergency assessment missions, organizational support for health emergency coordination, provision of specialized drugs and medical supplies, and stockpiling and standardizing specialized emergency health supplies. WHO's emergency preparedness activities include policy-making and planning, awareness-building, and the dissemination of technical advice, focusing particularly on training activities in the health sector.

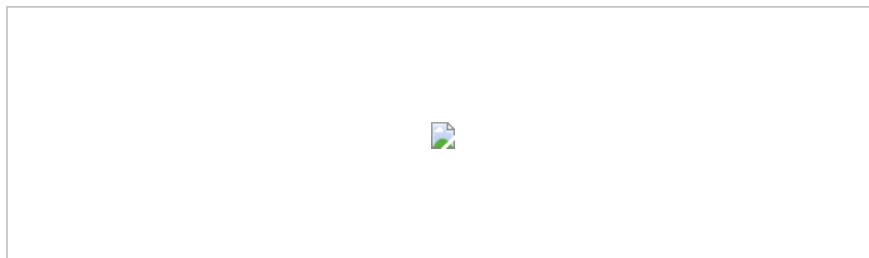
Food and Agriculture Organization

FAO is mandated to raise levels of nutrition and standards of living, to improve agricultural productivity, and to better the condition of rural populations. The organization works to alleviate poverty and hunger by promoting agricultural development, improved nutrition and the pursuit of food security – i.e. the access of all people at all times to the food they need for an active and healthy life.

In addition to its development programs, FAO also plays a major role in dealing with food and agricultural emergencies. In relief operations, it focuses on the provision of agricultural inputs, such as seeds, farming tools, and emergency veterinary services. This involves working closely with relevant NGOs, and in some countries with UNICEF. Furthermore, the organization operates an early warning system for famine that assesses shortfalls in food production. It also conducts joint assessments with WFP in countries of concern to assess food security and food assistance needs.

In practice, coordination between OCHA and these agencies does not always go as smoothly as it might. This may be due to differences in interpretation over which agency is mandated to take the lead in different phases of the emergency, and the potentially conflicting loyalties of a Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator who is also the in-country representative of a particular UN agency.

One senior OCHA official, who has spent many years working in the field, makes this comment:



b) *Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General*

A Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) is sometimes appointed by the UN Secretary-General to act on his behalf in emergencies which are "complex or of exceptional magnitude" (as set out in the Standard Directives for SRSGs). In practice, the appointment of an SRSG is normally reserved for those complex emergencies which require UN involvement in major political negotiations and/ or when UN peacekeeping forces are deployed.

When an SRSG is appointed, he/ she is recognized as having overall authority with regard to UN operations in the designated country. If heading a peacekeeping operation, the SRSG reports to the Secretary-General through the USG for Peacekeeping Operations or, if heading a political mission, through the USG for Political Affairs.

At the same time the Humanitarian Coordinator is recognized as having the sole mandate for coordination of humanitarian assessment/ response, under the SRSG's strategic lead. The SRSG recognizes that mandate by ensuring that all concerned agencies and NGOs deal with his office through the HC. HCs report in parallel to the SRSG and the ERC: in particular to the SRSG on the day-to-day functioning of operational coordination, but remaining accountable to the ERC for coordination, programming and policy in relation to humanitarian assistance.

This relationship was redefined in this way in April 1999 because of the inherent tension between two potentially conflicting policy goals where there are political and humanitarian elements of UN involvement in an emergency (and therefore between the SRSG and HC in a particular country or region). These policy goals are the need for the UN to achieve a substantially greater level of strategic coordination between political and assistance elements of its response to crises (illustrated by lessons learned from such operations as Bosnia, Rwanda, Somalia and the former Zaire), balanced with the UN's mandate to deliver humanitarian assistance on the fundamental principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality – i.e. to respond to victims of armed conflict solely on the basis of need.

(See Note of Guidance on Relations between Representatives of the Emergency Relief Coordinator and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, April 1999.)

In certain circumstances the Secretary-General may appoint a Special Envoy, who would have a similar political mandate to that of a SRSG (but who would not head a peacekeeping mission). A Special Envoy is sometimes deployed for a specific mission or to address a particular issue (e.g. in the Great Lakes region, to participate in peace negotiations for the Democratic Republic of Congo).

c) UN Designated Official for Security

In each country where the UN is present, the Secretary-General, in consultation with the executive heads of all UN agencies, appoints one senior official with the title of Designated Official for Security. The Designated Official (DO) is responsible for ensuring security and safety of UN personnel and their eligible dependents in the country. In this regard the DO is accountable and responsible to the Secretary-General, through the UN Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD), to whom s/he must report all security matters. In the majority of countries, the UN Resident Coordinator serves as the DO.

The DO will constitute a Security Management Team (SMT) to advise him/ her on all security-related matters. The composition and size of the team may vary, although most representatives of UN agencies, programs and funds at the Duty Station are expected to participate. Representatives of NGOs and international organizations may also be invited to participate. This team will assist the DO in preparing a Security Plan for the country and, in times of crisis, will meet frequently to review security arrangements.

In addition the DO will, where there is a security phase in effect, grant security clearance for UN staff and their dependants, if applicable, to enter the country whether on mission or on assignment; ensure that all staff members and their dependants are briefed on security measures in place at the duty station; ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the security of locally recruited staff members; and given appropriate security directives to staff members in the expectation that they will be followed.

At duty stations where a full-time security officer is not warranted, one international staff member will serve as the Field Security Officer. For those duty stations where security is tenuous, a full-time Field Security Officer will be appointed to assist the Designated Official. This individual plays a key role in organizing and implementing relocations/ evacuations of UN staff and their eligible dependants in times of crisis.

(See 'Security Coordination' in Chapter 6, and Annex IV for the five UN security phases.)

d) UN Peacekeeping Operations

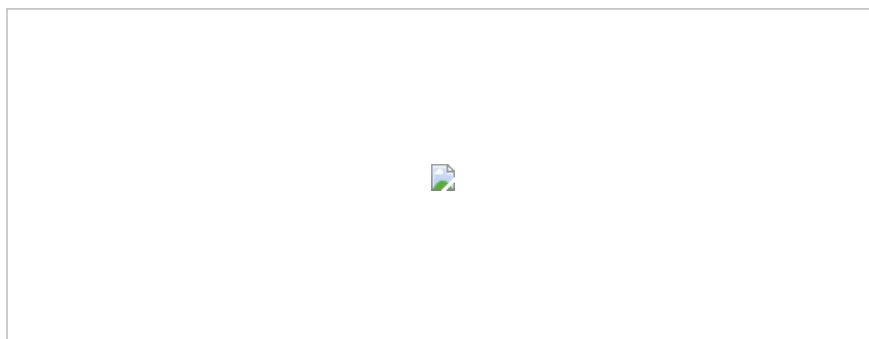
While humanitarian assistance is provided in almost all complex emergency situations, UN peacekeeping operations remain more limited in number. When such peacekeeping operations are initiated, they generally start up later than the humanitarian assistance efforts. This is due to the need for first obtaining a Security Council resolution authorizing the operation, and the time required to obtain and deploy the necessary troops, weapons and logistics support. However, in some cases, such as in Rwanda in 1994, UN peacekeeping forces may already be on the ground when a new emergency occurs in the context of a pre-existing one. Each UN peace-keeping operation is unique, established with a mandate and organizational structure tailored to a specific conflict or situation.

UN peacekeeping has traditionally relied on the consent of opposing parties and involves the deployment of peacekeepers to implement an agreement approved by those parties (under Chapter VI of the UN Charter). In the case of enforcement action, the Security Council gives member states the authority to take all necessary measures to achieve a stated objective (under Chapter VII of the UN Charter). Consent of the parties is not necessarily required. It has been used in very few cases – including the Gulf War, in Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Albania. None of these enforcement operations was under UN control. Instead they were directed by a single country or a group of countries. A NATO-led multinational force succeeded the UN peacekeeping operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

UN peacekeeping forces can play important roles regarding humanitarian assistance. One is the provision of security, including for relief convoys. While this is sometimes controversial, (and some relief agencies contend that armed escorts often tend to draw fire more than they deter or protect from it), in some situations it may simply be impossible to operate without such protection. Peacekeeping forces can also provide major logistics support to relief efforts, especially in terms of truck and air transport.

On the downside there is often an inherent tension between humanitarian and military operations due to their different objectives, roles, responsibilities and operating styles. This may be attributed to a basic lack of understanding between two essentially different cultures. In some situations this tension may be alleviated through the establishment of a Civil-Military Operations Center (CMOC). The CMOC is staffed with military and civilian personnel, and works in support of the Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator. UN humanitarian coordination staff may also help to resolve such misunderstanding – for example by convening coordination meetings where humanitarian and military staff can work out issues of common concern, or by incorporating military liaison officers into the humanitarian coordination structures.

One approach towards this kind of problem-solving is described by a former OCHA field adviser:



4) Donor Governments

Many donor governments to international relief efforts have embassy representation in-country. Most of the larger donors usually have specialists within their embassies that focus on relief efforts.

While UN agencies will, of course, maintain their own direct donor contacts, meetings between the UN agencies as a group and with the main donors are generally arranged via the Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator. Dialogue with donors in-country also takes the form of individual meetings, and of visits by donor representatives to field sites. The Office of the Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator should encourage and facilitate such field visits, including providing support if needed.

An important role of Field Coordination Unit staff is to provide donors with updated information, especially regarding outstanding assistance needs, through the provision of Situation Reports and other documents (see Chapter 5 on the Consolidated Appeals Process). Unit staff are also responsible for ensuring that donors receive updated information on contributions they have provided.

5) NGOs, Inter-Governmental Organizations (IOs) and the Red Cross Movement>

a) Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

In most complex emergency situations OCHA will liaise closely with both international and local NGOs in the field.

International NGOs are private, non-profit organizations that operate in more than one country. Most have their headquarters in Western countries, although an increasing number are based in developing countries. Some NGOs are mandated exclusively for the provision of humanitarian relief (e.g. Medecins Sans Frontieres), whilst others normally have development-oriented programs (e.g. Care International, Oxfam, Save the Children Fund) but will become involved in humanitarian relief operations when a crisis occurs. The humanitarian relief component of major international NGOs is in part funded by private sources, and donor governments may use them to channel large amounts of humanitarian assistance. Some international NGOs also receive funding via UN agencies, as implementing partners of the UN agency in question. NGOs' participation in the UN inter-agency consolidated appeals process is crucial, as it allows collaborative programming to be undertaken within the large humanitarian community.

Local NGOs operate only in their country of origin, and may have a wide range of programs, often with a development perspective. These organizations may act as implementing partner with international NGOs, and may be funded and supported by them (and in some cases by international donors).

b) Inter-Governmental Organizations

Inter-governmental organizations are ones that exist outside the UN system, and which have executive boards composed of national governments. One important example is the International Organization for Migration (IOM). IOM arranges resettlement and repatriation for refugees, usually working in close collaboration with UNHCR, and focusing particularly on the transportation of such persons. It also assists with resettlement and repatriation of migrants – for example the return home of substantial numbers of 'guest workers' displaced out of Iraq into neighboring countries prior to the Gulf War.

Another important example of an inter-governmental organization is the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO). ECHO has the task of administering humanitarian aid on behalf of the European Union (the biggest donor of humanitarian aid in the world) to non-European Union countries. This aid goes to victims of both man-made crises and natural disasters. In carrying out this task, ECHO works in collaboration with more than 170 organizations worldwide – including OCHA, UN agencies such as UNICEF, WFP and UNHCR, as well as the Red Cross family and NGOs dedicated to humanitarian causes.

c) The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), based in Switzerland, is the founding institution of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. This Movement includes three branches: ICRC, the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies), and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). All three branches have distinct tasks:

(i) ICRC

ICRC's mandate is to operate in areas of armed conflict and internal disturbance. It originally focused mainly on protection work, such as promotion among the conflicting parties of the various Geneva Conventions and Protocols, regarding such matters as the treatment of civilians and prisoners of war. In recent years, the provision of assistance in complex emergencies has become a very large component as well, especially inside conflict zones (and on both sides of conflict lines).

ICRC was originally a Swiss organization, in part to more effectively promote its fundamental principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence. It now incorporates staff of different nationalities in its assistance efforts (e.g. doctors and mechanics). However, its Delegates, who handle protection matters and the more sensitive negotiations regarding providing assistance, remain almost exclusively Swiss.

(ii) National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

National Societies operate in more than 160 countries around the world (using the Red Crescent symbol in Islamic countries). These Societies act as auxiliaries to the public authorities in their own countries. They provide a range of services from disaster relief, health and social assistance to first aid courses. During wartime, National Societies may support the army medical services

(iii) International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The Federation (or IFRC) works around the world to support the actions of the various National Societies. It assists with coordination of international assistance provided via the Red Cross Movement to victims of natural disasters, and to victims of manmade disasters outside of conflict areas (where ICRC takes the lead).

So how do all these humanitarian actors come together in practice? The potential complexity of OCHA strategic coordination in the field may be illustrated by the example of Afghanistan where OCHA comprises some 70 field staff. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (UNOCHA) has been presented in some detail in the earlier section on field coordination units. For further background information see Annex VII on 'Further Reading'.

