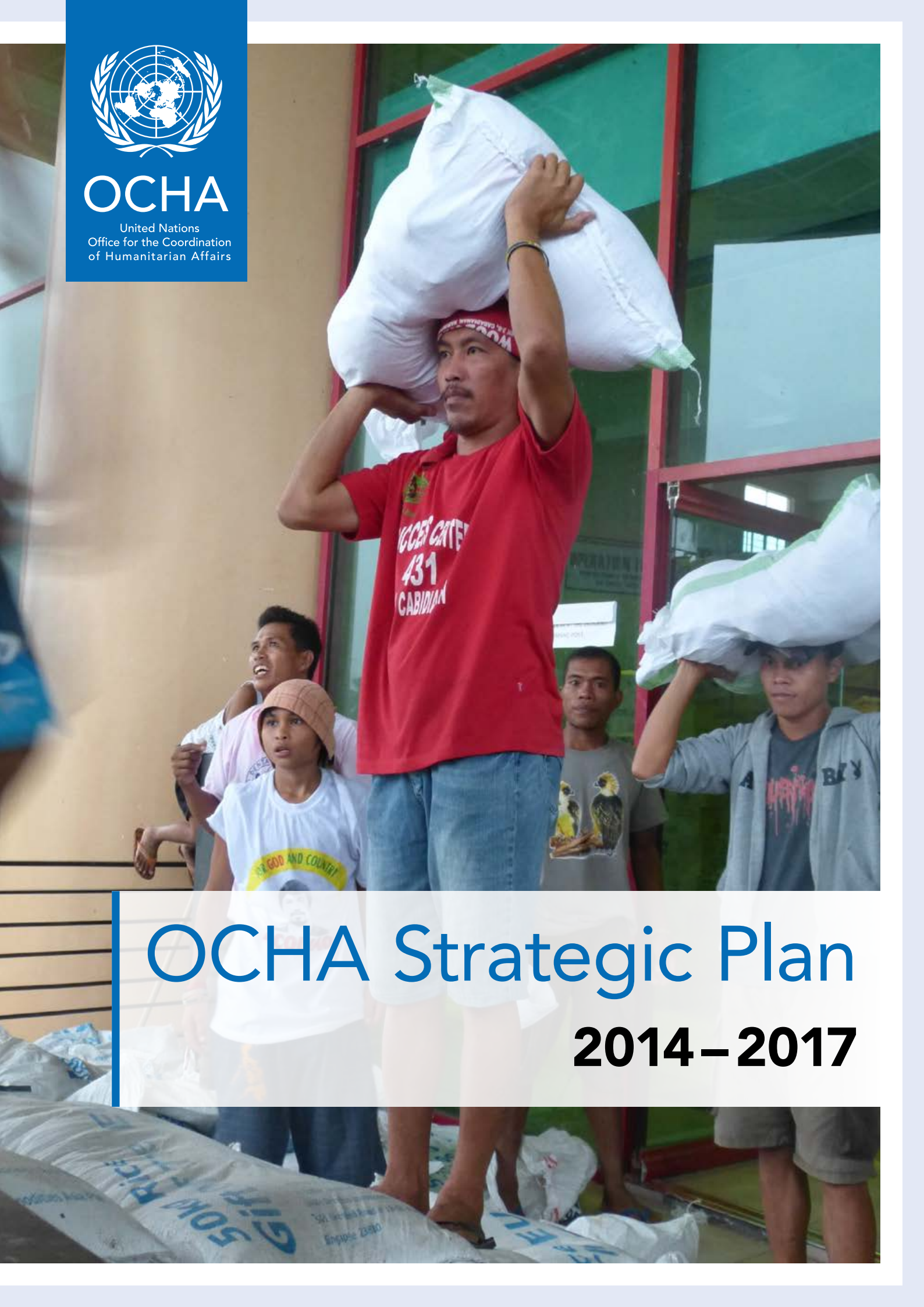




OCHA

United Nations
Office for the Coordination
of Humanitarian Affairs



OCHA Strategic Plan

2014 – 2017



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OCHA Strategic Plan

2014–2017

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FOREWORD

Humanitarian crises continue to grow in scale and complexity, and the humanitarian system needs to adapt to keep pace. Over the past decade, the number of people affected by humanitarian crises has almost doubled and is expected to keep rising. At the beginning of 2014, international aid organizations launched appeals to help 52 million people in need around the world, at a cost of US\$15.6 billion—almost double the amount we needed in 2012.

The year so far has been dominated by the three top-level emergencies in Syria, South Sudan and the Central African Republic. We are also continuing to respond to the often-forgotten protracted crises in Yemen, Sudan, Somalia, the Sahel, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Afghanistan. It is essential that the UN agencies and global NGOs that are part of the IASC, with support from colleagues in the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, continue to improve our humanitarian response efforts.

At the same time, we must work with partners to determine how we can best plan and prepare to meet future challenges. Given the growth in humanitarian needs and pressures on capacity and funding, solutions are required that give affected people a far greater say in how aid is provided, and give first responders and national Governments the support they need to become more effective. OCHA is at the forefront of bringing about this change, leading reform efforts and promoting innovation.

OCHA's 2014-2017 Strategic Plan describes how we will contribute to reform over the next four years. We will focus on delivering two mutually reinforcing goals: improving humanitarian action in the world's ongoing crises, and increasing the effectiveness of response efforts by engaging with new partners and promoting new technologies and ideas. The World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 will provide an opportunity to bring together the key stakeholders in the humanitarian community to map out a change agenda that will support an inclusive and diverse global humanitarian system that is better able to meet future needs and challenges.

OCHA has moved to a new results-based management approach that will measure how our leadership, coordination and advocacy contribute to collective humanitarian action.

We consulted widely in the development of our strategic plan. I would like to thank everyone involved for their inputs. We now look to you, our partners, to support us in implementing it.

Valerie Amos

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs
and Emergency Relief Coordinator

INTRODUCTION

OCHA's Strategic Framework covers the 2014 to 2017 period. The Strategic Plan presents OCHA's vision, overarching goals and strategic objectives. A related Management Plan explains how OCHA will strengthen its operations to deliver against this plan.

This Strategic Plan has been prepared in response to persistent global challenges. They include continuing and protracted armed conflict, chronic vulnerability, displacement and an ever-increasing demand for humanitarian assistance due to the growing number of disasters worldwide. At the same time, there have been dramatic changes in the makeup of the humanitarian sector and the way it works. Humanitarian agencies are more numerous and diverse. Communities, Governments, regional organizations, civil society and neighbouring countries have increased their capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies. And technological advances are giving a stronger and clearer voice to people affected by disasters, enabling them to more clearly state their needs and criticize response efforts, leading to changes in the way assistance is provided.

