Evaluation of OCHA's Role and Activities in Preparedness

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Acknowledgments

Acronyms

AHA Centre	ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BCPR	UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
CADRI	Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative
CAP	Consolidated Appeals Process
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CISB	Communication and Information Services Branch
CRD	Coordination and Response Division
DOCO	UN Development Operations Coordination Office
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EPS	Emergency Preparedness Section
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GFM	Global Focus Model
HFA	Hyogo Framework Agreement on disaster risk reduction
HQ	Headquarters
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee on humanitarian affairs
IFCR	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IM	Information Management
ISDR	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
MIRA	Multi-sector Initial Rapid Assessment
NDMA/O	National Disaster Management Authority/Organisation
NDRA	National Disaster Response Advisor
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RC	Resident Coordinator
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
RO	Regional Office
ROAP	Regional Office for Asia-Pacific
ROLAC	Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
ROMENA	Regional Office for Middle East and North Africa
ROSA	Regional Office for Southern Africa
ROWCA	Regional Office for West and Central Africa
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
UN	United Nations
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNHCT	UN Humanitarian Country Team
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme

Executive Summary

Introduction

Humanitarian preparedness involves a range of actions and expectations, which are currently shifting in response to the changing capacities and priorities of governments as well as the projected humanitarian needs in future. When disaster strikes, survival and recovery depend not only on the capacity to react and respond, but also on the extent to which both the affected country and any external responders have prepared themselves for this eventuality. There can be no dispute that preparedness is a vital function of humanitarian action. It also has come to be seen as a critical component of *resilience*, a concept that, newly resurgent, has begun to reshape the international aid dialogue. Recognising these shifts, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) commissioned an external evaluation in 2012 to assess how OCHA defines, and how well it executes, its role in preparedness at the global, regional, and national levels.

The evaluation team, consisting of independent researchers from Humanitarian Outcomes with the participation and support of an OCHA Evaluations staff member, conducted the evaluation between May and November, 2012. Team members observed OCHA's work in the three regions of Asia-Pacific, Middle East and North Africa, and Southern Africa, and interviewed a total of 176 individuals representing OCHA and its partners. The team also reviewed relevant policy documentation and other literature on preparedness, including a focused desk review of the Latin America and Caribbean region. This report synthesises these findings by evaluating OCHA's activities on their relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact/sustainability, and coherence. It then identifies potential areas for improvement in OCHA policy, operations, and institutional structures.

OCHA's work has always been characterised by a tension between hewing strictly to its official mandate as a coordinating body, and stepping into additional roles not being filled by any other entity that need doing. The tendency to fill vacuums attests to the organisation's flexibility and dynamism. Yet in the past this tension has led to a problematic cycle of scope expansion followed by painful contraction. This tension also informs OCHA's role and actions in the area of preparedness. OCHA's 2010 Policy Instruction defines its preparedness role in a deliberately narrow frame: coordinating inter-agency activities to prepare for humanitarian response interventions. The reality, however, reflects a wider breadth and depth of its actual activities across many countries. In some places, particularly in Asia-Pacific, OCHA not only coordinates, but also enables and drives preparedness efforts, both in host governments and among international partners and regional entities. This practice includes, in some settings, working directly with governments to build and strengthen their preparedness capacities and institutional structures for response—a role well beyond OCHA's current Policy Instruction. The degree to which this has been possible has depended on OCHA capacity, as well as pre-existing levels of capacity and collaborativeness on the part of host governments, which vary across regions.

Because the needs, capacities, and political contexts are so varied, this evaluation cannot comparably assess the performance of each regional and country office against any single standard of its preparedness role, especially when the definition of that standard has thus far been unclear. Instead, the evaluation addresses the various ways OCHA activities in countries and regions have met, or failed to meet, the evaluation criteria as applicable to that particular context.