4. Humanitarian Coordination at the International Level

At the headquarters level there are two main OCHA approaches to humanitarian coordination within the UN system, and these are reflected in the dual responsibilities of the Head of OCHA as Emergency Relief Coordinator and as Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs in the UN Secretariat.

As Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), the Head of OCHA is responsible for coordination among the humanitarian community. The ERC achieves this in part through his chairmanship of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which brings together many of the major international humanitarian entities, both within and outside the UN system.

As Under-Secretary-General (USG) on the other hand, the Head of OCHA is the principal adviser to the Secretary-General on humanitarian issues. The USG provides a link between the humanitarian community and the inter-governmental organs of the UN (the General Assembly and the Security Council), as well as the political, security, developmental and human rights elements of the UN system. This is achieved partly through the USG's role as Convenor of the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA), as well as through his chairmanship of the IASC. The ECHA provides a forum for the humanitarian community and the political and peacekeeping departments of the UN Secretariat to share perspectives on humanitarian crises and issues.

The main actors within the UN system at headquarters level with important humanitarian roles may therefore be summarized under the following headings:

A. Secretary-General

The Secretary-General is appointed by the General Assembly voting on the recommendation of the Security Council, normally for a term of five years. The UN Charter empowers him to bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which, in his opinion, threatens international peace and security. The Charter describes the Secretary-General as the "chief administrative officer" of the organization.

With regard to humanitarian assistance, OCHA liaises closely with the Office of the Secretary-General, ensuring that the SG is kept up-to-date on relevant humanitarian developments, especially issues of pressing concern such as lack of access for humanitarian aid in a particular country.

In the context of complex emergencies the Secretary-General may dispatch Special Representatives or Special Envoys to a country or region in crisis (see Chapter 3). Although their focus is usually political or peacekeeping operations, they are also required to recognize and respect the mandate of the Humanitarian Coordinator in-country. At headquarters, OCHA may brief a Special Envoy or Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the humanitarian situation in the country or region he/she is due to travel to.

B. General Assembly

The General Assembly is the main UN deliberative organ, composed of representatives of all 185 Member States.

Although most of its decisions are non-binding recommendations, the Assembly adopts instruments such as conventions that are legally binding on the signatories of those conventions. These have included instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Status of Refugees.

At the beginning of each regular session (which usually runs from September until December), the Assembly holds a general debate in which Member States express their views on a wide range of matters of international concern. These include reviews of specific complex emergency situations and humanitarian assistance efforts, as well as passing Resolutions on systematic matters regarding UN humanitarian assistance (such as UN coordination mechanisms). When such a review takes place, Desk Officers at the Emergency Liaison Branch (ELB) in New York will be in close contact with OCHA staff in the field, and will pass on relevant information to the Under-Secretary-General (USG) who may brief the General Assembly.

OCHA also contributes the humanitarian section of the Secretary-General's annual report to the General Assembly (effectively a progress report on the work of the various components of the UN Secretariat).

C. Security Council

The Security Council has primary responsibility, under the UN Charter, for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council has 15 members, five of which are permanent and have veto powers (i.e. China, France, Russia, U.K. and U.S.A.).

When a complaint concerning a threat to peace is brought before it, the Council's first action is usually to recommend that the parties try to settle the dispute by peaceful means. It may also investigate in order to determine the nature and gravity of the situation. It may appoint special representatives or may request the Secretary-General to do so. In some cases, it may recommend appropriate action for a peaceful settlement.

When a dispute leads to fighting, the Council's first concern is to bring the fighting to an end as soon as possible. It may issue a cease-fire directive, and send observers to monitor it. It may also send UN peacekeeping forces to help reduce tensions while negotiations are taking place.

Security Council resolutions will often have a humanitarian component. For example, in its resolution of 26 February 1999 that confirmed the

withdrawal of the UN Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA), the Security Council called upon “all concerned to cooperate with the UN humanitarian assistance activities throughout the national territory of Angola on the basis of the principles of neutrality and non-discrimination and to guarantee the security and freedom of movement of humanitarian personnel”. In this regard the Security Council may be briefed by the Under-Secretary-General or the Secretary General himself, who in turn will have been briefed by the ELB (based on consultations with OCHA in the field). This now happens on a regular basis.

Failure to comply with decisions of the Council could result in enforcement measures, such as economic sanctions (see Chapter 7), or even collective military action.

D. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), established under the authority of the General Assembly, has the key function of serving as the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, and for formulating policy recommendations to Member States and the UN system. It also makes or initiates studies and reports, and makes recommendations, on international cultural, educational, and health-related matters, as well promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

ECOSOC generally holds one five-week substantive session each year, alternating between New York and Geneva. Since 1998 the Council has incorporated a humanitarian affairs segment. OCHA and its humanitarian partners (both in and outside the UN system) contribute to the ECOSOC report that is debated during this annual session. ECOSOC will subsequently issue policy recommendations to the participating humanitarian organizations. In 1999 the theme of the humanitarian segment was strengthening humanitarian coordination, focussing on issues such as the ‘development gap’ (see Chapter 7).

E. UN Secretariat

The UN Secretariat is composed of a variety of entities working in such fields as political and economic analysis, social development, peacekeeping operations and others – all of which are directly accountable to the Secretary-General (as opposed to the UN humanitarian agencies, which, while ultimately responsible to the Secretary-General, report directly to various types of boards of directors composed of UN members states). OCHA itself is part of the Secretariat, and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs reports to the Secretary-General. Parallel to its coordination efforts in the field (described in Chapter 3), within the UN Secretariat OCHA cooperates most closely with the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the UN Security Coordinator and – additionally – the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

F. Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), chaired by the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), is a primary mechanism through which OCHA discharges its coordination functions at headquarters level. IASC facilitates inter-agency decision making in response to complex emergencies primarily by developing and agreeing on system-wide humanitarian policies; allocating responsibilities among agencies in humanitarian programs; advocating common humanitarian principles to parties outside the IASC; identifying areas where gaps in mandates or lack of operational capacity exist; and building consensus between humanitarian agencies on system-wide humanitarian issues.

The IASC is formed by the Executive Heads of the following agencies (many of which are described from a field perspective in Chapter 3):

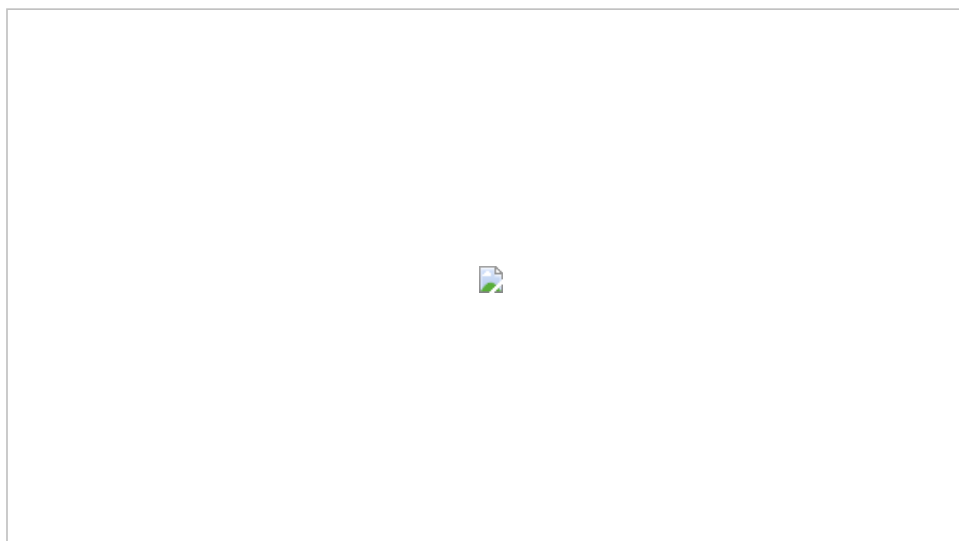
FULL MEMBERS	STANDING INVITATION
OCHA	International Committee of the Red Cross
UNICEF	International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies
UNDP	International Organization for Migration
FAO	Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response
WFP	INTERACTION
WHO	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
UNHCR	Special Representative of the Secretary General on IDPs
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
WBANK	World Bank

The IASC responds to new or rapidly changing emergencies through frequent consultations between the ERC, his deputy and senior executives of the member agencies.

At the heads of agency level, the IASC meets formally at least twice a year and deliberates on issues brought to its attention by the ERC and by the IASC Working Group (IASC-WG). The IASC-WG, formed by senior representatives of the same agencies, meets four to six times a year. Its responsibilities include formulating the agenda for IASC meetings; making non-strategic policy and operational decisions; endorsing the yearly work plan; and preparing options and recommendations for the IASC on strategic policy and major operational issues. The IASC-WG also acts as the inter-agency forum for consultations on all aspects related to Internally Displaced Persons.

IASC Sub-Working Groups are created on an *ad hoc* basis to discuss issues at a technical level. Their work often forms the basis for IASC-WG discussions, and ultimately, for IASC decisions.

The relevance of the IASC “process” is described here by the current head of OCHA:



G. Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA)

The Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs is one of the four Executive Committees created by the Secretary General in the framework of UN reform, with the aim of enhancing the coordination within the UN system. Chaired by the head of OCHA in his capacity as Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, and composed of senior executives of various agencies and departments, ECHA meets on a monthly basis in New York.

ECHA’s membership includes various UN Departments that add a political/ military dimension to humanitarian consultations. It works closely with the Executive Committee on Peace and Security (ECPS) and the Development Group (DG), collaborating on developing the concept of Strategic Frameworks as a tool to define the principles, goals and institutional arrangements for a coherent and effective UN response to a particular country in crisis.

The following UN agencies and departments are ECHA members:

ECHA MEMBERS
UNDP
UNICEF
UNHCR
WFP
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
Department for Peace Keeping Operations
Department for Political Affairs
UNRWA
Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children in Armed Conflicts

ECHA is therefore geared towards supporting the Secretary General and taking quick, executive decisions that are binding in the UN context. These decisions relate to humanitarian situations in which political, peacekeeping and security concerns are predominant.

The joint IASC/ ECHA Secretariat of OCHA has a strategic role of facilitating the work of IASC and ECHA as effective, action-oriented and well-coordinated decision-making bodies. The Secretariat, based in New York, is answerable directly to the USG for Humanitarian Affairs. A liaison office is maintained in Geneva, answerable directly to the Director of OCHA Geneva, with operational responsibility for facilitating the IASC-WG meetings.

5. Funding and the CAP

An effective and well-coordinated response to complex emergencies depends heavily on the ability of the international community to raise the necessary resources. In view of limited donor support however, in recent years it has become necessary to address massive humanitarian needs with a declining availability of resources. This has required improvements to be made not only in the design of fundraising tools, but in the

strategic programming of a system-wide response to emergencies.

For specific complex emergency situations, OCHA solicits donor support mainly through the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP), that encompasses the emergency relief requirements of all relevant operational agencies, and to a much lesser extent through the Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF). Both these mechanisms were established by the General Assembly Resolution 46/182 of 1991, providing the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) with the means to promote effective and appropriate responses to emergencies.

In the 1999 CAP, the grand total of funding requirements for the participating agencies in complex emergencies was US\$1,735 million. As of April 1999 there was still a shortfall of US\$1,387 million.

The CAP is also the main tool for funding OCHA's own requirements. OCHA has a regular budget, plus extrabudgetary requirements. In OCHA's 1998-99 biennial budget, the estimated extrabudgetary requirements for OCHA Field Coordination Units alone totaled US\$27.7 million. As of April 1999 there was still a shortfall of US\$8.1 million.

In order to meet such requirements OCHA is heavily dependent on voluntary contributions from States and other donor organizations, such as the European Union (see Annex V for the main donors to OCHA's coordination activities in 1998).

A The Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP)

The CAP is based on an overall strategy that enables the UN system to set clear goals and define priorities in a given country, and provides a framework for joint programming, common prioritization and joint resource mobilization.

OCHA provides a framework for humanitarian organizations – including UN agencies, international organizations and NGOs – to prepare the appeals, and monitors the receipt and use of contributions. At headquarters level, CERB in Geneva takes the lead role in this (see Chapter 6 for field support provided by CERB). In the field, the preparation, implementation, monitoring and review of the CAP is primarily the responsibility of the Humanitarian Coordinator, working closely with the Country Team (including the OCHA Field Coordination Unit).

The process of planning, preparing and tracking contributions to the CAPs has evolved considerably. At first, preparation of the CAP was not much more than a consolidation of individual agency and sectoral projects. Even at that stage, however, the CAP improved upon the prior practice of each agency producing its own appeal, with little or no consultation. The 1994 IASC CAP Guidelines – that clearly define the CAP as a programming process rather than just an appeal – remain endorsed, although certain aspects need to be updated (e.g. pre-disaster planning is not considered part of the CAP).

More recently, the CAP has become not only a more efficient fund-raising mechanism but a much improved coordination tool. The [1999 Technical Guidelines for the Consolidated Appeals Process](#) provide a framework for the Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP), the consolidated inter-agency appeal itself, and strategic monitoring reports including mid term reviews. The Guidelines also provide practical guidance to Humanitarian Coordinators and Country Teams on how to prepare and finalize the required documents in the process (e.g. the format for reports).