In light of these changes, many factors—longstanding and relatively new—have challenged the international community's ability to meet the needs of people affected by crises. In addition to funding constraints, these factors include growing economic inequality and vulnerability due to global trends such as climate change and urbanization; the failure of political processes to end conflict; and inadequate prioritization and investment in disaster risk reduction.

In response, OCHA will remain focused on providing high-quality and strategic coordination services that support humanitarian actors in their delivery of principled and effective responses by supporting the implementation of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Transformative Agenda. This focuses on improving the leadership, coordination and accountability of humanitarian response efforts.

OCHA also recognizes that the humanitarian sector needs to adapt to address these challenges. If the sector is to keep pace with the increased needs of growing numbers of people, it will need new actors and capacities, and improved links between international, regional and national aid providers. OCHA will thus work to ensure that the humanitarian sector continues to become more inclusive, and to make fundamental changes in the way it works, while building on current strengths, norms, values and principles. Much of this work will actively inform and benefit from the consultations leading up to the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, at which Member States, humanitarian organizations and affected people will create an agenda to ensure that humanitarian action is fit to respond to future challenges.

OCHA's 2010-2013 Strategic Framework was organized around three goals: 1) a more effective humanitarian coordination system, 2) a more enabling environment for humanitarian action, and 3) strengthened OCHA management and administration. The 2014-2017 Strategic Framework builds on these three aims. Goal 1 is an extension of OCHA's efforts to create a more effective humanitarian coordination system via its specific contributions to the implementation of the Transformative Agenda, the purpose of which is to improve response in the field through collective action. Goal 2 is an evolution of OCHA's efforts to create

an enabling environment for humanitarian action, including through strengthened engagement with a broad range of Member States, expanded partnerships with other actors and adaptation to the changing humanitarian landscape. OCHA's role in supporting coordination, innovation and policy development in the humanitarian sector, as expressed in this Strategic Plan, is separate from matters pertaining to its internal organization. These matters are detailed in the related Management Plan and are thus an extension of its ongoing efforts to strengthen OCHA's internal management and administration.



THE CHANGING CONTEXT FOR HUMANITARIAN ACTION:

The new normal

Increasing disasters

“Mega disasters” continue to occur more frequently and with more devastating effects in rich and poor countries. Smaller-scale disasters, which are often cyclical and include droughts, floods and extreme temperatures, are also increasing. Small but recurrent disasters often cause more cumulative negative effects than larger disasters, but they receive less international attention and fewer resources. For example, in 2012, the disasters that resulted in the most fatalities, economic damages and/or numbers of people affected were similar to those in the previous year, such as Typhoons Bopha and Washi in the Philippines, Hurricanes Sandy and Irene in the Caribbean and US, and three years of widespread flooding in Pakistan.

Conflict and internal displacement

Conflict continues to create significant humanitarian needs. The number of people internally displaced by armed conflict has risen steadily from 17 million in 1977 to an estimated 28.8 million at the end of 2012. There is now a different type of conflict in many communities, fuelled by criminal activity and trafficking in people, drugs or stolen goods.

Compound crises and chronic vulnerability

Disasters are not only increasing in number; they are becoming more multifaceted. The effects of climate change, environmental degradation, economic inequality, population growth, political

unrest and migration have weakened community resilience in many countries. Protracted and recurring emergencies are creating groups of people for whom crisis is “the new normal”, making humanitarian caseloads harder to define.

Complexity

Rapid urbanization around the world is bringing specific challenges. Natural disasters and man-made emergencies can have more devastating effects in towns and cities. Of the 3.3 billion people who live in urban areas today, one third are housed in precarious informal settlements and slums. By 2030, the world’s urban population is predicted to be more than 5 billion people, some 80 per cent of whom are expected to live in the developing world.



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Newly urbanized areas are often inherently fragile and unstable, and people’s dependency on complex and interconnected infrastructure systems in cities makes them more vulnerable when these systems break down.

The provision of humanitarian assistance often takes place in a complex environment in which separate—and not necessarily complementary—military, political and security objectives pose challenges to the application of humanitarian principles, responders’ ability to reach people in need, and the safety and security of aid workers. These conditions can place pressure on humanitarian actors to support and participate in political and security efforts. In some situations, integrated approaches can yield

important benefits for people affected by emergencies. But this mix of objectives can also challenge humanitarian actors’ ability to provide impartial and independent assistance to vulnerable people.

More people not receiving the help they need

The United Nations, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and the largest international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) continue, with Governments and national civil-society organizations, to provide the response to most major international humanitarian crises. These organizations remain the largest recipients of current humanitarian aid flows. For

example, between 2007 and 2011, more than half of international assistance was channelled through multilateral organizations and funds. But even with stable funding, increasing needs mean that in the future, more people will not receive the help they require. The rising number of humanitarian crises now generates 25 to 30 inter-agency appeals for assistance, many of which are underfunded year after year.

THE CHANGING GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN SECTOR: Beyond the system

Continuing humanitarian sector reform

In 1991, UN General Assembly resolution 46/182 established what is referred to as the international humanitarian system, based around the role of the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and the IASC. The resolution established a set of core guiding principles for humanitarian action. Since then, there have been several reform efforts to improve leadership, accountability and shared responsibility in the international humanitarian system; strengthen preparedness; and ensure greater interoperability between the UN, the Red Cross/Red Crescent

Movement, international NGOs, and regional and national actors.

This evolution continues. Following the launch of the humanitarian reform process, improvements were made between 2005 and 2011 in providing more predictable humanitarian financing and more effective multilateral coordination mechanisms. Building on these, the IASC Principals agreed in 2012 on a Transformative Agenda to strengthen humanitarian leadership, streamline coordination mechanisms and ensure accountability for collective results in the delivery of humanitarian response efforts. These changes have led to stronger humanitarian leadership in the field, a new coordination

framework and coordination tools, and enhanced capacity for rapid response. It remains critical to continue to operationalize these new reforms in order to ensure increasingly effective and principled responses to humanitarian emergencies worldwide.

Building resilience and the post-2015 agenda

To end humanitarian aid dependency and more sustainably reduce vulnerability, initiatives have been launched with the aim of responding to protracted crises and/or recurrent natural disasters through resilience programming and closer alignment between humanitarian and

development actors. Several processes are also under way to identify priorities for the development agenda after 2015, which is when the Millennium Development Goals and the Hyogo Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Reduction will be reviewed. The World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 is expected to take the reform process further by integrating the humanitarian and development agendas.

An expanding humanitarian sector

The humanitarian system is expanding. National Governments and disaster management authorities are playing a bigger role; there are greater numbers of





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NGOs and civil-society actors involved in humanitarian response than ever before; and many actors, including OCHA, are establishing new partnerships with the corporate sector. A growth in regional and national policy frameworks and systems for disaster and crisis management has accompanied this shift. As more countries reach middle-income status, more Governments are becoming donors or providers of in-kind assistance and are sharing their experience and expertise. The increase in humanitarian actors offers new perspectives, experiences, capacities and contributions to international response efforts. It also brings new challenges, including the fact that some

partners may not share the same commitment to the fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. A key reason for the World Humanitarian Summit is the need to recognize and solidify the cooperation among these actors and the multilateral system.