Key findings

In its best cases, OCHA has demonstrated the innovation, political agility, and operational flexibility to lead improvements in preparedness beyond the narrow coordinating role envisioned by its current Policy Instruction. OCHA has become the go-to partner among agencies and key donors for preparedness work. Overall, however, its performance in preparedness has been mixed. It has made only slow and preliminary progress to date in achieving the three preparedness objectives stated in the 2010–2013 Strategic Framework: one, defined roles and responsibilities of OCHA and partners; two, integrated, rigorous analysis to underpin preparedness and response; and three, 'a more predictable and scalable suite of OCHA services and tools' in preparedness. This slow progress results partly from a combination of external factors over which OCHA has little or no control, and partly from an internal lack of clarity, leadership, and strategic direction. Most key stakeholders do not generally perceive this issue as a problem of OCHA over-reaching its mandate. On the contrary, and encouraged by OCHA's early progress, the regional level partners who were interviewed expressed a desire to see OCHA do more, not less, in preparedness, such as potentially managing new funding mechanisms for this purpose. If the resilience movement continues to gain momentum and starts to spur reform, OCHA would be well positioned as an important player, especially if it developed a clearly defined and proactive role in preparedness.

Regional level
The regional level drives most of OCHA's advancements in preparedness. Supporting preparedness is one of the principal objectives of Regional Offices (RO), along with supporting response with surge capacity for emergency response and building partnerships with other regional actors. The most notable of these advancements is the Minimum Preparedness Package (MPP). Developed in the RO for Asia-Pacific (ROAP) and rolled out in that and other regions, the MPP provides a systematic framework for achieving a defined level of preparedness for national and international humanitarian actors.

Many variables affect how much progress OCHA can make in preparedness. The more influential ones include the types of hazards most prevalent in the given region and the level of governments' capacity and willingness to engage. Chronic emergency conditions, coupled with low host government capacity and declining donor interest, result in greater challenges for preparedness than is the case in Latin America/Caribbean and Asia-Pacific. Here there are relatively high government capacities and long stretches between major crises (and these crises tend to be sudden-onset and short-lived). Most challenging of all are settings where governments are unstable and where armed conflict represents the primary hazard. High staff turnover, a lack of leadership, inadequate accountability structures, and unpredictable donor funding all create major impediments to OCHA's preparedness efforts as well.

Country level
At the country level, OCHA's effectiveness in preparedness can now be measured by the extent to which it achieves the Minimum Preparedness Package outcomes. In a few countries, particularly those where OCHA maintains close and longstanding working relationships with governments (e.g., Indonesia and the Philippines), these outcomes have already facilitated faster and better coordinated responses. In many other countries, however, OCHA is only beginning to take a systematic approach to building preparedness; thus, it is too soon to show results. Even where OCHA has had measurable success in meeting preparedness objectives, certain weaknesses and gaps in that process signal the need for further improvement. If, for example, an affected government is reluctant to formally request international humanitarian aid, then preparedness planning and structures may be rendered useless. A lack of explicit triggers or agreements for mobilising the international humanitarian machinery can lead to late, weak responses. Furthermore, preparedness capacity mapping remains lacking and under-emphasised more generally. One can add to these factors that a lack of resources (and/or

will) for preparedness coordination in RCOs and the UN Country Team hinders OCHA's remote support to non-CO countries.

Global/HQ level

The effectiveness of OCHA headquarters in the realm of preparedness has been limited. It lacks a clear strategic vision for OCHA in preparedness, a vision that should emanate from the most senior level and then be articulated in policy. As yet, no formal consensus on preparedness roles exists in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on humanitarian affairs (IASC). Uncertainty remains regarding the role of the Emergency Preparedness Section (EPS) and its relationship to the Coordination and Response Division (CRD) and the field. Additionally, it is unclear to staff where the preparedness mandate and accountability sits among senior-level leadership in the organisation. Staff in the field are further concerned about the implications of the 'Transformative Agenda,' as initiated by the UN Emergency Response Coordinator to improve leadership, coordination, and accountability of international humanitarian crisis response. This agenda has created high expectations, but not articulated either operational goals or guidance for preparedness.