The [Common Humanitarian Action Plan \(CHAP\)](#) is a collaborative effort between UN agency field offices and their headquarters, as well as between agencies and OCHA in the field (for which the primary responsibility lies with the Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator). The CHAP is a coordinated program of interventions based on an agreed strategy designed to achieve shared goals. This strategy is made through common analysis of the political, economic and security constraints in the context of the humanitarian program; analysis of projected humanitarian needs both in the short and longer term, based on sectors, identifying any potential gaps; analysis of the competencies and capacity of the humanitarian community; and a statement of the goals and objectives (again based on sectors) of the humanitarian community. The strategy also includes a common analysis of how the transition will be made from relief activities to the reconstruction, rehabilitation and development activities carried out by development agencies.

Prioritization of needs is essential in the CHAP, as it is in the overall appeals process (particularly from a donor viewpoint). An updated CHAP becomes the starting point for the actual Consolidated Appeal document.

Details of how the CHAP should be compiled are set out in the Technical Guidelines for the CAP.

The [Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal](#) itself derives from the CHAP and is normally launched on a yearly basis. The main task of the team that prepares the appeal (usually the in-country team with external assistance where necessary), is to develop a set of funding requirements that reflect the strategic plan's most urgent components. Prioritization and integration are essential.

The Technical Guidelines for the CAP provide practical information on how a Consolidated Appeal document should actually be put together, in terms of content and format. The main components are the updated CHAP, a re-statement of the prioritization criteria outlined in the CHAP, a summary of sectoral goals and objectives, and details of individual projects/ programs by sector (including how they relate to other projects in that sector). The objectives and budgetary requirements for individual projects must show consistency.

In the case of an unusually urgent situation, it may sometimes become necessary to launch ["Flash" or Interim Appeals](#) to generate emergency funds, prior to the finalization of a consolidated inter-agency appeal. These are prepared over the course of a few weeks and usually cover emergency requirements for only a few months.

In order to support urgent funding needs of agencies and organizations in-country, the Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator, on the advice of the assessment missions (among others), may request that funds from the [Central Emergency Revolving Fund \(CERF\)](#) be used (described below). The requirements presented in the Flash Appeal, and funds raised, will subsequently be fully incorporated into the CAP.

In terms of post-Appeal follow-up activities, the 1999 Technical Guidelines set out a framework for strategic monitoring and reporting on the CHAP as a whole. The aim of this is, *inter alia*, to provide updated information to the humanitarian community, donors and other partners, and ultimately to help ensure that humanitarian needs are met in a timely and appropriate manner.

Reporting is usually in the form of a Mid-Term Review and, particularly in large-scale complex emergencies, a Quarterly report. The content and format of these reports is detailed in the Technical Guidelines.

At headquarters, CERB tracks and reports on donor contributions. It issues monthly updates of contributions to all emergency operations, with detailed and summary financial information, including on the Internet through ReliefWeb (www.reliefweb.int).

(See Annex VI for the Generic Process Timetable for a Calendar Year, which provides a good overview of how all these procedures fit together.)

B. The Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF)

The CERF is a cash-flow mechanism, under the authority of the Emergency Relief Coordinator and administered at the New York headquarters, to enable an immediate response to an emergency. The CERF may be used at the very outset of a crisis and, in exceptional cases, during later phases to assist agencies with cash-flow problems before donor contributions are available. The mechanism requires that agencies borrowing from the fund reimburse the amount loaned within a specific target period, not to exceed one year.

The CERF is primarily used as funding mechanism by UN operational agencies. OCHA is authorized to access only the interest on the fund. This interest may, for instance, be used to help overcome delays in obtaining budget codes when deploying cost-shared Field Security Officers, and their related equipment, to the field.

Since its inception in 1992 up to March 1999, the fund was accessed 55 times, with a total of US\$133.3 million disbursed (of which US\$124.7 was reimbursed). Loans to UNICEF, UNHCR and WFP account for approximately 80% of this total. Loans to OCHA have usually been below US\$500,000.

6. Services & Tools Available to Support the Field in its Coordination Functions

A. CERB and ELB

Knowing when to turn to Geneva and when to turn to New York for advice or support on particular issues in the field may not always be straightforward. While the reform of DHA in 1997 led to the strengthening of the Geneva-based emergency response function, the allocation of headquarters field support responsibilities to offices on opposite sides of the Atlantic has sometimes caused confusion. This resulted, in November 1998, in a clarification by the ERC of the division of responsibilities between the two branches of OCHA dealing intensively and exclusively with complex emergencies – the Complex Emergency Response Branch (CERB) in Geneva, and the Emergency Liaison Branch (ELB) in New York.

The Complex Emergency Response Branch (CERB)

As indicated in Chapter 2, the CERB in Geneva is the principle focal point for day-to-day contacts with the field. The initial point of contact at CERB will usually be with a Desk Officer within one of the regional units.

The Desk Officer should be able to provide field staff with regular, practical advice on a wide range of issues, including day-to-day administrative or personnel problems; strategic planning, monitoring and reporting; appeals and the CAP, as well as donor relations.

Amongst the CERB's specific responsibilities are supporting field coordination through the recruitment and deployment of necessary personnel, including their administration and servicing (in collaboration with the Finance and Administrative Section). Also with the FAS, CERB has the task of ensuring a quick field response on basic financial and administrative issues including logistics and other arrangements for the field.

On strategic planning, CERB is responsible for ensuring the establishment and smooth running of a field-based strategic planning process. This entails the production of regular and systematized UN common action plans, and following their execution, monitoring and evaluation. (including, for example, the Common Humanitarian Action Plan described in Chapter 5). Included here is providing advice on the development of contingency plans in advance of a complex emergency, and where necessary drawing up and executing such plans, and carrying out fact-finding and needs assessment missions.

CERB is further responsible for drawing up and launching appeals and other documents associated with complex emergencies, including consolidated inter-agency appeals, mid-term reviews, and monitoring and evaluation reports. Related to this, CERB also acts as OCHA's main donor relations service by mobilizing actual and potential donors for the CAP as well as for OCHA's own needs.

Lastly, CERB's support of the OCHA New York Office includes supporting IAU's role on early warning, and providing input to policy and advocacy issues at the Policy, Advocacy and Information Division.

The Emergency Liaison Branch (ELB)

The ELB is the link between the New York headquarters and Humanitarian Coordinators serving in complex emergencies. Like the CERB, it is also divided into two sections: Africa, and Asia, Europe and Latin America. The Desk Officers here support the ERC and Humanitarian Coordinators on issues that have humanitarian, political, security and military implications. Desk Officers may be in frequent contact with the field to exchange information on such issues, and to provide policy advice and guidance. In order for ELB to provide effective support to the field, Desk Officers seek recommendations and advice from the field. By channeling information through ELB to OCHA's Advocacy and External Relations Unit, the field also has an opportunity to raise awareness of events taking place in the field. ELB Desk Officers should also communicate policies and decisions of the ERC to the field, as well as those of the Security Council, General Assembly and other relevant bodies.

Towards this end, the ELB liaises with many different entities on complex emergencies and other issues, ensuring that humanitarian concerns are addressed. It regularly consults with (and sometimes briefs) Secretariat Departments (particularly DPA, DPKO and UNSECOORD); the Executive Office of the Secretary-General; the Security Council; ECOSOC; the General Assembly; other inter-governmental fora in New York; representatives of UN agencies, NGOs and international organizations in New York; members of ECHA and of the Executive Committee on

Peace and Security; Permanent Missions of Member States; and the Humanitarian Liaison Working Group (HLWG) in New York. The Branch prepares or contributes to a wide variety of reports and briefing papers on the humanitarian aspects of emergencies, and chairs or represents OCHA in inter-departmental and inter-agency meetings and task forces.

B. Security Coordination

In each country the primary responsibility for the security and protection of UN staff members rests with the host government. Nevertheless it has been necessary for the UN to put in place a system for planning and managing security issues which is aimed at ensuring that there is a coordinated approach toward the protection of staff.

At the headquarters level, the UN Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD) is appointed by the Secretary-General to report directly to him and serve as his coordinator at the New York Office. UNSECOORD is responsible for formulating security policy and recommendations, responding to emergency situations, coordinating inter-agency safety programs, and taking decisions relating to the relocation/ evacuation of staff members.

OCHA/Headquarters maintains a direct liaison with the Office of the UN Security Coordinator, in New York, in large part to assist OCHA field staff in dialoguing with UNSECOORD on security matters of concern. For country-specific issues, your contact/Focal Point is Mr. Kevin Kennedy, Chief of the Emergency Liaison Branch. For matters regarding overall security policies and procedures, the Focal Point is the Acting Chief of the Information Management Services Branch, Mr. Lance Clark

Also at the headquarters level, a Field Security Coordinator is appointed by the Executive Head of each UN organization to ensure liaison between UNSECOORD, the respective organization headquarters and its offices in the field.

Security coordination arrangements at the field level were described in Chapter 3. Detailed security arrangements can be found in the [Field Security Handbook](#), a comprehensive policy document that applies to all persons employed by UN organizations – except those locally recruited – consultants, UN volunteers and UN fellows studying in the country. (Security of UN peacekeeping missions falls under the jurisdiction of the SRSG and/ or the Force Commander).

A useful booklet is '[Security in the Field – Information for Staff Members of the United Nations System](#)', that contains information regarding practical, common sense measures which each staff member can take to minimize the risks he/ she may face. (This booklet should be available at each duty station; alternatively contact OCHA New York.)

C. UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination team (UNDAC)

The UNDAC system, which is run by the Geneva-based Field Coordination Support Unit (a part of the Disaster Response Branch), has been created for natural disaster response. It may also be exceptionally used for “sudden onset complex emergencies” - i.e. to immediately provide teams of experienced emergency managers a stopgap arrangement until humanitarian organizations become sufficiently mobilized. UNDAC teams may be deployed at 12 hours notice, from a pool of more than 130 specially trained emergency management experts who are made available when needed by 29 countries and other participating organizations such as IFRC or UN Agencies (including OCHA staff). UNDAC members, who come from a wide range of professions (humanitarian, technical, medical, academic and many others), should have emergency management experience and international experience. Whilst these individuals are paid for by their respective governments or organizations, OCHA runs the system and provides the necessary organization, mission equipment, communications, and additional training and is responsible for the deployment of UNDAC missions.

The 1999 humanitarian crisis in Kosovo is a classic example of how UNDAC may be used in response to a sudden onset complex emergency (other than a natural disaster). In April, at the request of UNHCR (the lead UN agency), two 3-person teams were deployed to Macedonia and Albania to assist UNHCR for a period of three weeks until CERB found longer-term recruits with the appropriate complex emergency background. Equipped with mobile satellite telecommunications and essential office equipment, these teams helped to assess humanitarian needs and coordinate relief actions.

D. Military and Civil Defence Unit (MCDU)

The MCDU, also located inside the Disaster Response Branch at OCHA-Geneva, was established by a decision of the IASC in 1995 to ensure the most efficient use of military and civil defense assets in support of humanitarian operations. The MCDU consults with contributing nations and organizations to maintain up-to-date information on preparedness and response measures related to military and civil defense support. It also acts as a focal point with interested governments, regional organizations and military/ civil defense establishments on preparedness measures for the exceptional use of these assets in support of humanitarian operations, and coordinates their mobilization when needed. The MCDU maintains a database on resources, ranging from cargo aircraft, field hospitals and field catering units to nuclear, biological and chemical detection units.

Whilst the MCDU is mostly used for natural disaster response, it may also be used in complex emergencies when requested by the Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator or UNDP. Like UNDAC, MCDU was called upon to assist with the humanitarian response to the crisis in Kosovo. MCDU helped to set up an air coordination cell at UNHCR headquarters in Geneva, staffed by air traffic controllers from NATO countries and logistics specialists from the UN system. It also mobilized cargo aircraft with relief items from Pisa in Italy (see below) to Macedonia and Albania, as well as trucks for various UN agencies. The MCDU also provided portable storage tents (Rubhalls) and mobile kitchens.

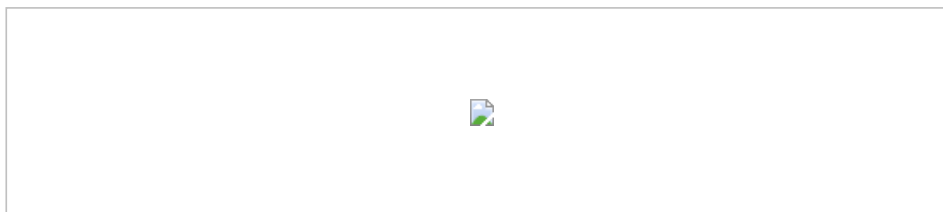
E. Other Support

Pisa Warehouse - OCHA, in cooperation with WHO, WFP and the governments of Italy, Japan, Luxembourg and Norway, maintains stocks of various relief items in its warehouse in Pisa, Italy. Supplies can be dispatched to the field either as a bilateral donation, or through the UN, on behalf of WHO or WFP, or at the request of the UN Disaster Management Team to help fill critical relief gaps.

In terms of logistical support for relief missions, the Field Coordination Support Unit has established the Five-Partite Cooperation agreement with the governments of Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway and the UK, for access to field coordination support resources. Such resources include specially equipped field vehicles, telecommunications equipment and administrative support, as well as specialist staff to help install and maintain such equipment. Although these standby-resources are primarily for use by UNDAC teams in natural disasters, they may be accessed on an informal basis by OCHA in the event of large-scale emergencies.