Evolving methods of responding and people's involvement

The provision of humanitarian assistance is also changing, with new mechanisms and means of delivering aid. For example, there has been considerable progress over the last few years in institutionalizing the use of cash-transfer programming in

humanitarian response. The question is no longer whether cash is an appropriate way of meeting the needs of crisis-affected people, but how organizations, donors and Governments can best use cash with, and in place of, in-kind humanitarian assistance. As the use of cash-transfer programming continues to grow, there is a need to better understand the potentially far-reaching implications this may have on the provision of humanitarian assistance.

At the same time, people are connecting through technology at an accelerating pace. In 2012, global mobile phone subscriptions topped 6 billion. As communities are fragmented and uprooted by displacement, migration and economic hardship, they



WFP/Laure Chadraoui

are, at the same time, better able to connect through communications technology. Direct communication means that affected people can tell those providing aid and support exactly what they need, and they can organize their own response. This change is also bringing significant new players into humanitarian response—including local telecommunications companies and Internet-service providers—and humanitarian actors are recognizing that providing connectivity to affected people is a vital humanitarian service in its own right. Informed, connected and self-reliant communities are changing the way humanitarian organizations do business.

Defining effectiveness in humanitarian aid

Overall, there is no common framework or theory that defines humanitarian effectiveness while fully reflecting the complexity of humanitarian work. Different constituencies (including affected people, host Governments, donors, humanitarian organizations and actors such as private-sector companies) tend to prioritize different elements of effectiveness, as well as accountability for it. Furthermore, their conceptualization of effectiveness often depends on the particular humanitarian context, such as natural disasters versus conflicts. Thus, while the overall goal of saving lives

and reducing suffering may be shared, the components of effectiveness that are viewed as the most critical can differ. What defines humanitarian effectiveness may also change in the future, given the changing ways in which people are meeting their humanitarian needs (through private-sector or Government support, civil-society networks, etc.) and changes in how the traditional humanitarian system provides aid (e.g., cash transfers). Many useful initiatives and frameworks have been set up to monitor effectiveness, but further assessment is required to determine how these initiatives and frameworks fit together and consider diverse perspectives and future realities.

OCHA'S COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE:

Supporting principled,
effective and timely
humanitarian response

Coordinated humanitarian action multiplies the impact and efficiency of individual responders. OCHA, with its partners, contributes to principled, effective and timely humanitarian responses through strategic coordination, advocacy, policy, information management and humanitarian financing services.

OCHA's comparative advantage lies in its unique mandate and cumulative experience, which enable it to serve as a neutral convening authority and an agent of change and reform. OCHA's success relies on its partnerships with the key humanitarian responders and collocutors, such as IASC members, who are at the forefront of providing aid to people.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN:

Goals and strategic objectives

OCHA aspires to a world in which:

- People are better able to withstand shocks.
- Governments are aware of risks, are well prepared and able to respond to disasters quickly and effectively.
- International assistance is provided quickly, efficiently and appropriately.

Between 2014 and 2017, OCHA will work towards this vision in two ways.

First, it recognizes the importance of continuing to provide strategic humanitarian leadership and coordination to meet the needs of affected people by championing the implementation of the IASC Transformative Agenda, and by building strong, flexible coordination mechanisms.

Second, OCHA will respond to the changes in the humanitarian sector by fostering a spirit of innovation. It will analyse trends, anticipate change and identify new forms of action with a wide range of providers and partners.

OCHA's goals and strategic objectives








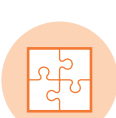
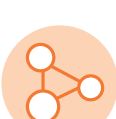

Based on the above analysis and vision, and in line with its mandate, OCHA has two goals for 2014 to 2017 underpinned by 10 strategic objectives. These define the focus of OCHA's work in the field and at headquarters, as well as the overarching priorities towards which all of its activities contribute.

GOAL 1 **FIELD EFFECTIVENESS**

More effective and principled humanitarian action that meets the needs of affected people.

GOAL 2 **FIT FOR THE FUTURE**

A more diverse and adaptable humanitarian sector, spanning a variety of existing and emerging responder-and-partner networks.

	LEADERSHIP	Humanitarian action is led by empowered, competent and experienced professionals.
	SITUATIONAL AWARENESS	Humanitarian decision-making is based on a common situational awareness.
	ASSESSMENT, PLANNING & MONITORING	Humanitarian action is guided by joint strategic response planning based on prioritized needs.
	COORDINATION MECHANISMS	Coordination mechanisms are adapted to the context and support the effective and coherent delivery of humanitarian assistance.
	HUMANITARIAN FINANCING	Humanitarian financing is predictable, timely and allocated based on priority needs.
	PROTECTION & ACCESS TO ASSISTANCE	People in emergencies are protected from harm and have access to assistance as a result of advocacy and coordination.
	EMERGENCY RESPONSE PREPAREDNESS	International partners are ready to respond to humanitarian emergencies without delay and with the right assistance.
	DIVERSITY	A more diverse set of actors engages in and provides political, technical and material support to collective humanitarian action.
	INTER-OPERABILITY	International, regional and national actors are able to deploy well-coordinated and interoperable humanitarian response capacities within agreed frameworks.
	INNOVATION	Innovation to promote improvement is consistently fostered and brought to scale in the humanitarian sector.

GOAL 1

More effective and principled humanitarian action that meets the needs of affected people.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: LEADERSHIP



Humanitarian action is led by empowered, competent and experienced professionals.

Leadership is tested in times of crisis, when it is most needed. In the midst of mounting and increasingly complex humanitarian crises, often with critical protection and human rights dimensions, a lack of leadership can lead to uncoordinated, incoherent and even ineffective responses that undermine national leadership, local authorities, economies and social structures. Between 2014 and 2017, OCHA will:

Put the right leaders in the right places at the right time

Building on the Transformative Agenda, OCHA will, in collaboration with relevant partners, continue to strengthen and support humanitarian leadership in the field, focusing on Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs), Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) and sectoral/cluster coordinators. In support of national

leadership, OCHA will ensure that highly experienced and qualified leaders are in place at the right time, particularly in complex situations requiring effective leadership, expertise and coordination capacity. It will identify, prepare, guide and help to mentor high-calibre future humanitarian leaders through inter-agency mechanisms such as the HC pool, while aiming for more balanced geographical, gender and institutional representation. This will include reaching out to experienced leaders from Governments, UN partners, NGOs and regional organizations. OCHA will continue to refine existing inter-agency mechanisms, such as the HC "Level 3" pool and the inter-agency rapid response mechanism, designed to ensure the rapid deployment of strong and experienced humanitarian leaders at all levels—drawn from OCHA, a range of organizations and cluster-specific rosters—to guide the

response from the outset of a major crisis. To avoid critical gaps in leadership, better succession planning will be implemented and supported by advocacy to address political impediments to deployment.

