

THE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE SYSTEM OF THE UNITED NATIONS



OCHA

THE UN CHARTER PRINCIPLES FOR HUMANITARIAN ACTION



UN CHARTER ARTICLE 1.3:

“ ... to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character...

... through ...

UN CHARTER ARTICLE 1.4:

... becoming a centre for harmonizing actions.”



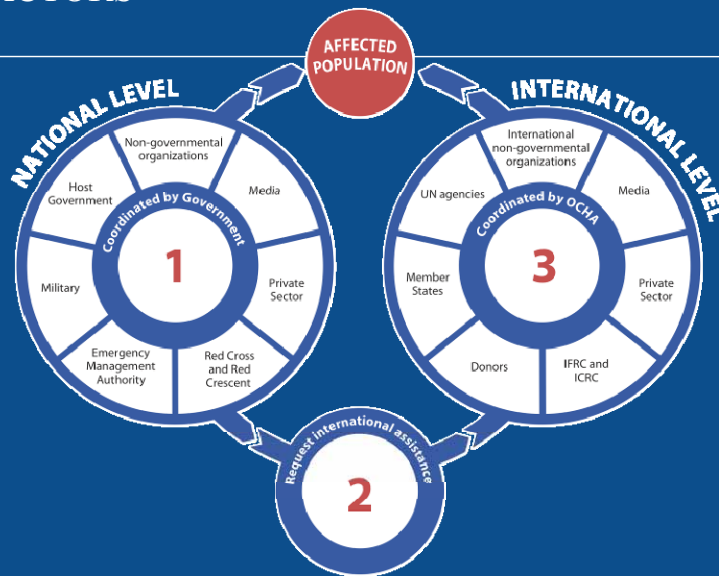
OCHA'S MANDATE

- **1991:** General Assembly Resolution 46/182 created the Emergency Relief Coordinator as the focal point and voice for humanitarian emergencies.
- The same resolution created the Department for Humanitarian Affairs (became OCHA in 1998), the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and the CERF.



THE KEY ACTORS

Upon request OCHA assists governments in mobilizing international assistance when the scale of the disaster exceeds the national capacity.



AID IS AN ABSOLUTE RIGHT

WHY DO WE NEED COORDINATION?

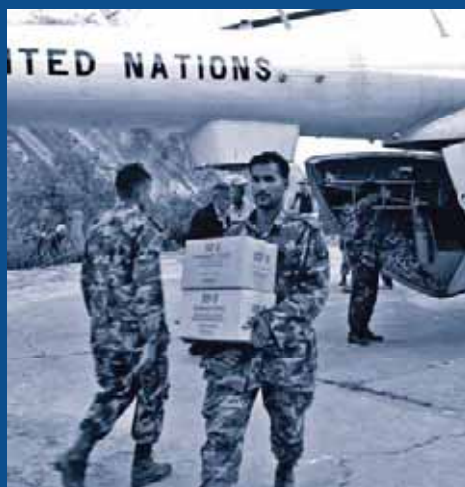
- We need to deal with a multiplicity of actors.
- We need to work with limited resources.
- We need to avoid the politicization of aid.
- We need to avoid gaps, duplications, and assure the responsibility of each humanitarian partner.



AID IS AN ABSOLUTE RIGHT

COORDINATION MECHANISMS

- **GLOBAL:** Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA), Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP)
- **COUNTRY LEVEL:** Humanitarian Coordinators, Humanitarian Partnership Teams, Consolidated Appeals.





Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)

- Composed of NGO consortia, Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, IOM, World bank and UN agencies

Inter-Agency Standing Committee
Full Members and Standing Invitees

Full Members	Standing Invitees
 Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO)	 International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
 Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	 International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA)
 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	 International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
 United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	 American Council for Voluntary International Action (InterAction)
 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	 International Organisation for Migration (IOM)
 United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	 Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
 World Food Programme (WFP)	 Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons (SRSG on HR of IDPs)
 World Health Organisation (WHO)	 Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHIR)
	 World Bank (World Bank)

Why did we need Humanitarian Reform?

- Myriad of actors – coordination difficult
- Gaps in response
- Unpredictability of response
- Insufficient accountability
- Inconsistent donor policies

=> In September 2005 the IASC endorsed the cluster approach as default way of organizing the international response to any new humanitarian emergency.



HUMANITARIAN reform

Humanitarian Coordinator (HC)

- ERC decides on case by case basis on appointment of HCs
- ERC first looks at suitability of incumbent Resident Coordinator (RC)
- If he/she lacks humanitarian experience or for other (e.g. political) reasons the RC is not suitable, ERC will usually select an HC from the 'HC pool'
- HC Pool was established in 2006 – ongoing training in humanitarian coordination/leadership, tools etc (HC pool includes many RCs)
- HC is Head of the (UN) Humanitarian Country Team
- Direct reporting line to the ERC (currently John Holmes)



reform HUMANITARIAN

Cluster Approach

Aim

- Higher standards of predictability, accountability and partnership in all sectors or areas of humanitarian activity
- More strategic responses
- Better prioritization of available resources

Terminology

- Each country to decide on appropriate terminology, based on the working languages and local preferences
- But a 'cluster' is basically the operational body for a 'sector' and the change is about securing clear leadership for that sector

Allocation of Cluster Leads at country level

- The HC, in consultation with the Humanitarian Country Team, is responsible for designation of cluster/sector leads at country level
- Where possible, cluster leads at country level should be in line with leads at global level but this may not always be appropriate



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Responsibilities of Global Cluster Leads

- **Normative**
 - Standard setting & consolidation of 'best practice'
- **Capacity-Building**
 - Training and system development at all levels
 - Surge capacity and standby rosters
 - Material stockpiles
- **Operational Support**
 - Emergency preparedness
 - Advocacy and resource mobilization



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Terms of Reference for Cluster/Sector Leads at Country Level

- Inclusion of key humanitarian partners
- Establishment of appropriate coordination mechanisms
- Coordination with national/local authorities, local civil society etc.
- Ensure participatory and community-based approaches
- Attention to priority cross-cutting issues (age, environment, gender, HIV/AIDS etc.)