Emergency Telecommunications Unit – In OCHA Geneva, there is an Emergency Telecommunications Unit within the Disaster Response Branch. Although the Branch focuses on natural disasters, the Emergency Telecommunications Unit can also support response to complex emergencies. Questions regarding agreements with host countries on use of telecommunications resources can be addressed to this Unit. There are conventions and resolutions which call upon member states and other entities to facilitate the use of telecommunications resources for humanitarian assistance (Tampere Convention) and, in particular, for the safety and security of humanitarian personnel (ITU Plenipotentiary Conference, 1998, Resolution COM 5/18). Further information on this subject can also be retrieved from Reliefweb at <http://www.reliefweb.int/telecom>.

7. Policy & Advocacy Issues in the Context of Field Work



The humanitarian challenge of safeguarding the welfare of civilian victims and of aid workers in an environment where they are made deliberate targets has become ever more daunting. There is however still no clear understanding of how international aid strategies can be designed that promote compliance with humanitarian principles, especially during armed conflict. At the headquarters level, OCHA is seeking to address this problem by working with partner agencies (on the IASC) to find ways to operationalize humanitarian principles, and to develop country-specific ground rules covering issues such as access, security and interaction with local/ national authorities. At the same time OCHA advocates for greater respect for humanitarian norms and principles, drawing attention to specific humanitarian issues such as those described below. These collaborative efforts between OCHA and its partner humanitarian organizations are targeted not only at UN Member States and the UN political organs (such as the Security Council), but also at the media and civil society in general, including NGOs and academia.

Until such guidelines, field practices and practical advocacy strategies are formulated however, OCHA humanitarian staff in the field may often be obliged to respond to “humanitarian dilemmas” on a somewhat *ad hoc* basis.

Outlined here are some of the major policy issues on which OCHA and its humanitarian partners are working toward the formulation of practical field strategies, in terms of how to respond when the principles are disregarded. In the context of these policy issues, examples are given wherever possible of successful strategies that have been employed by individual OCHA Field Coordination Units. References are also made to relevant documents for more detailed information.[See Annex VII for ‘Further Reading’, or contact OCHA’s Policy Development Unit at New York headquarters for further information: E-mail: ocha-pdu@un.org].

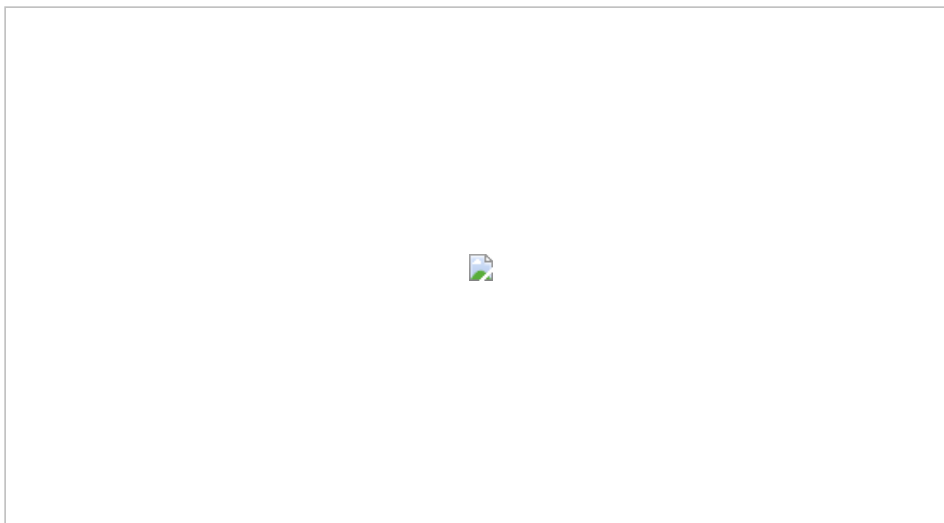
A. Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict

This overriding issue, which encompasses various others, represents perhaps the biggest and as yet unresolved problem for humanitarian workers in the field.

The most common breaches of international legal instruments in this domain include systematic attacks against the civilian population; forced displacement of civilians, creating internally displaced persons and refugees; combatants and armed elements mixed with civilians in refugee and IDP camps; the conscription of children; the denial of humanitarian access and humanitarian assistance; and the targeting of humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel. Recent examples of such breaches abound, from the ethnic cleansing and systematic killing of civilians in the 1992-95 Bosnian war, to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, to the ongoing killing, mutilation and forced conscription of civilians (including children) in Sierra Leone, and the recent ethnic cleansing of Kosovo Albanians from the Yugoslav province of Kosovo.

Ongoing international efforts are aimed at strengthening the protection of civilians through political support for legal and (most importantly) physical protection measures. At the beginning of 1999 the Head of OCHA (in his capacity of Under-Secretary-General) urgently requested the Security Council “to examine practical ways in which we can ensure greater levels of protection for civilians in armed conflict, which is of direct relevance to the Council’s core responsibilities.” In response, the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to submit a report containing concrete recommendations to the Council by September 1999 on ways the Council could improve the physical and legal protection of civilians in situations of armed conflict. This report is expected to consider enforcement measures such as the use of targeted sanctions and the deployment of international and regional peacekeepers, as well as civilian police.

Prior to the launch of the report, and in connection with the 50th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, OCHA’s Advocacy and External Relations Unit (AERU) embarked on a wide-reaching advocacy campaign in order to raise awareness and support for the key issues, and then to lobby for political and public support towards realizing the measures recommended in it. (Contact AERU in New York for further information on the campaign activities).



B. Humanitarian Action and Human Rights

Clearly then, the task of translating international laws into field-oriented and practical tools for the protection of civilians on the ground is an urgent one. Humanitarian staff in the field should not only be able to identify violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, but should also know how to respond.

As step one in this process, OCHA produced, in 1999, an 'Easy Reference' booklet on International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, intended primarily for humanitarian personnel working in situations of internal armed conflict.

However, simply being able to identify which legal instruments are being breached in a particular situation is not sufficient to ensure the protection of civilians. As a follow-up therefore, OCHA is working toward the development of 'Field Practices on International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights and Refugee Law for use by humanitarian personnel'. This aims to enable humanitarian personnel to respond in a practical and effective manner to issues such as the denial of humanitarian assistance to populations in need, or the forced displacement of civilians, to name just two examples. This document should be completed and available for use in the field by early 2000. (Contact the OCHA Policy Development Unit in New York for further information on both these documents).

For example: The denial of humanitarian assistance to populations in need (where the State authorities are not providing assistance) is clearly a violation of international law, under which States are obliged to ensure that all those in need receive assistance - regardless of whether those populations are located in areas outside the government's control.

In both Angola and Sierra Leone, the promotion of child vaccination campaigns as a strategy to gain access to "rebel-held areas" are being explored by OCHA and its partner humanitarian organizations. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, OCHA helped establish an agreement (in principle at least) by both sides to the conflict for 'Days of Tranquility' in order to facilitate a WHO/ UNICEF polio vaccination campaign. An earlier example from Angola is provided by a former OCHA official:



C. Internally Displaced Persons

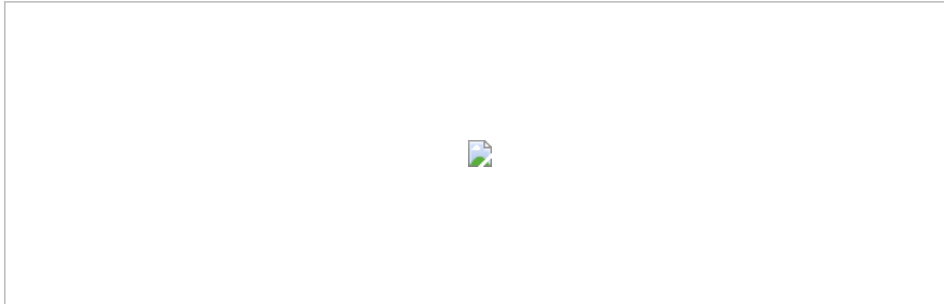
In the words of the Emergency Relief Coordinator in June 1998, "Again this is an issue where much has been said and written, many conferences held, but where at the field level drastic improvements are still required". That said, improving the provision of protection and assistance to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) continues to be one of OCHA's top priorities. (Under an IASC decision, the ERC is the designated focal point at headquarters level for the inter-agency coordination of humanitarian assistance to IDPs, for which no single agency has a comprehensive mandate, whilst the IASC Working Group is the forum for consultations on all matters concerning internal displacement)

In 1998 the Representative of the Secretary-General on IDPs, Mr. Francis Deng, finalized the 'Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement' (subsequently endorsed by the IASC). These principles identify rights and guarantees relevant to the protection of persons from forced displacement and to their protection and assistance during displacement, as well as during return or resettlement and reintegration. Their aim is to provide practical guidance to governments, other competent authorities, inter-governmental organizations and NGOs in their work with IDPs.

OCHA's focus now is to promote the application of these principles, and also on implementing existing IASC decisions on determining a division of labor at the field level for dealing with assistance and protection needs for IDPs on a case-by-case basis. The Field Practice Manual on Internal Displacement, compiled by UNICEF, OCHA and HCHR and subsequently endorsed by the IASC Working Group in April 1999, offers numerous examples of field programs supporting IDPs. Also in April 1999, OCHA recruited a senior staff member to provide practical leadership in this area and ensure effective cooperation with relevant partners.

At the field level, the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator is, in full consultation with the inter-agency country team, responsible for the strategic coordination of assistance to IDPs. This responsibility includes addressing humanitarian requirements before, during and after an emergency, serving as an advocate for assistance and protection, as well as recommending to the ERC a division of responsibility among agencies. The work of the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator on behalf of the internally displaced is carried out in close collaboration with responsible government authorities, local and international NGOs, international organizations, and other relevant actors.

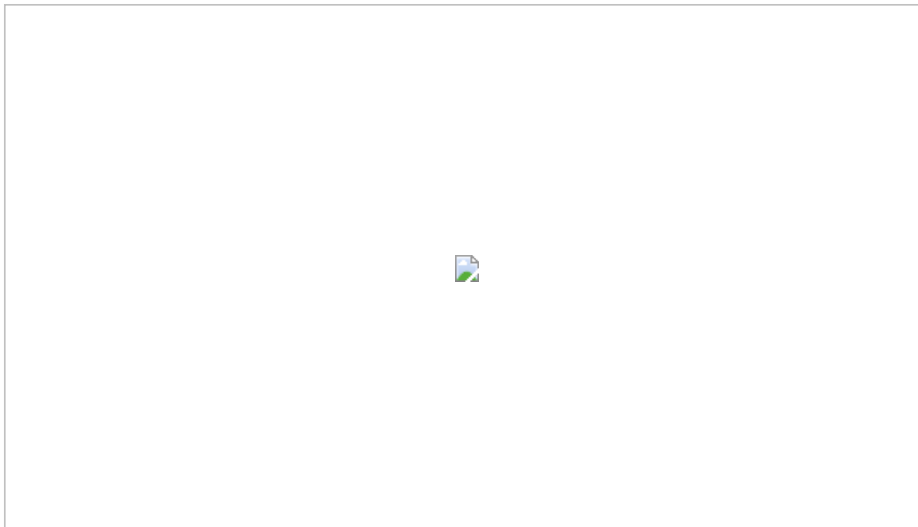
One example of a practical, OCHA-led initiative regarding the provision of assistance to IDPs was in Sierra Leone at the beginning 1996:



D. Security of Humanitarian Personnel

In January 1999 the Convention on the Safety of United Nations personnel came into force. However the Convention applies only to personnel serving in operations specifically authorized by the General Assembly or the Security Council and is only binding on States parties, and is therefore inapplicable to most of the situations in which humanitarian personnel work. Whilst advocating for the ratification of the Convention, OCHA is also urging for it to be extended to cover all situations in which UN and associated personnel, including national staff, are deployed, and of insuring its implementation by non-State actors.

One example of practical advocacy in the field is provided by OCHA in Georgia:



E. Strategic Coordination

This aims to develop a principled, unitary and coherent approach by the UN system as a whole in its response to crises, in order to facilitate conflict resolution and peace building. It covers the UN's political, human rights, humanitarian and development activities in countries in, or emerging from, crisis.

One initiative aimed at achieving this is the concept of 'Strategic Frameworks'. This comprises a political strategy and the field-based arrangements for a common international assistance strategy (applicable to the entire range of the UN's activities in a particular country and, ideally, the activities of all external actors). This was first adopted in Afghanistan in 1998, where it enabled all the concerned partners – UN, donors, NGOs, Afghans – to work together more effectively on the basis of agreed principles and objectives. A Strategic Framework was subsequently planned for Sierra Leone – principally because, like Afghanistan, it is a country where the UN assumed a major leadership role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts, and where the normal mechanisms (such as Round Table or Consultative Group) for interaction between the country and the international community were inoperative.

The Strategic Framework approach is also consistent with the 'Principles Project', coordinated by OCHA, that aims to produce 'Common UN Ground Rules'.