Reinforce operational field support to humanitarian leaders

OCHA will support humanitarian leaders by focusing on improving strategic decision-making on the direction of the response, and by finding solutions for challenges in the field. It will standardize expectations for its heads of offices and deputies in terms of identifying, planning and implementing coordination solutions, better support them to achieve these solutions, and hold them accountable through its results and performance management frameworks when they do not.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: SITUATIONAL AWARENESS



Humanitarian decision-making is based on a common situational awareness.

OCHA sits at the centre of multiple information flows coming from a range of sources that include response partners, clusters, donor and recipient Governments, affected people, the media and academia. By collecting, helping to analyse and making this data widely available, OCHA helps decision makers better understand the contexts in which they work and take well-informed decisions. To this end, over the next four years OCHA will:

Provide compelling contextual analysis

In the field, OCHA will ensure that humanitarian leaders receive more comprehensive and objective contextual analysis that rests on a better understanding of: 1) hazards, 2) underlying factors or contextual changes that may increase people's vulnerability, including environmental factors, 3) in-country and regional capacities, and 4) opportunities and means to influence humanitarian action at all levels. This will better enable humanitarian actors to: 1) identify the most appropriate response and advocacy strategies, 2) inform a particular decision



about a crisis, or 3) identify patterns, correlations and trends within a crisis and/or across countries and regions. OCHA will do this by working with other actors to identify and address knowledge gaps, including better use of available risk analysis. This will be supported by policy research and analysis on emerging humanitarian trends and thematic issues of global concern. OCHA will promote more systematic consultation with national actors and affected people, including men, women, boys and girls, to strengthen contextual analysis.

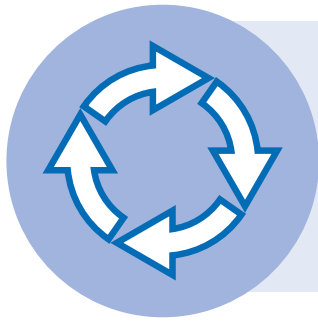
Ensure access to high-quality and timely data and information

OCHA will provide a more predictable and higher-quality suite of information products and services to its partners across all of its offices. It will make these more easily accessible through a single, integrated web platform (or “one-stop shop”). These efforts will be supported by improved data collection and consolidation before, during and after crises so that OCHA’s analysis and information products can rely on better data, information

and results analysis, and key policy and operational factors relating to access constraints and protection, as well as the specific needs of men, women, boys and girls. OCHA will prioritize the accessibility of its information products and services to national authorities and affected communities. This will improve communication on critical issues and allow better coordination with a wider range of actors, including Governments and development actors, on resilience approaches.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: ASSESSMENT, PLANNING & MONITORING



Humanitarian action is guided by joint strategic response planning based on prioritized needs.

An effective humanitarian response depends not only on a common understanding and prioritization of people's needs, but also on a shared, multi-sector approach to meeting them. This helps unite the operation at all levels with all partners, including with the people it serves. A strong needs-based strategic response framework that gives direction to sector-activity planning can enable Governments and humanitarian organizations to more effectively monitor the quality of the collective response and make any necessary course corrections. Improved, more transparent needs analysis, response planning and monitoring can also lead to greater accountability of humanitarian actors and donors to each other and to affected people. Between 2014 and 2017, OCHA will:

Coordinate and support joint needs assessments, inter-sectoral analysis and prioritization

In line with the Transformative Agenda, OCHA will continue to refine guidance and tools that help actors to reach a common understanding and prioritization of humanitarian needs. At the onset of a crisis, and where appropriate in support of Governments, OCHA will lead the coordination of multi-sectoral assessments. As the crisis evolves and the depth and volume of information necessary for an effective response increase, OCHA will work with partners to agree on what data to collect (including sex- and age-disaggregated data), as well as when, where and how, in order to ensure more harmonized, and therefore efficient, needs assessments throughout the crisis, particularly in protracted crises. OCHA will promote the involvement of people in identifying their needs and priorities, and it will work closely with human rights and other protection-mandated partners to ensure that protection concerns, including gender considerations, are integrated into all needs assessments. It will facilitate joint analysis of

assessment results, looking at needs, response capacities and gaps. Needs analysis and prioritization will help to ensure the most appropriate response. OCHA will support Governments and other actors to develop their assessment methodologies based on global best practice. Furthermore, OCHA will work with development actors to ensure that issues identified in the assessment of humanitarian needs that require longer-term interventions are addressed.

Coordinate and support joint strategic response planning

In keeping with the Transformative Agenda, OCHA will continue to promote joint planning that is more strategic and based on sound evidence-based analysis and prioritization of protection-and-assistance needs. The emphasis will be on more streamlined, results-driven and less process-oriented and resource-intensive planning efforts, supported by improved information services. OCHA will work with partners

to strengthen or develop new guidance and tools to facilitate strategic response planning, with consideration as to how these can better support resilience planning based on best practice. OCHA will engage a broader range of stakeholders, including affected people, to ensure a comprehensive understanding of and buy-in for the strategic direction of the humanitarian response. In slow-onset, chronic or recurrent crises requiring longer-term solutions, OCHA will promote humanitarian planning that is more compatible with development-planning approaches, such as the UN Development Action Frameworks.

In situations where integrated UN presences are deployed or being considered, OCHA will help humanitarian partners engage and interact with these missions to ensure UN action for peace consolidation is appropriate to the situation and does not impede humanitarian action or undermine humanitarian principles. In doing so, OCHA will facilitate and promote

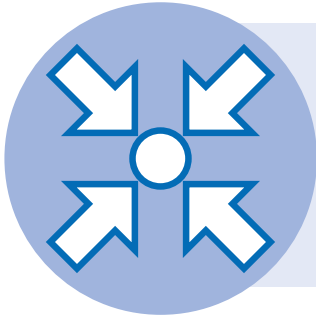
a common and coordinated humanitarian position on the most appropriate configuration of the UN on the ground.