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Activities of cluster leads

- ❖ Emergency preparedness
 - Planning and strategy development
 - Needs Assessment and Analysis
 - Application of standards
 - Monitoring and reporting
 - Advocacy and resource mobilization
 - Training and capacity building
 - Provider of Last Resort (POLR) – what does that mean???

Regional Disaster Response Framework in the Pacific

Specific Context of Humanitarian Assistance in the Pacific

- High degree of disaster risk
- The vast ocean mass
- Small and scattered population on small islands
- Local responders quickly overwhelmed
- Regional responders operate from different locations in the Pacific

Challenges for effective & timely response and coordination

Background

- Humanitarian Reform and Cluster Approach at the global level
- Lessons from the [Solomon Islands Tsunami/ Earthquake in April 2007](#), which highlighted the challenges in response and the importance of disaster preparedness
- Objective: more effective & predictable humanitarian assistance in the Pacific
- Inter-agency coordination and collaboration and emergency preparedness are an important part of this effort

Lessons from SI EQ/Tsunami

- Data preparedness and collection
- Sustained coordination at multiple levels
- Information management for coordination and decision-making
- Logistics, transport and supply
- Roles and responsibilities of various actors

Outcomes from inter-agency collaboration

Pacific Humanitarian Team

- Comprising all disaster response actors that have a regional capacity to deploy in Pacific Island Countries
- 6 Prioritized clusters
(1) Health & Nutrition (2) WASH (3) Emergency Shelter & Camp management (4) Logistics (5) Information Management (6) Protection

6 Pacific Priority Clusters

Humanitarian Cluster	Global cluster lead	Pacific cluster lead	Pacific cluster partners
1 Health & Nutrition	WHO & UNICEF	WHO & (UNICEF)	WHO, UNICEF, USG, Red Cross (RC), UNFPA, WV, UNDP, UNEP, SCF, OXFAM, NZ, AUS, Fiji School of Medicine/Monash
2 Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH)	UNICEF	UNICEF	UNICEF, RC, OXFAM, NZ, WV, SCF, USG, JP, WHO, AUS
3 Shelter & Camp Management	IFRC & IOM	IFRC (convener for Shelter) IOM (for Camp Management)	IFRC, SCF, HFH, WV, Oxfam, NZ, JP, AUS, IOM?
4 Logistics	WFP	(WFP)	WFP, Oxfam, Red Cross, USG, Church, FRANZ
5 Information Management	Cross-cutting issue	UNOCHA	UNOCHA, OXFAM, SCF, RC, USG, UNFPA, UNICEF, Monash/ FSM, UNESCO, FRANZ, SOPAC?, NZCID, ACFID? PIANGO?
6 Protection	UNHCR	UNHCR/UNICEF/ OHCHR	UNHCR, UNICEF, OHCHR, OXFAM, WV, SCF, OCHA, USG, UNFPA, NZ, RC, Churches, UNDSS, AUSAID

Outcomes (cont'd)

- **Coordination - IASC: Cluster leads + UNRCs**
 - Inter Cluster Coordination
 - Inter-Agency Standing Committee of the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT - IASC): WHO, UNICEF, IFRC, OCHA, UNDP and others as per request
- **Utilization of Pacific Disaster Net as an information tool**
- **Country level Contingency Planning exercises (2008/2009)**
 - Regional humanitarian organizations (PHT) will support and compliment the existing national disaster preparedness and response structures and plans
 - Focus on priority countries

Planning assumptions

- Most likely, worst case scenario: Rapid onset natural disaster affecting up to 30,000 people, including displacement, shelter, etc. in multiple locations/countries
- This preparedness capacity should be able to deal with most other (smaller) emergencies (natural and man-made)

Experience & Results

- Fiji floods (Jan 09)
- Solomon Islands Floods (Feb 09)
- Ambrym Floods & Eruption (Apr 09)
- Regional PHT workshop for review and 2009/10 preparedness in Oct 09

WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE

ReliefWeb	www.reliefweb.int
Financial Tracking System	www.reliefweb.int/fts
Humanitarian Appeals	www.humanitarianappeal.net
Humanitarian Early Warning System	www.hewsweb.org
Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System	www.gdacs.org
Humanitarian news and analysis	www.IRINnews.org
Humanitarian Information Centres and Partners	www.humanitarianinfo.org
OCHA	www.ochaonline.org
Inter-Agency Standing Committee	www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc



And
www.humanitarianreform.org
www.pacificdisaster.net



OCHA'S MISSION



OCHA mobilizes and coordinates effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors.



OCHA'S MISSION



OCHA HAS FOUR CLEAR GOALS

- To alleviate human suffering in disasters and emergencies.
- To advocate for the rights of people in need.
- To promote preparedness and prevention.
- To facilitate sustainable solutions.



OCHA'S CORE FUNCTIONS



OCHA'S CORE FUNCTIONS

OCHA'S HAS FIVE CORE FUNCTIONS

- Humanitarian coordination
- Humanitarian advocacy
- Policy development
- Management of humanitarian information
- Humanitarian Financing