F. The 'Development Gap'

OCHA's goal in this area is to "link relief to development within a coherent context aimed at promoting sustainable peace". Operational agencies such as UNHCR and WFP often encounter problems in this transitional period, when they may be required to phase out their assistance (often due to limited financial resources), but are unable to do so because there is no-one to hand over to.

OCHA's policy objectives aimed at alleviating this problem include improving the links between the Consolidated Appeals Process and the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF); improving inter-agency resource mobilization during transitional situations; developing system-wide policy and operational steps on reintegration; and ensuring the effective participation of the World Bank in coordination arrangements.

Yet despite all the policy initiatives, and the numerous workshops and conferences, practical measures are still thin on the ground, and it is widely agreed that progress in the field has been slow.

G. Gender and Humanitarian Action

Whilst it is the responsibility of the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women to ensure the incorporation of gender perspectives into all UN programs, OCHA's role is to ensure that a gender perspective is introduced into humanitarian action. In recognition of the importance of this issue, in 1998 OCHA created focal points for gender issues in both New York and Geneva. At the same time the IASC Sub-Working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Assistance issued a policy statement that identified four priority areas where gender needs to be mainstreamed by OCHA and its IASC member partners: assessment and strategic planning for humanitarian crises; the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP); a principled approach to complex emergencies; and the involvement of women in the planning, designing and monitoring of all aspects of emergency programs.

In the case of Afghanistan, the issue of gender has already been integrated into the CAP, and a Gender Adviser has been deployed to the region to advise UN agencies on how to actively incorporate gender issues into humanitarian assistance programs.

H. Children and Armed Conflict

OCHA cooperates closely with the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflicts (SRSG/CAC), currently Mr. Olara Otunnu, as well as with UNICEF, especially in the areas of policy development and advocacy (on such issues as forced conscription and small arms). Furthermore, OCHA facilitates dialogue between the SRSG/ CAC and the humanitarian community, taking advantage of the fora such as the IASC, ECHA and OCHA's monthly meetings with NGOs. OCHA also supports field missions by the SRSG/ CAC.

I. Humanitarian Impact of Sanctions

OCHA has been particularly involved in the development of new approaches to sanctions regimes, aimed at exerting pressure on targeted governments whilst minimizing the humanitarian consequences of the regimes on civilian populations. One reason for this has been the serious difficulties faced by humanitarian agencies in recent years in providing emergency relief assistance under sanctions regimes, such as in Iraq, Haiti and Former Yugoslavia. These difficulties prompted the IASC to request OCHA (then DHA) to develop a methodology to assess the humanitarian impact of sanctions and to facilitate the processing of humanitarian exemptions. Various studies have been undertaken towards developing such a methodology (see 'Further Reading' in Annex VII).

Secondly, the General Assembly decided (in resolution 51/242 of 1997) that OCHA should play a coordinating role in organizing and conducting assessments of humanitarian needs and vulnerabilities at the time of the imposition of sanctions, and regularly thereafter while sanctions are being implemented. It considered that information on the potential or actual humanitarian impact of sanctions should be brought immediately to the attention of the Security Council. It further decided that guidelines for the exemption of humanitarian goods should be developed to ensure that applications are quickly dealt with.

Lastly, the UN Security Council twice requested assessments from OCHA before deciding on the modalities of a sanctions regime (i.e. in the case of the proposed UN flight ban against Sudan) and during the imposition of a sanctions regime (i.e. in the case of the UN sanctions and ECOWAS embargo against Sierra Leone). Regional embargoes supported by the Security Council – as in the case of Sierra Leone, and Burundi – have at times hampered the delivery of critical humanitarian assistance by UN agencies and international NGOs. The role of the Security Council in providing support to humanitarian exemptions mechanisms under regional sanctions regimes is therefore vital, as well as ensuring

that standards and procedures applied to UN sanctions regimes are respected.

J. Protected Areas

“Protected areas” established by order of the Security Council have in the past been of two types: “safe zones” which are meant to protect the threatened population where it normally lives (e.g. for the Kurds in northern Iraq in 1991, and in southwestern Rwanda in 1994); and “safe havens” which are meant to protect displaced populations so that victims can flee their homes without fleeing their country (as in Srebrenica in 1993). There has been a lot of debate about the value (or otherwise) of such “protected” areas as an instrument for the protection and assistance of civilians, and how this might be developed. In February 1999 OCHA participated in an Inter-Agency Expert Consultation on Protected Areas in order to develop practical guidelines for endorsement by the IASC. There it was agreed that a clear distinction should be made between non-consensual “security zones” established by the Security Council, and “humanitarian zones” established upon (temporary) consensus of the conflicting parties. It was further recommended that the establishment of a security zone by the Security Council should be a last resort, where respect for international humanitarian law has broken down or is non-existent. A clear mandate would then be required by the Council enabling the deployment of military force to protect civilians in an adverse environment. Inside such a security zone, particular attention should be given to issues of humanitarian access (e.g. secure corridors), registration of protected persons, the establishment of a regime of principles, and cooperation with the internal administration of the zone (i.e. military and police forces)

K. Humanitarian Impact of the Proliferation of Small Arms

Researchers have stated that in 46 out of the 49 conflicts that have broken out since 1990, light weapons were the only arms used. Humanitarian agencies have therefore become increasingly concerned with the high levels of civilian death and injury resulting from the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in many conflict areas throughout the world, as well as with the negative consequences on their own work and security. At present however there is little data on the humanitarian impact of small arms proliferation, and focussed research has yet to be conducted.

In view of this the IASC Working Group Reference Group on Small Arms (RGSA) was established at the beginning of 1999, with the participation of OCHA, UNICEF, UNDP, ICRC and SCHR. The group’s immediate objective is to assemble relevant data to be used for developing case studies in selected countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Such studies may illustrate the extent of the negative humanitarian impact of small arms and light weapons over a period of time – before, during and post conflict. The group’s overall aim is to support any move to reduce the uncontrolled and excessive accumulation and transfer of small arms and light weapons, in part by raising public and organizational awareness of these humanitarian implications through joint advocacy efforts. The group also supports the UN’s mechanism for Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) (see Annex VII for ‘Further Reading’).

L. Humanitarian Implication of Landmines

As part of the 1997 reform program, the Secretary-General decided that operational aspects of mine action work would be transferred from OCHA to DPKO. Subsequently the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) was established as the focal point within the UN system for all mine-related activities. OCHA meanwhile is responsible for sharing all relevant information with UNMAS and other partners on the humanitarian implications of landmines, and to ensure that humanitarian needs are met as a fundamental part of the overall humanitarian effort. OCHA also works closely with UNMAS on resource mobilization in its capacity as manager of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF), and coordinator of the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP).

In addition, OCHA Field Coordination Units monitor developments in-country related to the laying of landmines. Mine activities are considered to be primarily a humanitarian issue in so far as they affect the delivery of assistance to beneficiaries, and prevent IDPs and refugees returning to their homes.

OCHA further supports UNMAS and other relevant bodies in advocating for a global ban on landmines.

8. Public Information & the Media

A. Information Platforms

Key OCHA information resources are ReliefWeb and the Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) - separate but complementary and mutually reinforcing information systems. These can be used to provide fast, accurate and relevant information on complex emergencies or natural disasters to the international community as a whole, and as a useful information resource for OCHA field staff themselves. In addition, linked to ReliefWeb is OCHA On-Line, OCHA’s home web site that provides information specific to OCHA and its work.

ReliefWeb (www.reliefweb.int)

Since its launch in 1996, ReliefWeb has been acknowledged as a principal on-line source of information on humanitarian emergencies. ReliefWeb supplies information collected from more than 300 sources, including OCHA, IRIN, other UN agencies, international organizations, governments, NGOs, academia/ research organizations and the media. The Web has users in more than 150 countries – predominantly from within the international humanitarian community – who access more than 300,000 documents each month. Together, the two ReliefWeb offices in New York and Geneva provide time-critical coverage of global emergencies from 08.00 to 24.00 hours GMT.

From the perspective of new OCHA field staff, ReliefWeb can provide very useful orientation – especially in the absence of a formal briefing before departure. Perhaps its most valuable resources are situation reports, emergency bulletins and news about current disasters and humanitarian crises. With regard to complex emergencies, countries/ regions are listed alphabetically. Information can then be accessed by source (e.g. a particular NGO’s report), by format (such as analysis or field reports), or by month/ year. These documents include OCHA’s own situation reports from the field.

Analytical/ background information is provided on each country/ complex emergency, through links to other web sites. Also useful, and popular,

are documents dealing with humanitarian organization activities, such as emergency appeals, project descriptions and press releases.

Other key features of ReliefWeb

Map Center – Automatic links are provided to a catalogue of maps relating to emergencies in particular regions and countries covered by ReliefWeb. A GIS specialist based in New York is currently developing improved reference maps displaying humanitarian information, such as location and movement of displaced persons.

Financial tracking – This database, managed by CERB in Geneva, charts pledges and contributions to the Consolidated Inter-Agency appeals.

Resources –

- 1) Humanitarian Vacancies: employment opportunities in both UN and non-UN agencies.
- 2) Library: reference documents on humanitarian topics.
- 3) Early Warning: a directory of web sites maintained by various organizations devoted to early warning (e.g. on El Nino).
- 4) Register of Disaster Management Capacities: provide links to information on stockpiles of emergency relief items, customs contact points and rosters of expertise for disaster management.
- 5) Emergency Telecommunications: related to the activities of the Working Group established to look at this issue.
- 6) Directory of Organizations: listings of approximately 300 humanitarian organizations.
- 7) Humanitarian Assistance Training Inventory: information on workshops, conferences etc.
- 8) Related Sites: a directory of web sites maintained by other humanitarian organizations.
- 9) Search_Engine – ReliefWeb has both a simple and an advanced search engine.

OCHA On-Line (www.reliefweb.int/ocha.ol)

This is OCHA's home web site (which can be accessed from ReliefWeb). It includes information specific to OCHA (mandate, structure, contact information etc), news from headquarters and field offices (newsletters, press releases and official statements), and policy and advocacy position papers (publications, speeches and IASC materials). The weekly 'OCHA News', widely distributed as hard copy, is also available on this web site under 'publications'.

Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN)

The broad objective of IRIN is to foster greater awareness and understanding of regional issues and events, to contribute to better-informed and more effective humanitarian action and media coverage, including emergency preparedness and advocacy. Established in 1995, it initially concentrated on the crisis in the Great Lakes from its base in Nairobi, but later expanded to provide in-depth coverage of events in East, Central, Southern and West Africa (from additional offices in Johannesburg and Abidjan). Depending upon financial support, in 1999 OCHA will establish a similar network in Central Asia, the Caucasus and Southern Balkans to monitor and report on events in the region (from a central office in Turkey).

IRIN produces updates, analyses and alerts that cover a wide range of political, economic and social issues pertinent to humanitarian work - from a regional perspective. The information is drawn from (and provided to) an extensive network including UN agencies, NGOs and international organizations, national authorities, donors, human rights organizations, political parties, regional institutions, churches, academia, businesses and the media.

In addition to producing their own daily, weekly, and special reports, IRIN disseminates publications from UN agencies, local and international NGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the OAU, governments, academia and others. Reports produced by OCHA Field Coordination Units may also be disseminated.

IRIN's reports and documents are distributed to its subscribers by e-mail and fax. Since April 1999, IRIN material can also be accessed via the IRIN web site (www.reliefweb.int/IRIN). As of mid 1999, IRIN had a subscription base of almost 6,000 and an estimated daily readership of some 20,000 people in approximately 40 countries. NGOs and UN agencies each account for a quarter of the direct subscribers (divided roughly equally between Africa, Europe and North America).

What can I get from IRIN?

IRIN is an important information resource, as it provides up-to-date, value-added information and analysis on events in sub-Saharan Africa.

The IRIN web site is also a useful research tool, as it contains an archive of all IRIN documents. Specific information may be located through IRIN's search engines.

IRIN also functions as an information clearing house, in that IRIN Information Officers sift through thousands of messages and news items each day. On the basis of this daily reports are issued, which in 2-3 pages provide a concise overview of events.

Subscribers to IRIN may define their user profiles according to their particular fields of interest, and thereby receive custom-made news to fit their requirements.

Depending on the location of their duty station, it may be beneficial for new OCHA field personnel to visit an IRIN office for briefing on the particular country/ region.

Contacts

Central and Eastern Africa: Tel: +254 2 622147
Fax: +254 2 622129
e-mail: irin@ocha.unon.org

West Africa: Tel: +225 21 73 54,
Fax: +225 21 63 35
e-mail: irin-wa@ocha.unon.org

Southern Africa: Tel: +27 11 880 4633
Fax: +27 11 880 1421
e-mail: irin-sa@ocha.unon.org

IRIN Internet Site: <http://www.reliefweb.int/IRIN/>(Subscription to IRIN can be done on the internet.)

B. Relations with the Media

The following principles – that reflect both the UN Secretariat media policy and standard practice – may be used for guidance:

General

OCHA Field Coordination Units (FCUs) should reflect the overall UN policy of being open and transparent in its dealings with the press. It is in the interest of OCHA, and the UN as a whole, to provide the media with timely and accurate information. As journalists are pressured by their deadlines, a slow or unhelpful response can be damaging to the organization.