Coordinate and support joint monitoring and evaluation of collective responses

In line with the Transformative Agenda commitment to enhance accountability in humanitarian action, OCHA will help affected Governments and HCTs to regularly review and evaluate collective responses. This will help to ensure consistent and transparent joint response monitoring to steer collective responses in real time. Reviews will focus on assessing leadership arrangements, implementation of the humanitarian programme cycle, emergency response preparedness, coordination mechanisms and the means of ensuring accountability to people affected by the crisis. OCHA will work with the UN Evaluation Group, the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development and Development Assistance

Committee evaluation network and others to ensure a coordinated approach to the rigorous evaluation of all major humanitarian responses. Specifically, it will work with partners to coordinate and lead a select number of inter-agency humanitarian evaluations based on agreed trigger mechanisms in order to produce an independent examination of collective results. Based on these reviews and evaluations, OCHA will ensure that the programme cycle is continually strengthened, promoted and supported in all operations. It will also ensure that affected people have a role in all inter-agency evaluations of major humanitarian responses that it coordinates.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: COORDINATION MECHANISMS



Coordination mechanisms are adapted to the context and support the effective and coherent delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Effective coordination helps humanitarian actors achieve better collective results. Specifically, it helps them to prepare, assess, plan, respond and monitor as a team. It enables actors to maximize resources and respond more effectively to the needs of people affected by crises. It ensures that humanitarian actors organize themselves in support of national responses, based on an agreed set of priorities. Effective coordination facilitates more predictable, transparent and accountable humanitarian response. Therefore, establishing and supporting coordination platforms that are predictable and tailored to the specific coordination needs on the ground will remain a key priority for OCHA. Over the next four years, OCHA will:

Support more decisive and strategic Humanitarian Country Teams

As a full member of, and secretariat to, the HCT, OCHA will work with its partners to ensure that the HCT is strongly positioned to provide strategic direction to the overall response. It will facilitate interaction and the smooth flow of information between sectors/clusters (at the national and subnational levels) and the HCT so that the latter is continuously informed of the realities on the ground and enabled to make timely humanitarian decisions. OCHA will work to ensure that NGOs and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, national actors and people, particularly women's organizations, have greater access to decision-making and planning processes. OCHA will help ensure better links and information flows between HCTs and in-country donor representatives, and it will promote discussions on donor representation in

HCTs. Increasingly, OCHA will advise on how to position HCTs and structure humanitarian action to better engage a wider range of strategic and operational decision makers around key issues, including governmental entities, civil society, the private sector and international development actors.

Lead and support inter-sector/cluster coordination

OCHA will lead country-based inter-sector/cluster coordination around multi-sectoral strategic objectives in support of an accountable, efficient and effective response throughout the humanitarian programme cycle. Within the HCT and across sectors/clusters, OCHA will promote common approaches to cross-cutting issues such as accountability to affected people, resilience building, protection and communication with affected people. OCHA will work with HCs, HCTs and Governments to ensure that appropriate coordination mechanisms are

in place at all levels. OCHA will limit its involvement in the coordination of individual sectors and/or clusters, leaving this work to the organizations that have assumed responsibility for it. OCHA will support HCs and HCTs to ensure the appropriate and time-bound activation, transition and de-activation of formally activated clusters, particularly ensuring that they support national mechanisms. OCHA will also ensure the regular review of cluster-coordination mechanisms, and will work to ensure that global coordination mechanisms are mobilized to support these activities.

Identify and develop flexible coordination solutions

The increasingly varied settings in which OCHA and its partners work require coordination solutions that are less prescriptive and more context specific. For instance, as more affected Governments are able to lead sector and inter-sector coordination,

international coordination, planning and resource mobilization arrangements must be adapted to support them. Slow-onset crises require responses that are more integrated with development actors' efforts. Mixed migration flows necessitate holistic, multi-sectoral coordination approaches. Integrated-mission environments require particular attention to ensure humanitarian actors' ability to provide impartial assistance to vulnerable people. In situations where resources do not permit the full suite of coordination services and tools, Governments and partners must still be able to rely on high-quality coordination services. And in increasingly volatile and insecure environments, more effective and creative coordination approaches are needed to ensure aid can be delivered where it is required. To this end, OCHA will use flexible and creative modes of coordinating and connecting various actors on the ground in different situations, building

on existing mechanisms to eliminate overlaps and optimize the delivery of aid. For example, OCHA will work with partners to ensure appropriate coordination for the response to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees in cooperation with relevant organizations and entities. In the context of integrated UN presences, OCHA will work with HCTs and the UN system to establish coordination mechanisms that are tailored to specific contexts, and which mitigate risks to humanitarian action. OCHA will also work with partners to assess, including through policy research and analysis, how best to support strategic coordination needs at the global and field levels around new or emerging areas of programming, such as cash transfers and communication with affected people.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: HUMANITARIAN FINANCING



Humanitarian financing is predictable, timely and allocated based on priority needs.

OCHA works with partners to consolidate and analyse overall funding requirements for humanitarian response. It then helps to raise resources through advocacy. Pooled funds are an important addition to the humanitarian financing landscape at the global and country levels, and they provide a conduit for Member States to contribute to meeting humanitarian needs in a timely and efficient manner. OCHA manages a global pooled fund (the Central Emergency Response Fund—CERF), as well as many country-level pooled funds (emergency

response funds and common humanitarian funds). The latter serve as in-country sources of flexible and unearmarked funding that enable humanitarian organizations to meet the most pressing humanitarian needs following a disaster, fill critical gaps in the response to ongoing humanitarian operations and provide critical support for underfunded emergencies. By complementing other funding sources, pooled funds play an important role in ensuring a well-led, well-coordinated and effective humanitarian response. From 2014 to 2017, OCHA will:

Coordinate system-wide advocacy to mobilize resources for humanitarian response

OCHA will continue to facilitate the development of consolidated and flash appeals. In situations where significant humanitarian resources are needed but formal appeals are no longer the fundraising tool of choice, OCHA will support the development of comparable efforts. Where it adds value, OCHA will support partners to coordinate fundraising efforts, and it will identify and update system-wide fundraising priorities. It will



work to ensure that partners benefit from their investment in such coordination. OCHA will tailor appeal information and updates to better inform and guide donor decision-making, and to improve the tracking of resource flows and funding gaps, including through its Financial Tracking Service. OCHA will advocate funding for emerging fields of humanitarian work, such as improving communication with communities, and it will seek increased contributions to pooled funds from interested and emerging donors, including the private sector and the public.

Use pooled funds strategically, predictably and in a timely manner to respond to prioritized humanitarian needs

OCHA will continue to manage humanitarian financing instruments that enable HCs to strategically

direct funds to address the most pressing needs and to the actors best placed to meet them. OCHA will better manage the risks associated with the use of pooled funds by developing and implementing risk management systems. Improving accountability and performance processes around pooled funds will be a priority. To this effect, OCHA will strengthen the monitoring, reporting, evaluation and auditing of activities financed by pooled funds. OCHA will ensure that clear criteria for fund allocations are developed and communicated to all partners, and it will work with partners to ensure that cluster-led project selection reflects assessed needs. OCHA will streamline administrative processes and develop sound management systems and tools in order to disburse funds in a more timely fashion.