Following the overall UN policy on transparency in dealings with the media, OCHA's Advocacy & External Relations Unit (AERU) in New York serves as a source of information for FCUs on priority advocacy themes and opportunities, including possible public information activities that may be carried out at both field and headquarters. AERU also provides the media with information on major issues of concern for the humanitarian community in complex emergencies and countries affected by natural disasters. For this purpose, AERU provides the Office of the Spokesman of the Secretary-General with notes on major humanitarian developments, produces statements by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs or the Secretary-General, schedules interviews for senior OCHA officials and Humanitarian Coordinators visiting headquarters, encourages journalists to contact FCUs and produces OCHA News, a weekly newsletter covering major developments and issues both in the field and at headquarters.

Who should speak to the Press

The principal voice of OCHA in the field is the Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/ HC), based in the capital city or main duty station. Most FCUs also have a designated Information Officer who speaks on behalf of the RC/ HC. In addition, the RC/ HC may authorize other OCHA staff to speak on his/ her behalf – either at the same duty station or at provincial field offices. Such authorization may be general, or on specific issues or events only. Thus, interviews with the press, and any questions on sensitive issues, must be referred to the RC/ HC or his/ her designated spokesperson(s).

In countries or regions where there is a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) there should be a clear division between the spokesperson on peacekeeping/ political affairs and the spokesperson on humanitarian affairs. Clarification on who is authorized to speak to the press should nevertheless be given by the Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator to his/ her staff in-country.

Information regarding the safety of UN staff – for example in an emergency situation – should be handled by the UN Designated Official for Security.

Any OCHA field staff who are authorized to speak to the press (as above) should keep the RC/ HC and/ or the Information Officer fully informed of what was said. In the case of press statements being released or press conferences/ briefings being held, the Advocacy and External Relations Unit in New York should be kept informed. This will help provide headquarters with an indication of the issues that the media is interested in, and ultimately help to attract international media attention.

How to speak to the Press

Those OCHA field staff authorized to speak to the press should:

- speak only on humanitarian issues, not political or security issues
- speak only within their area of competence and responsibility
- provide facts, not opinions or comment
- leave sensitive issues to officials who are specifically authorized to speak on them

For those speaking on sensitive issues, knowing the journalist's particular interest in a story can be useful. Furthermore, it may sometimes be necessary for OCHA to keep certain issues confidential – for example to protect a diplomatic process – in which case it is important to clarify at the outset the parameters of issues that may be discussed.

When OCHA field staff do speak to journalists, it should normally be done on the record - that is, for attribution. Sometimes, though, officials specifically authorized to address sensitive issues can give a journalist a deeper understanding of an issue by speaking on background. However, it is very important that the journalist know on which of the following bases the conversation is being conducted:

On the record: "everything I say can be attributed to me by name"

Not for attribution (on background): "don't attribute this to me by name, but rather to a UN official"

On deep background: "use my ideas but not my words; don't attribute to anyone"

OCHA field staff speaking to the press should not feel that they have to answer every question, in particular any hypothetical ones.

As part of its coordination role, OCHA should – where appropriate – refer journalists to other sources of information (for example to operational UN agencies or NGOs in relation to specific programs).

It is unwise, and may sometimes be unethical, to tell one journalist what another is working on, or to suggest that one journalist discuss a pending story with another.

9. Administrative Matters

Administrative matters are often cited as the biggest source of frustration for OCHA staff in the field – in particular questions regarding contracts, entitlements etc. Often, not knowing whom to ask for advice, or who is responsible or accountable for various administrative matters is at the heart of the problem.

Instead of attempting to give a comprehensive description of administrative procedures however, which is beyond the scope of this handbook, provided here are some of the most frequently asked questions posed by OCHA staff members in the field (as compiled by the OCHA office in Geneva, UNOG, in March 1999). This is not a definitive guide. A detailed Administrative Manual is however being prepared by UNOG, which is expected to be ready for distribution to the field by summer 1999.

A. Whom do I talk to?

The first point of contact will always be the Country Desk Officer at OCHA Geneva. If there is a problem, the Desk Officer will either obtain suitable clarification from the Finance and Administration Section (FAS) or put you in touch with the person concerned in FAS.

In respect of contractual questions for field staff, the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) provides the interpretation of the applicable staff rules.

B. Contracts

Who issues my contract?

Contracts are issued on behalf of OCHA by the Personnel Section of UNCTAD. The initial documentation is prepared by OCHA before submission for approval to the Budget Section of UNOG and then to UNCTAD.

How is my grade determined?

OCHA provides UNCTAD with your Personal History Form, the Terms of Reference of the post (i.e. the job responsibilities) and a recommendation for the grading. UNCTAD independently reviews the qualifications against the Terms of Reference and against its standards based on similar positions throughout the world, and then makes an offer to you. The grade of the post that you are set against does not necessarily mean that you will be given the same grade.

Why didn't I get a longer contract?

OCHA field expenses are extra-budgetary, therefore your contract will cover the maximum length possible under the funds allocated. If you are recruited in the second half of the year, the contract will normally only be issued through to 31 December. Given the approval of further funds, the contract will be renewed into the next year.

What is a short-term contract?

This is the type of contract initially given to staff members. Once a short-term contract has been extended to 12 months, an intermediate term contract is given. For example if your initial contract is 3 months, your first renewal is for 6 months and after the second renewal of 6 months you will have an intermediate term contract. If your initial contract is 6 months, after your first renewal (for 6 months), you will have an intermediate term contract.

What is the difference?

The different types of contract give you different benefits and entitlements (see Section 5 for details).

C. Salary

Who pays my salary?

Salaries are paid through the UN Office in Geneva to the account nominated, and your payslips are forwarded through the pouch system to you

at your duty station.

Can I split the payment of my salary?

You can split the payment of your salary so that a portion is paid into an account not at your duty station. The form is available on request.

How do I tell what I have been paid?

Unfortunately the pay-slips provided sometimes do not give a clear indication of payments made. If you have problems with the pay-slip, please forward a request to OCHA Geneva where they will try to clear it up with the Payroll Unit.

I am a US citizen. What about my IRS return?

Once a year the Payroll Unit prepares a statement of payments made to each staff member. On the basis of this statement the staff member prepares his/her own IRS return. Detailed information on the procedure is available from the Payroll Unit.

D. Travel to my Duty Station

How do I get to my duty station?

When you join OCHA you will be given a contract. Upon appointment UNCTAD will arrange for a travel authorization to be issued, and a Carlson Wagonlit Agent near your place of recruitment will contact you to provide you with an air ticket. Do NOT travel without a signed contract.

What about my belongings?

This depends upon the length and status of your contract. You may be entitled to take with you 10 kg of belongings as excess luggage, and 1,000 kg unaccompanied luggage by surface or 500 kg by air, if you have a contract of at least one year.

E. Allowances

What allowances does the UN give?

The type of allowance paid by the UN depends upon your marital status and the length of your contract.

What will I receive initially?

If you have a short-term contract, you will be paid a Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) applicable to your duty station, which is determined by the UN and is subject to change without prior notice. This is paid locally.

For the first 60 days you will receive DSA at the full rate, after which you will receive 75% of the amount for the next 60 days. After 120 days from commencement of employment the amount is reduced to 60% of the DSA rate, up to the point where your contract is changed to intermediate term.

If you are posted in a hazardous duty station, you will receive Hazardous Duty Allowance (HDA) for every day that you spend there.

Your salary will be paid at the single rate, even if you are married. This will change when your contract is converted to an intermediate contract.

What do I receive with an intermediate term contract?

You are entitled to a salary at the dependants' rate if you are married (if your spouse does not work); to dependency allowance if you have children; and to post-adjustment at the rate applicable at your duty station, instead of DSA.

You will receive an assignment grant that is equivalent to one month's salary including post-adjustment, and one month's DSA at your duty station.

If OCHA moves you from one duty station to another for a period of more than one year, you are entitled to an assignment grant to cover expenses, calculated as one month's salary including post-adjustment, plus 30 days of DSA at the new duty station.

If you are posted in a Hazardous Duty Station, you will continue to receive HDA.

You are also eligible for home leave, family visit, education allowances, and extended monthly evacuation allowance (see below).

F. Home Leave

What is it?

The UN will pay for you and your family (if they are with you) to return to your place of recruitment/ home country, depending upon your contractual status and duty station.

Am I eligible?

Normally, you are entitled to one home leave for every two years of service. At a hazardous duty station, you are entitled to home leave every

year. This is dependent upon you having a contract valid for a period of six months after your return. You must spend a minimum of two weeks in the home leave location.

If your duty station is in one country and your family is another, you are entitled to take them on home leave as well.

How do I get it?

You should seek the approval of OCHA Geneva, through the Country Desk Officer, for the period of leave by sending a request in advance. This will be forwarded to UNCTAD to determine eligibility and, if they concur, a Travel Authorization will be issued.

G. Family Visit

What is it?

The UN will pay for your return to your place of recruitment or home country, depending upon your contractual status and your duty station, to visit your immediate family if they are not at your duty station. Alternatively you may claim for your spouse to visit you at your duty station.

Am I eligible?

Normally, you are entitled to one family visit for every two years of service. At a hazardous duty station you are entitled to one family visit every year. This is dependent upon you having a contract valid for a period of 6 months after the visit and also upon your not having been on home leave within the previous 9 months.

How do I get it?

You should seek the approval of OCHA Geneva by sending a request to the Country Desk Officer in advance. This will be forwarded to UNCTAD to determine eligibility, and if they concur a Travel Authorization will be issued.

H. Education Allowance

What is it?

Under certain circumstances the UN will meet a proportion of the costs you incur towards the education of your children.

Am I eligible?

This is a complex area: you should complete the appropriate form and forward it to the Country Desk Officer at OCHA Geneva who will forward it to UNCTAD for processing.

I. Extended Monthly Evacuation Allowance (EMEA)

What is it?

It is the allowance paid if you are stationed in a non-family duty station, towards the cost of maintaining two domiciles, as your family cannot be with you.

How is it calculated?

It is dependent upon the place of residence of your family, and calculated as a percentage of your salary. It is normally paid at quarterly intervals.

J. Official Travel

For Home Leave, Family Visit and Travel to Duty Station you will be issued with travel authorization, commonly referred to as a PT8 (the form number). You should not normally undertake any travel without a PT8 (or copy), or at the least without written authorization quoting a PT8 number. It is in the interest of your safety that you have a PT8 with you.

For international travel a PT8 is issued in Geneva and a copy transmitted to your duty station. The original is normally sent via the pouch and this should be returned with your travel claim.

After your travel you should always submit a claim (Form F10), as you are normally entitled at least to the terminal allowances (airport taxes are also reimbursable). The terminal allowances cover costs relating to travel to and from the airport and your destination. This is a lump sum payment to cover all costs incurred by the staff member

For early reimbursement, the completed F10 and original PT8 (if you have it) should be returned to the Finance and Administration Section of OCHA Geneva as soon as possible. It will then be forwarded for certification and processing by UNOG (this can take up to 3 months).

Do not forget to enter your bank details on the F10 form.

For travel inside the country of your duty station, a PT8 will be raised and settled by the local UNDP office. The DSA and HDA payments will be adjusted depending upon your contractual status and duty station.

K. Occasional Recuperation Break (ORB)

What is it?

It is an existing policy for UN staff members serving in specific duty stations under conditions of severe stress, danger, hardship and/or isolation to take a regular period of time-off away from the so designated duty station. There are only 6 duty stations that are currently eligible for ORB: Angola, Northern Iraq, Democratic Rep. Of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi and the Balkans. Duty stations might be added to this list after a request for inclusion is made. Each decision is made on a case by case basis. Duty stations within the list are reviewed periodically, to ascertain whether the conditions of service remain the same.

How does it work?

If a staff member serving in one of the aforementioned duty stations works for 10 additional days (over and above normal working hours) in three months, he/she is entitled to five days of ORB and 2 days maximum travel time at his/her own expense. The staff member can elect to go anywhere. ORB cannot be accumulated or carried forward from one 3-month block to the next. It must be taken shortly after it has been earned.

A task force comprising representatives of the operational agencies and the UN secretariat is currently reviewing the divergent policies on rest and recuperation, with a view to agreeing on one common policy for all. However, until such an agreement is reached, be aware that the entitlements you have regarding Rest (or breaks) are the entitlements that all UN Secretariat staff have. Other operational agencies may have slightly different entitlements for their staff.

10. Beyond the Handbook

This Orientation Handbook attempts to provide all the basic information considered necessary for OCHA field staff to be effective. However, each field location is unique, with its own set of opportunities and constraints. When confronted with a problem or crisis in the field, OCHA staff will often have to use their judgment on how to resolve things in that particular situation – sometimes without time for recourse to their boss for policy advice or guidance.

It is therefore important to continue the orientation process after arrival at the Duty Station. It may be useful, as part of this orientation in the field, to review the table of contents of this handbook with more senior colleagues to identify and discuss those issues that are most relevant for your particular location.