Promote stronger coordination through multilateral funding mechanisms

OCHA will promote inclusiveness and enhanced coordination by involving a greater variety of actors, particularly local stakeholders, in decision-making regarding humanitarian financing instruments. OCHA will involve NGOs in the governance and prioritization process for allocations through its pooled funds, and it will seek to improve access to funding for national partners through country-based pooled funds. OCHA will also reinforce complementarity and coordination among existing humanitarian financing mechanisms, bilateral contributions and other funding sources at the global and country levels.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6: PROTECTION AND ACCESS TO ASSISTANCE



People in emergencies are protected from harm and have access to assistance as a result of advocacy and coordination.

Effective humanitarian responses require full, timely and unimpeded access to people in need. They also must aim to meet the immediate needs of affected people and provide a secure environment that promotes and protects the full respect of the dignity and rights of people in accordance with the letter and spirit of relevant bodies of international law. Protection broadly encompasses the activities aimed at obtaining these ends. Between 2014 and 2017, OCHA will:

Improve and sustain analysis, monitoring and advocacy on humanitarian access

OCHA will improve its monitoring and analysis of access constraints in the field, including through the development of improved country-based access-monitoring systems that will help gather and analyse information provided by the broadest possible range of humanitarian actors. OCHA will support the development of context-appropriate strategies to improve and

sustain access. It will also improve training and support to humanitarian leaders to strengthen the delivery of its mandate on humanitarian advocacy and negotiations with State and non-State actors to, for instance, secure access to deliver aid and carry out needs assessments, or to provide assistance and protection to people in need.

Bolster collaborative protection coordination

OCHA will provide enhanced support to HCs and other humanitarian leaders towards achieving tangible outcomes



and inclusive strategies for the protection of people in emergencies, whether in conflict or natural disasters. As part of its inter-cluster coordination role, OCHA will work with partners, including the Protection Cluster, to ensure that protection approaches, including those aimed at preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence, are mainstreamed and prioritized in all humanitarian action.

Strengthen protection advocacy and policy

The ERC will work closely with relevant protection-mandated entities and organizations to pursue robust and collaborative humanitarian action that protects people and promotes respect for humanitarian principles, international human rights, and humanitarian and refugee law. This includes working with partners to ensure that people can

access the assistance and services they need; that parties to conflict are held accountable for serious violations; and that the specific protection-and-assistance needs of affected people, including IDPs and other members of the population who may be vulnerable to protection risks, are addressed. OCHA will provide authoritative analysis and recommendations on the protection of civilians in its engagement with the UN Security Council, including through enhanced use of the Security Council Experts Group on the Protection of Civilians, and to other relevant intergovernmental bodies. It will promote and support policy development and other intergovernmental processes aimed at strengthening the protection of civilians and respect for relevant international law and humanitarian principles. This will include working with Member States, humanitarian partners

and other stakeholders to convene policy-development processes around the consent for relief operations and the use of weapons in densely populated areas.

To support these efforts, OCHA will elevate the quality of its advocacy through a more whole-of-organization, targeted and evidence-based approach. This will include engagement with humanitarian, human rights, political and security actors, and with in-country partners to develop strong, quiet diplomacy and public-advocacy strategies. While seeking to influence key decision makers at field, UN Headquarters and capital levels, OCHA will mitigate the risks that public advocacy can sometimes pose for field operations, including through the development of better joint strategies and partnerships within and outside the UN system.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 7: EMERGENCY RESPONSE PREPAREDNESS



International partners are ready to respond to humanitarian emergencies without delay and with the right assistance.

Effective responses depend on adequate preparation. Preparedness saves lives and can reduce the cost of responding. Consistent and coordinated preparedness measures build humanitarian actors' readiness prior to the onset of a crisis or a sudden shock, as well as during ongoing crises that may deteriorate. In practical terms, this entails addressing anticipated problems ahead of time, establishing relationships with key partners, reinforcing coordination structures, and clarifying emergency response roles and

responsibilities. Between 2014 and 2017, OCHA will:

Improve response outcomes through system-response readiness

OCHA will continue to assert its mandated role to coordinate emergency preparedness activities among humanitarian actors present on the ground. These will improve immediate readiness for new or suddenly deteriorating crises in support of national efforts and, where feasible, be integrated within them.



To do this, OCHA will directly support Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinators (RCs/HCs) and HCTs in applying joint emergency response preparedness methodologies, including through risk assessment, early warning monitoring, contingency response planning, minimum preparedness actions, standard operating procedures, simulations, trainings of HCT members and, as feasible, Governments in key aspects of emergency response preparedness. OCHA will promote the application

of multi-hazard risk assessments. OCHA and its partners will coordinate joint preparedness planning with key regional and international partners in support of national authorities, including for “Level 3” scenarios, and it will assess data and information management readiness to help address gaps in those areas. It will also increasingly coordinate efforts to address critical gaps linked to equipment, assets and infrastructure needed to deliver assistance in large-scale emergencies. In high-risk countries without an OCHA presence, OCHA

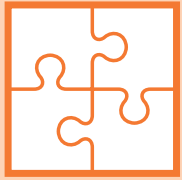
regional offices will take the lead in supporting UN RCs and in-country partners, including national authorities, to this end. OCHA will evaluate the effectiveness of these efforts through after-action reviews. At the global level, OCHA will develop and expand tracking-and-analysis systems to monitor country-level response readiness. OCHA will advocate the availability of resources and mechanisms to promote preparedness.



GOAL 2

A more diverse and adaptable humanitarian sector, spanning a variety of existing and emerging responder-and-partner networks.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 8: DIVERSITY



A more diverse set of actors engages in and provides political, technical and material support to collective humanitarian action.

Newer capacities for humanitarian action, combined with the need to work more efficiently in the face of rising needs and limited resources, present an opportunity to strengthen the existing humanitarian sector by building closer alliances for humanitarian action. The sector can benefit from the use of all possible resources, expertise and capacity (from existing initiatives, public and private, and from local to regional to multilateral) for more effective responses to people's needs in a principled manner. The corollary is that not every partner will be interested in multilateral coordination, and some may prefer only to share information rather than to coordinate programming, hence necessitating flexible partnership approaches. Over the next four years, OCHA will:

Foster deeper and more diverse partnerships for multilateral humanitarian action with:

Member States

OCHA will deepen its strategic engagement with a range of stakeholders to improve the delivery of principled humanitarian response, including through policy dialogue. In support of IASC commitments, OCHA will build and strengthen institutional partnerships with regional intergovernmental organizations and civil society, and it will increase the involvement of key humanitarian players from the African, Arab and Asian regions in multilateral humanitarian action. It will aim to build mutual awareness of the advantages and ways of collaborating with the multilateral system in order to deliver

on shared objectives and foster understanding of humanitarian principles. It will do this, for example, through more targeted relationship building with key partners and Governments that can help solve operational challenges; by convening and leading partnership missions with emerging and interested partners to raise awareness and demonstrate how the UN works with host Governments to assist people; and by providing more targeted support to Special Humanitarian Envoys to reinforce humanitarian messages to local and regional audiences and help address misperceptions about multilateral humanitarian action. In particular, OCHA will build relationships with a limited number of countries of strategic influence that are willing to collaborate and that could bring



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added value to the system, particularly by playing a lead role in regional or global humanitarian response. It will also continue, through UN intergovernmental processes, to harness the views and expectations of a broad range of Member States regarding the evolution of multilateral humanitarian action and coordination.

NGOs

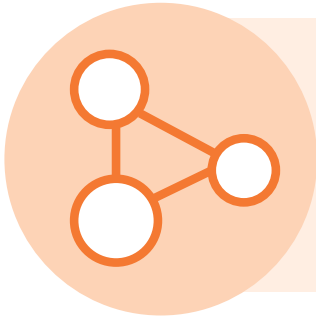
Recognizing their role in delivering the bulk of humanitarian assistance worldwide, OCHA will more directly engage with NGOs at the field and global levels, as a distinct group, to solve operational challenges and promote joint initiatives. It will promote the formation of national NGO forums to facilitate their engagement in multilateral humanitarian action.

The private sector

Links with the private sector will be strengthened and developed. OCHA will play a brokering role to bring together new and existing partners and thereby strengthen capacities to promote coordinated and

principled humanitarian action. In particular, OCHA will foster a limited number of transformational partnerships through which business innovation and expertise can contribute innovative approaches to existing and future systematic challenges. For example, OCHA has been working with a private-sector company to deliver high-quality leadership training to RCs/HCs in an effort to strengthen the humanitarian system. OCHA will focus on partnerships that will address challenges that the current humanitarian sector is unlikely to be able to respond to adequately, particularly in the area of strengthening humanitarian aid effectiveness, including monitoring, transparency and accountability. OCHA will work to channel more private-sector engagement in response to emergencies.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 9: INTER-OPERABILITY



International, regional and national actors are able to deploy well-coordinated and interoperable humanitarian response capacities within agreed frameworks.

The number and diversity of actors engaged in humanitarian action is increasing. This trend highlights more than ever the limitations of a one-size-fits-all approach to coordination. It also highlights the necessity to ensure that various response networks, often acting in the same places, are either: 1) compatible, meaning that they can function alongside each other and in some cases achieve synergies and/or reduce duplication, or 2) interoperable, meaning that operational systems and approaches are fully interchangeable through pooled or modular resources, or common standards. This will allow partners to better: 1) communicate with and learn from each other, 2) work together to reduce gaps or overlaps in assistance and strive to ensure the protection of people in need, and 3) ensure that what works in one place can be more easily replicated and brought to scale wherever

it is needed. The UN and its partners need to become more interoperable with each other, as well as with other networks and actors, to be able to better use each other's services and capacities and improve overall inter-sector coordination. Between 2014 and 2017, OCHA will:

Promote policy analysis and dialogue on change

OCHA will promote and provide policy-dialogue platforms to foster engagement and exchange on the objectives and capacities of the expanding number of humanitarian actors. These efforts will help lead the wider global humanitarian community to develop a forward-looking humanitarian agenda in consultation with a broad range of humanitarian constituencies. It will identify the steps that are needed to ensure that humanitarian action is fit to respond to the challenges of the future—building on the

existing strengths, values and norms of international humanitarian action. This will require increased focus on the proactive analysis of emerging and future trends affecting humanitarian action. To this end, policy dialogue between 2014 and 2017 will be aligned with the four themes identified for the World Humanitarian Summit. It will focus on taking stock of international cooperation on humanitarian issues, discussing the changing humanitarian landscape, and sharing knowledge and best practices. Key policy areas will include humanitarian aid effectiveness, humanitarian innovation, reducing vulnerability and managing risk, and people in conflict.

To support this dialogue, OCHA will invest in research, analysis and policy consultation on each of these thematic areas. Additionally, OCHA will strengthen its ability to cull, retain and share knowledge and best practices towards improving humanitarian action in the field.

OCHA will also encourage post-2015 agendas to help reduce the risk of humanitarian crises and their impact. It will engage with other actors to ensure that these agendas tackle conflict, disaster, climate and other risks, with a focus on strengthening resilience in the most vulnerable communities. OCHA will also work to ensure that relevant priorities reflected in the post-2015 development and disaster risk reduction agendas inform and mutually reinforce the priorities set out in the humanitarian agenda, to be determined through the World Humanitarian Summit process.

Promote and adapt greater interoperability of response tools and services

OCHA will work to ensure that international humanitarian response tools and services: 1) better reflect global lessons learned and experience, especially between regional and national actors, 2) can be adapted to better serve the aspirations of national and regional authorities to prepare for and respond to national disasters in varying contexts, including in ways that build national and community resilience, and 3) are compatible with existing multilateral tools and services to allow more synergistic joint deployment and use of these tools.

Provide universal access to trusted, timely humanitarian data

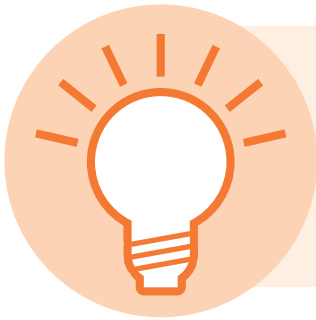
OCHA will lead in the development and promotion of common data-exchange mechanisms and standards. This will enable operational partners and others to share and access each other's data in a common format, making it possible to provide a common understanding of the humanitarian situation and for all users to analyse a reliable body of evidence. An open-data policy will be developed that will serve as the framework for governing the interoperability of data in the humanitarian sector. It will promote the use of common terms, data quality and security, and clear licenses for the re-use of partner data. OCHA will also prioritize improving national actors' accessibility to humanitarian data at the country level, including affected communities.

Undertake and promote knowledge transfer and capacity-building to strengthen self-reliance

OCHA will support and promote robust, visible national leadership for emergency management and resilience through a more systematic and developed approach to knowledge transfer and capacity-

building in priority high-risk countries and with regional bodies. It will focus on strengthening the capacity of national and regional authorities to perform critical humanitarian coordination functions through tailored solutions. To do this, OCHA will seek to: 1) promote strengthened disaster management response and policy frameworks of national and regional authorities, 2) transfer essential technical skills and operational know-how to national and regional actors in gap areas, and 3) promote the exchange of knowledge and expertise between Member States and peer-to-peer support networks. It will coordinate its efforts with other humanitarian and development actors to ensure that development approaches to building disaster response capacity are informed by humanitarian principles.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 10: INNOVATION



Innovation to promote improvement is consistently fostered and brought to scale in the humanitarian sector.