To stimulate thinking on practical applications of the material presented in this handbook, here are some examples of the kinds of real-life situations for new field staff to consider and discuss with more senior colleagues:

- You work in a rebel-held area as the OCHA representative. You've spent months convincing a rebel group that aid is provided for humane reasons, based on need. Aid agencies, you've asserted, are not involved in politics. They are interested only in getting emergency relief to civilians in need. An aircraft arrives with supplies for an aid agency. One of the boxes breaks open while being unloaded and bedding for the aid agency's staff spills out. The sheets and pillowcases have images of the country's president (who is the rebel group's archenemy) on them. The rebel leader happens to be at the airport and one of his cohorts sees the bedding and confiscates it. The rebel group call you (because you are the 'coordinator') to explain the situation.
- Your radio operator is arrested by the local 'secret service'. You know where he is being held. What do you do?
- You head the OCHA office in the capital of country X and are negotiating access to a secessionist zone. The government has given you the go-ahead to visit the zone and you're about to have your first meeting with the secessionist zone's leader. The day before you travel, an embassy with good intelligence tells you that your mission has been targeted and that going to the secessionist zone 'could be bad for your health'. What do you do?
- UN peacekeepers are starting to distribute aid to populations in areas that they patrol because they 'look hungry and ask us to help'. Aid agencies have just carried out extensive assessments in the same areas that showed no signs of food insecurity. The peacekeepers acknowledge that they have no humanitarian mandate but believe that their mission would be in peril if they do not continue with their distributions. As the OCHA field adviser, how do you address the situation?
- A rebel group tells you that an aid worker is in fact a spy from a prominent country. What do you do?
- The SRSR has asked the humanitarian coordinator to 'get agencies to provide aid in zone x' because it will help the peace process. You're the field representative in zone x and know that there are no humanitarian needs in zone x; in fact there are no civilians living there. What's your recommendation to the humanitarian coordinator?
- You're accompanying an NGO to a village on the frontline and you reach a checkpoint. The very young soldiers point their AK-47s at you and demand 500kg of wheat. (500kg are half a ton, or put another way, 'only ten bags'.) Negotiate your way through the checkpoint without handing over any food.
- The government in the country where you work agrees to your request for access to a 'grey area near the frontline' but insists on providing an armed convoy. Think about your different options and hold a discussion with your counterpart.
- Bulletproof vests, similar to the ones worn by the enemy's police, arrive in a WFP truck convoy. The drivers tell you that they are for you. You know nothing about this. As they lie in your office, the local police chief, who is visiting you on a different matter, sees them and recognizes them as 'enemy equipment'. What do you say?
- You are the OCHA representative in a town where malnutrition is extremely serious. (20% of the children under five are below 70% weight for height.) Six NGOs are distributing food to 200,000 civilians and three further NGOs are running feeding centers for children. An international NGO involved in food distributions tell you that 'local thugs' visited 38 households the night after a food distribution and 'taxed' the food. The

head of one household refused to pay the 'tax' and was shot dead. The NGO wants your advice on what to do. It is especially urgent, as more food is supposed to be distributed today. What possible courses of action could you recommend that agency or agencies take?

- You are sent to a designated hazardous duty station. Once there, you realize that staff of UN agencies are entitled to Rest and Recuperation leave every 6-8 weeks, but OCHA staff appear not to be entitled to this. You later discover that certain staff within OCHA are receiving this benefit, but you were never told about this, and no-one ever really explained to you what your entitlements would be. To whom do you speak to seek clarification on the situation?
- You are recruited to work at a field duty station for "approximately one year", but you are only given a two month initial contract that does not include the various benefits of a longer contract. What do you say, and to whom?
- The Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator at your duty station is also the UNDP Resident Representative. This individual believes that OCHA is merely a "technical arm" of UNDP rather than a separate coordinating body, and effectively excludes OCHA from various inter-agency fora in-country. How do you go about clarifying OCHA's role, and building up trust and respect for OCHA?
- You are on an inter-agency assessment mission to the interior of the country, travelling in a convoy of UN vehicles in an area that it is normally considered to be safe. The convoy is caught in an ambush by armed militia. You are unhurt, but your driver is seriously injured, as are several UN agency staff. When you reach the nearest town, journalists ask you to comment on what happened. (You are the most senior OCHA staff member there). What do you say?

Annex I

Acronyms Used in the Handbook

AERU	Advocacy & External Relations Unit (OCHA)
CAP	Consolidated Appeal Process
CASA	Coordinating Action on Small Arms
CERB	Complex Emergency Response Branch (OCHA)
CERF	Central Emergency Revolving Fund
CHAP	Common Humanitarian Action Plan
CMOC	Civil-Military Operations Center
DG	Development Group
DHA	Department of Humanitarian Affairs
DMT	Disaster Management Team
DO	Designated Official (for Security)
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRB	Disaster Response Branch (OCHA)
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DSA	Daily Subsistence Allowance
ECHA	Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECPS	Executive Committee on Peace and Security
ELB	Emergency Liaison Branch (OCHA)
EMEA	Extended Monthly Evacuation Allowance
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FAS	Finance and Administrative Section
FCSU	Field Coordination Support Unit
FCU	Field Coordination Unit
GA	General Assembly
GIS	Geographical Information System
HACU	Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HDA	Hazardous Duty Allowance
HEWS	Humanitarian Early Warning System
HLWG	Humanitarian Liaison Working Group
IAU	Information Analysis Unit (OCHA)
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDNDR	International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IO	International Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IMSB	Information Management Services Branch (OCHA)
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network
ITU	Information Technology Unit (OCHA)
MCDDU	Military and Civil Defense Unit
MONUA	United Nations Observer Mission in Angola

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PAID	Policy, Analysis and Information Division (OCHA)
PDAB	Policy Development and Advocacy Branch (OCHA)
PDU	Policy Development Branch (OCHA)
RC	Resident Coordinator
RGSA	Reference Group on Small Arms Security Management Team
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
SRSG/ CAC	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflicts
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade & Development
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment & Coordination
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan
UNOG	United Nations Office at Geneva
UNOMIG	United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
UNSECOORD	United Nations Security Coordinator
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
USG	Under-Secretary-General
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization
WG	Working Group

Annex II

Terms of Reference of the Humanitarian Coordinator [As approved by the IASC-WG on 30 November 1994]

The primary function of the Humanitarian Coordinator is to facilitate and ensure the quick, effective, and well-coordinated provision of humanitarian assistance to those seriously affected by the complex emergency if question.

Within this context, the Terms of Reference of the Humanitarian Coordinator include:

Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Mechanisms and Agreements

1. Convening and serving as the Chair for meetings of the DMT in-country to deal with matters relating to the complex emergency in question, and providing the necessary secretariat support to the DMT. For purposes of dealing with the complex emergency in question, the regular DMT will usually be expanded to include other relevant entities, such as NGOs involved in related relief efforts.
2. Reaching agreement on the basic division of responsibilities among the UN agencies, in accordance with their respective mandates and capacities, as well as working with the other relief entities to facilitate such agreements within the larger relief community.
3. Developing and maintaining a central registry of locally represented humanitarian assistance agencies and organizations, including information on their respective activities and expertise.
4. Ensuring that effective inter-agency coordination within specific sector areas is undertaken by the relevant agencies, and that coordination of the overall logistics needs of the relief operation is effectively undertaken.
5. Obtaining guidance from the Designated Official regarding the implementation of security procedures in support of humanitarian assistance activities, ensuring that this is effectively communicated to the concerned agencies in the field, and facilitating their coordinated implementation.
6. Acting as a focal point for discussion within the relief community regarding policy issues of inter-agency concern (eg. wage levels for local staff, difficulties with customs procedures and policies, Government clearances for travel and passes, etc.) and as an interlocutor with the relevant parties (eg. the host Government) for resolution of such matters.
7. Facilitating the provision of key support services for the larger relief community, such as telecommunications, transportation (eg. via vehicle or light aircraft operation), etc.

8. Ensuring consultation with Government and national authorities on matters regarding the planning and implementation of humanitarian assistance.
9. Facilitating communications, and ensuring overall coordination, between the UN and other humanitarian aid agencies on the one hand and the relevant components of bilateral military forces and/ or those of UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations when such forces are present, including promoting resolution of matters of joint concern to the humanitarian aid agencies

Assessing and Addressing Humanitarian Needs

10. Ensuring that the overall coordination of inter-agency, multisectoral assessments of needs, including identification of priority needs, and ensuring that such assessments are quickly initiated, adequately supported, and effectively carried out.
11. Coordinating the preparation of an overall humanitarian assistance strategy and Plan of Action of UN agencies, including the establishing of priorities for assistance and agreed collaborative approaches, and coordinating revisions and modifications as required by changing conditions and needs. The preparation and revision of this Plan should be done in close collaboration with the other relevant humanitarian assistance entities, including reflecting their activities and future plans in the Plan.
12. Coordinating the preparation of inter-agency consolidated appeals for humanitarian assistance for the complex emergency in question, including working with the agencies both in-country and at the headquarters level to ensure that the actions described in the IASC Consolidated Appeal Guidelines (currently being finalized) are implemented.
13. Monitoring the provision of resources against such appeals, bringing donor attention to important outstanding gaps, and facilitating inter-agency resource mobilization efforts both in-country as well as at the headquarters level (eg. via local donor meetings and briefings, convening donor conferences if appropriate, etc.)
14. Monitoring humanitarian needs and identifying specific gaps in the provision of humanitarian assistance. Working with UN and other entities to ensure that such gaps are addressed before they reach the crisis point.
15. Facilitating ongoing strategic planning for the relief effort, including the provision of early warning of major changes in needs or delivery capacities, and contingency planning for such eventualities.
16. Monitoring and facilitating UN humanitarian assistance to special population groups (eg. internally displaced persons, demobilized soldiers, etc.) to ensure that it is provided in an adequate and timely manner, and coordinating such UN efforts (unless such coordination has been delegated by the Emergency Relief Coordinator to a specific agency).
17. Ensuring that the necessary support is provided to field staff assisting in local coordination of humanitarian assistance and in situation monitoring.
18. Ensuring that effective evaluations of the overall relief efforts, especially the coordination aspects, are undertaken, the lesson to be learned clearly identified, and appropriate follow-up actions taken.
19. Cooperating with entities responsible for planning and implementation of rehabilitation and development activities to ensure that rehabilitation actions begin as soon as they become feasible (which will often be simultaneous with relief efforts), and that relief actions are planned and undertaken with the perspective of their longer-term impacts.

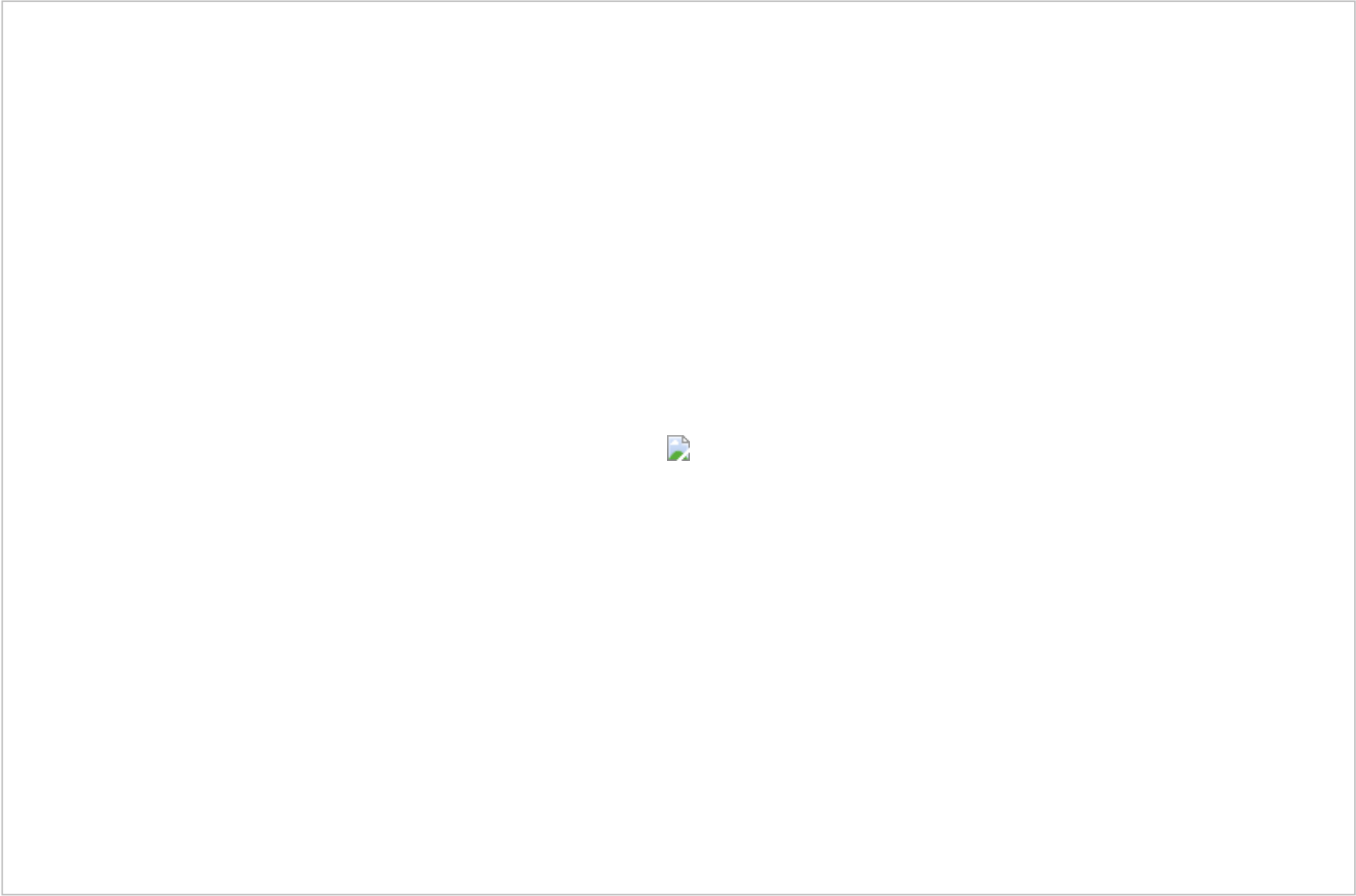
Humanitarian Advocacy

20. Serving as a focal point for the humanitarian community for ensuring the protection of humanitarian mandates in conflict situations, including by:
 - a) seeking acceptance by all parties to the civil conflict in question on the key principles that must underlie UN humanitarian aid efforts (eg. neutrality, impartiality, access to those in need, accountability to donors for aid provided, etc.), and
 - b) promoting, assisting, and if necessary, leading negotiations to obtain free, safe and unimpeded access for humanitarian assistance to those in need.

Information Dissemination

21. Collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information regarding humanitarian needs and operations to the wider community (eg. through the production of regular Situation Reports).
22. Ensuring the provision of timely, accurate and relevant information to media, and of briefing information to assist new agencies and NGOs, visiting missions and delegations, etc.

Annex III



Annex IV

UN Security Phases

The UN employs five specific security phases to describe those security measures to be implemented based on the prevailing security conditions in a given country or in parts of a country. These five phases are standard for all duty stations and must be included in all Security Plans. Following consultation with the Security Management Team the Designated Official may declare Phases One and Two at his/ her own discretion and notify UNSECOORD accordingly. Phase Three and Four, normally, will be declared by the Designated Official only with the authorization of UNSECOORD; and Phase Five normally will be declared by the Designated Official only when the authorization of the Secretary-General has been obtained through UNSECOORD.

Phases may be implemented in sequential order or as the situation dictates. Situations may occur where one part of the country is under a different phase than the remainder of the country. A "return to normal" may be implemented by the Designated Official with respect to Phases One and Two. If Phases Three, Four or Five have been implemented, the decision to return to a lower phase will be taken by UNSECOORD on the advice of the Designated Official.

The five Phases of the Security Plan are:

Phase One: Precautionary

This phase is designed to warn staff members that the security situation in the country or a portion of the country is such that caution should be exercised. All travel into the duty station requires advance clearance from the Designated Official.

Phase Two: Restricted Movement

This phase signifies a much higher level of alert and imposes major restrictions on the movement of all staff members and their families. During Phase Two all staff members and their families will be required to remain at home unless otherwise instructed.

Phase Three: Restriction

Phase Three indicates a substantial deterioration in the security situation, which may result in the relocation of staff members or their eligible dependants. When recommending Phase Three to UNSECOORD, the Designated Official and Security Management Team may recommend any of the following mandatory actions:

- Temporary concentration of all internationally recruited staff members and/ or their eligible dependants in one or more sites within a particular area
- Relocation of all internationally recruited staff members and/ or their eligible dependants to alternative locations within the country; and/ or
- Relocation outside the country of all eligible dependants of internationally recruited staff members and/ or non-essential internationally recruited staff members. The determination of essential staff members for security purposes will be made jointly by the Designated Official and the individual representative of the agencies, programs or funds at the duty station.

Spouses of internationally recruited staff members may remain, on a voluntary basis and subject to the approval of the Designated Official, at a duty station where Phase Three has been declared. Should this option be exercised, *no evacuation allowances* would be payable for the individual concerned. *This option applies only to Phase Three and only to spouses of internationally recruited staff members, never to other dependants.*

Phase Four: Program Suspension

Phase Four is to enable the Designated Official to recommend to the Secretary-General, through the UNSECOORD, the relocation outside the country of all remaining internationally recruited staff members except those directly concerned with *emergency or humanitarian relief operations or security matters*. All other internationally recruited staff members who heretofore were considered essential to maintain program activities will be evacuated at this time.

Phase Five: Evacuation

The decision to initiate Phase Five – which can only be declared following approval by the Secretary-General – signifies that the situation has deteriorated to such a point that all remaining internationally recruited staff members are required to leave.

The relocation/ evacuation of internationally recruited staff members and/ or their eligible family members will, in the first instance, normally be to a designated safe haven, either inside the country or in another country approved by UNSECOORD. Staff members and/ or dependants who are relocated/ evacuated from a duty station may be entitled to evacuation allowances (For more information regarding this matter, please contact your administrative officer).

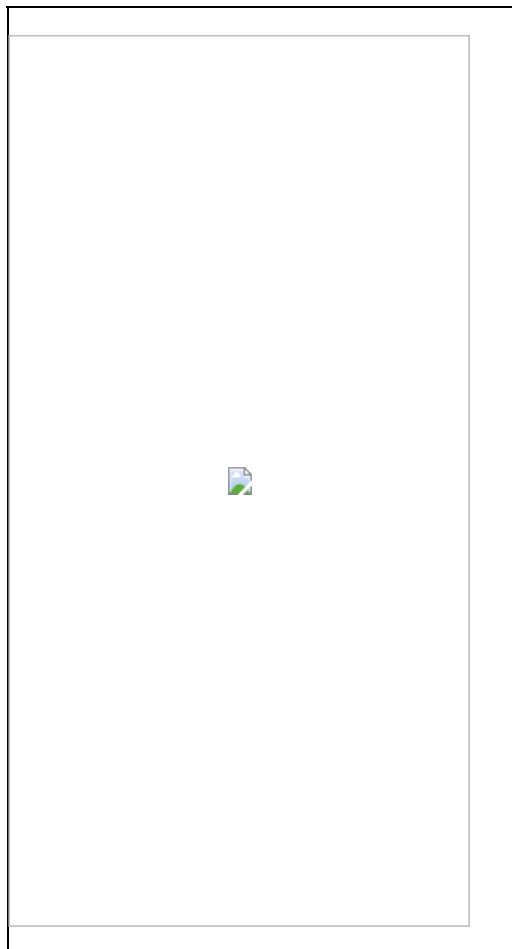
Following the relocation/ evacuation, a decision will be taken within 30 days to:

- Authorize their return to the duty station;
- Reassign staff members, temporarily or otherwise;
- Authorize their return to their respective home country.

Annex V

1998 CONTRIBUTIONS FOR FIELD COORDINATION UNITS, IRINs and CAP STRENGTHENING

(Income Received or Pledged)



Donors	Income (US\$)	Percentage of Total Funding
USA	3,671,824	18.3%
Sweden	3,469,188	18.1%
United Kingdom	2,182,545	10.9%
Netherlands	1,790,318	8.9%
Norway	1,781,963	8.9%
Denmark	846,472	4.2%
Canada	685,629	3.4%
Switzerland	445,356	2.2%

South Africa	200,000	1.0%
Australia	127,000	0.6%
Italy	117,842	0.6%
Greece	60,000	0.3%
EC-ECHO	56,000	0.3%
Liechtenstein	39,735	0.2%
Turkey	30,000	0.1%
Cyprus	13,998	0.1%
Botswana	10,000	0.0%
Philippines	2,000	0.0%
Women's Club of Nyon	1,654	0.0%
Various *	4,359,000	21.8%
TOTAL	20,039,452	100.0%

SOURCE: 'OCHA IN 1999' (March 1999)

Contributions received by UNOCHA in response to both coordination and mine action programmes.

Annex VI

Generic Process Timetable for a Calendar Year (from Technical Guidelines for the Consolidated Appeal Process, OCHA CERB, March 1999)

Early April	Fax from OCHA to field locations outlining intentions for Mid Term Review meeting Geneva mid July. Guidance/ instruction provided on the process and content for MTR document preparation and dissemination
Apr/ May	Field Offices gather and analyze information, financial responses, indicators relating to 1999 CHAP
End May	Training of trainers on CAP in advance of deployment late July/ August
Mid June	Field level preparation of MTR document
End June	Submission to OCHA Geneva of MTR for formal dissemination to member states
Mid July	MTR Meeting Geneva
3 rd week July	Country Team retreat to review situation and determine strategy for following year. Establishment of country level CAP 'steering committee'
Early August	Assessments and development of Sectoral analysis to include progress made, needs, identification of objectives and indicators
Early Sept.	CAP 'steering committee' convenes to discuss time-frame and structure of Appeal for following year and to formulate and agree on the CHAP
Mid Sept.	Sectoral lead agencies to determine priority areas of activity and associated projects for inclusion in the new Appeal in accordance with the CHAP
2-4 week Oct.	Completed field drafts submitted for finalization by OCHA Geneva
Early Nov.	Dissemination to member states and partner organizations
End Nov.	Global launch

All facilitator/ training support at the field level to take place in principle PRIOR to 31.8.99.

Annex VII

Further Reading

Please note that the following list merely attempts to offer a useful selection of reading material, and is by no means comprehensive. Further information on relevant publications might be gained either by contacting the web sites given below, or by contacting OCHA's Policy Development Unit in New York (E-mail: ocha-pdu@un.org).

In addition, two CD-ROMS, prepared by OCHA's Information Technology Unit in New York, are expected to be finalized in 1999. These will be particularly useful for OCHA staff in the field. The first is an archive of relevant publications, and the second is a 'Field Kit' containing useful information on a range of topics such as administrative and personnel matters.

Coordination

- "Strategic Coordination in the Great Lakes Region 1996-1977", an independent study for the IASC, March 1998 (available on www.reliefweb.int/resources)
- 'Humanitarian Action in the Caucasus: A Guide for Practitioners', by Greg Hansen, Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies, 1998 (www.brown.edu/Departments/Watson_Institute)
- 'Complex Crisis and Complex Peace: Humanitarian Coordination in Angola', by Nicole Ball and Kathleen Campbell, OCHA, March 1998 (www.reliefweb.int/resources)
- 'Coordination in Rwanda: the Humanitarian Response to Genocide and Civil War' by Taylor B. Seybolt, Conflict Management Group, February 1997 (www.cmgonline.org)
- 'The Policies of Mercy: UN Coordination in Afghanistan, Mozambique and Rwanda
by Antonio Donini, Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies, 1996 (see website address above)

Human Rights

- 'Easy Reference on International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights', OCHA_
Policy Development Unit, 1999 (contact OCHA-PDU at above e-mail address)
- 'Human Rights and International Legal Standards: What relief workers need to know', Relief and Rehabilitation Network, February 1997
 - 'The Human Rights Handbook: A practical guide to monitoring human rights', by Kathryn English and Adam Stapleton, University of Essex, October 1995
- Human Rights: A compilation of international legal instruments', (available at www.unhchr.ch)

Internally Displaced Persons

- Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement', (contact OCHA-PDU)
- 'Field Practices on Internal Displacement', compiled by UNICEF, OCHA and HCHR, April 1999
 - 'Internal Displacement in Africa', a workshop report by UNHCR, Brookings Institute, October 1998
- 'Women Displaced in the Southern Caucasus: an examination of humanitarian assistance needs in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Nagorno-Karabakh and Georgia', by Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, April 1998

Gender

- 'The Gender Dimension of Internal Displacement', by Judy Benjamin for UNICEF, OEP Working Paper Series, November 1998
 - 'Internal Displacement and Gender, Humanitarian Principles Workshop: Focus on a Child Rights Approach to Complex Emergencies and Internal Displacement', October 1998 (contact OCHA-PDU)
 - The Human Rights of Women and Children, Challenges and Opportunities', report of a consultation organized by UNICEF, UN Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), Save the Children Alliance, International Women's Rights Action Watch, Commonwealth Medical Association, January 1998_
- 'Gender-based Persecution', report of the Expert Group Meeting, DAW, November 1997

Sanctions

- 'United Nations Sanctions: How effective? How necessary?', by Andrew Mack and Asif Khan, UN Strategic Planning Unit, March 1999

- 'Coping with the Humanitarian Impact of Sanctions: An OCHA perspective', December 1998, (www.reliefweb.int/resources)
- 'Toward More Humane and Effective Sanctions Management: Enhancing the capacity of the UN system', by Larry Minear *et al.*, October 1997 (www.reliefweb.int/resources)

Miscellaneous (policy issues)

- 'Inter-Agency Expert Consultation on Protected Areas', final report, OCHA/ Harvard University, April 1999 (contact OCHA-PDU)
- 'Between Relief and Development: targeting food aid for disaster prevention in Ethiopia', by Kay Sharp, Relief and Rehabilitation Network, September 1998
- 'People in Peril: Human Rights, Humanitarian Action and Preventing Deadly Conflict', by John Strelau, Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, May 1998
- 'Life after Death: suspicion and reintegration in post-genocide Rwanda', US Committee for Refugees, February 1998

Security

- 'Security in the Field – Information for Staff Members of the United Nations System', (contact OCHA New York, tel. 212-963 1608)

Consolidated Appeals Process

- 'Technical Guidelines for the Consolidated Appeal Process', OCHA CERB, March 1999
- 'Consolidated Appeal Process Guidelines', IASC, April 1994