Innovation is commonly understood to be a dynamic process of change aimed at improvement. In practice, it is not only about new technologies or inventions, but also the adaptation of new products, processes and positions—often in combination—that can address system-wide challenges. Due to the rapid and fluid nature of emergencies, humanitarian action is, by necessity, a process of constant adaptation and problem-solving. But those same factors can also inhibit creativity and experimentation due to the need to be as effective as possible with finite resources, giving precedence to the strengthening of existing practices and norms. The humanitarian sector needs a new approach to change and improvement. To remain relevant, the humanitarian sector needs to identify new tools, products and services to respond to more complex operating environments and diversifying humanitarian needs. It must look ahead and see how the humanitarian sector needs

to adapt to transformative trends, such as increased cash-transfer programming and increased inter-connectivity through mobile phone technology. An evidence-based innovation management approach to learning can lead to more transparency, allow for ethical risk-taking and, where needed, offer solutions that can radically transform humanitarian work. From 2014 to 2017, OCHA will:

Support and foster a more innovative humanitarian sector

OCHA's unique role within the humanitarian sector allows it to act as a convener, a catalyst and an advocate to promote a more innovative humanitarian sector. OCHA will support global advocacy and policy analysis to address barriers to achieving a more enabling environment for innovation. This will entail exploring how to move towards a more risk-tolerant humanitarian sector that allows for new ideas to be tested, and which actively learns and shares innovative practices

at the regional, country and community levels. Doing so will involve bringing together humanitarian actors to undertake problem identification to define where change and improvement are needed. OCHA will share its expertise in this area to feed into the work of the World Humanitarian Summit process, for which innovation is an explicit theme.

Provide and promote humanitarian innovations

OCHA will develop innovative tools and services to improve its core operations (especially at the field level), but also to promote new and improved services developed by others to the wider humanitarian sector. Areas chosen will depend on identified

challenges that arise between 2014 and 2017. Possible areas of focus for more innovative approaches based on existing work to date include data management, needs assessments, accountability to affected people, early warning, resilience building, and managing operational and programmatic risks.





HOW OCHA WILL ACHIEVE ITS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Over the next four years, OCHA will implement its Strategic Plan by supporting its partners through its core coordination, advocacy, policy, information management and humanitarian financing services.

OCHA's detailed implementation plans will be set out in its biennial plans (OCHA in 2014–2015 and OCHA in 2016–2017), its country and regional office strategies, and internal OCHA workplans.

The internal Management Plan describes how OCHA will manage its resources and improve its systems and processes to be fit for purpose to deliver on its Strategic Plan. As part of implementing its Management Plan, OCHA will implement mitigation strategies to address the risks that might prevent the organization from attaining its goals.

OCHA will monitor its progress towards its strategic and management objectives, and it will measure its global- and field-level performance in a transparent and accountable fashion. It will do so through the combination of a new suite of standardized, measurable results frameworks, internal and inter-agency evaluation processes, and oversight mechanisms—all of which are encapsulated in the accompanying Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.

ANNEX 1

Cross-cutting issues

Cross-cutting issues are mainstreamed throughout this plan's strategic objectives. For ease of reference, below is a summary of each.

*To promote **protection**, OCHA will:*

- Ensure that its contextual analysis includes key policy and operational factors relating to access constraints, as well as protection (SO 2).
- Promote joint needs assessments and strategic response planning that reflect protection-and-assistance needs (SO3).
- As part of its inter-sector/cluster-coordination role, promote a cross-sectoral approach to protection (SO 4 and 6).
- Improve its monitoring and analysis of access constraints in the field, and strengthen training and support to humanitarian leaders to negotiate access with State and non-State actors (SO 6).
- Provide enhanced support to HCs to ensure the protection needs of people in emergencies are met, whether in conflict or emergencies (SO 6).
- Via the ERC and policy and operational support to RCs/HCs, advocate robust and collaborative humanitarian action that protects people and promotes respect for international humanitarian law, international human rights law, refugee law and humanitarian principles (SO6).
- Provide more targeted and situation-specific advocacy to protect people through more strategic and systematic engagement with humanitarian, human rights, political and security actors, as well

as through partnerships with those outside the UN system (SO 6).

- Provide authoritative analysis and recommendations on the protection of civilians in its engagement with the Security Council and other intergovernmental processes (SO 6).
- Better engage with humanitarian, human rights, political and security actors, and with in-country partners to develop strong, quiet diplomacy and public-advocacy strategies (SO 6).

*To promote **accountability to affected people**, OCHA will:*

- Ensure that its contextual analysis reflects key factors relating to the different needs of men, women, boys and girls, and promote more systematic consultation with them to improve contextual analysis (SO 2).
- Promote the inclusion of sex- and age-disaggregated data in order to strengthen assessment, analysis and beneficiary targeting, and involve affected people in identifying their needs (SO 3).
- Work to ensure the involvement of affected people, including men, women, boys and girls, in planning and decision-making processes regarding the response, particularly engagement with women's organizations (SO 3 and 4).

- Ensure inter-agency operational reviews assess the means of ensuring accountability to people, and that affected people, including men, women, boys and girls, have a role in all inter-agency evaluations of major humanitarian responses that OCHA coordinates (SO 3).
 - Promote a cross-sectoral approach to the protection-and-assistance needs of men, women, boys and girls, including those aimed at preventing sexual and gender-based violence (SO 4 and 6), as part of its inter-sector/cluster-coordination role.
 - Promote more innovative approaches, based on existing work, to ensure accountability to affected people (SO 10).
- development actors, around key issues at the country level (SO 4).
- Promote a cross-sectoral approach to resilience building (SO 4), as part of its inter-sector/cluster-coordination role.
 - Coordinate targeted advocacy by humanitarian actors to ensure that post-2015 agendas tackle conflict, disaster, climate and other risks while enhancing community resilience (SO 9).
 - Undertake knowledge transfer and capacity-building, and promote interoperable response tools and services to strengthen national self-reliance (SO 9).
 - Promote more innovative approaches, based on existing work, to resilience building (SO 10).

*To promote **resilience**, OCHA will:*

- Engage a broader range of stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive contextual understanding of the situation that better draws on available risk analysis (SO2).
- Ensure new guidance and tools to facilitate strategic response planning that better supports resilience planning based on best practice (SO 3).
- Promote humanitarian planning that is compatible with development planning in slow, chronic or recurrent crises requiring longer-term solutions (SO 3).
- Engage a wider range of strategic and operational decision makers, including

*To promote **communications with affected people**, OCHA will:*

- Prioritize ensuring accessibility of OCHA information products, services and data for national authorities, including affected communities (SO 2 and 9).
- Promote a cross-sectoral approach to communications with communities (SO 4), as part of its inter-sector/cluster-coordination role.
- Advocate funding of “communications with communities” programming (SO 5).



OCHA