OCHA needs to be clearheaded about what it realistically *can* do and what it *must* do, according to its mandate, avoiding unnecessary overreach. At the same time, however, it should not shrink from employing its particular strengths and flexibility to achieve pragmatic solutions on the ground. Two primary questions should guide OCHA's work generally. First, what needs doing to ensure better outcomes for affected populations? Second, can OCHA make a positive contribution? The recommendations that follow seek to provide a practical roadmap for guiding OCHA's future role and activities in preparedness:

Recommendations

Critical		
HQ/ global level	1. Develop a policy statement in consultation with UNDP and other IASC partners that sets out OCHA's vision for its institutional role in preparedness. The policy statement should: draw from the most current internal and external thinking on preparedness; take into account the full range of OCHA's actual activities in preparedness to date; and give special thought to the challenges around preparedness for conflict-related emergencies (e.g., contingencies for high-insecurity settings and cases where host government partnership may need to be augmented or replaced by partnerships with neighbouring governments and regional bodies, if the government is a party to the conflict).	ERC and SMT
	2. Based on the organisational vision outlined in the policy statement, review and update the Policy Instruction on preparedness to clarify the scope, objectives, and guiding principles of OCHA's operational role in preparedness at all levels. The updated Policy Instruction should define specific preparedness responsibilities and deliverables for the relevant personnel at each level of OCHA, and their placement in the programme cycle.	EPS coordinating with PDSB and CRD
	3. By actively involving regions and field, develop an implementation strategy and guidance for the updated Policy Instruction to ensure corporate observance of its preparedness approach.	EPS coordinating with CRD
	4. Based on the preparedness responsibilities and deliverables in the updated Policy Instruction, implement a clearer line of management responsibility on preparedness from the Senior Management Team to the Coordination and	SMT coordinating with PDSB,

	Response Division in HQ to the field. Define a joint workplan for EPS and CRD that focuses on support and technical assistance for the priority preparedness activities in OCHA ROs and COs.	CRD and EPS
	5. Develop and disseminate detailed operational guidance for the Transformative Agenda. Ensure the guidance addresses how the TA's goals for Level 3 emergency response can be operationalised in preparedness activities at the regional and country levels, and how these activities fit within, or can be integrated into, the MPP process.	CRD
	6. Engage UNDP in a senior-level dialogue on preparedness to further clarify each other's respective roles, responsibilities, and resource commitments. Avoid a focus on formal mandates; rather, pursue practical joint solutions to the problem of limited capacity for preparedness coordination among international and government actors in countries where OCHA is not present. Consider greater replication of the joint OCHA/UNDP RCO support team mechanism, such as that which exists in Indonesia, as one such solution, and consult with UNDP in the development of future OCHA policy instruction on preparedness.	ERC with EPS support
Regional level	7. Build more specific contingencies and triggers into the MPP process for cases where governments may be uncooperative or unwilling to accept international assistance.	ROs coordinating with COs and EPS
Country level	8. Prioritise capacity mapping for all stakeholders' (host government and international actors in country) preparedness assets as a primary task in preparedness planning. As a first step, identify and request any necessary technical inputs from regional and HQ levels to accomplish this goal.	COs with RO and EPS support
Important		
HQ/ global level	9. Work with IASC partners to design preparedness accountability frameworks for RCs and UNCTs, building on the IASC initiatives to define and clarify roles in preparedness and resilience.	PSB with CRD support
	10. Base budgeting for preparedness on objectively assessed risk, and in a way that does not detract from resources required for response.	CRD with EPS support
Regional and country levels	11. Provide instruction to governments that may otherwise be reluctant to request/accept international emergency aid on how they can exercise needs-based selectivity in terms of the international aid they receive. This could potentially be incorporated in the Guide for Disaster Managers.	RO and CO staff with EPS support
	12. To help address deficits in resources for preparedness among partners, consider the possibility of managing regional financing mechanisms, or expanding the terms of reference of existing country-level funds, to fund broader preparedness activities, including capacity support to governments and intergovernmental regional bodies.	RO and CO staff with PRMB support
Opportunity for learning		

Regional and country levels	13. Make more frequent and consistent use of government–government workshops and trainings, whereby governments can share lessons not only in preparedness, but also in working with the international humanitarian structures.	RO and CO staff

Table of findings and recommendations

Key findings	Consequent recommendations
• OCHA HQ lacks the senior-level leadership and explicit strategic vision for its preparedness role, both of which are needed to effectively steer and support the organisation's work in preparedness	1. Develop a policy statement in consultation with UNDP and other IASC partners that sets out OCHA's vision for its institutional role in preparedness. The policy statement should: draw from the most current internal and external thinking on preparedness; take into account the full range of OCHA's actual activities in preparedness to date; and give special thought to the challenges around preparedness for conflict-related emergencies (e.g., contingencies for high-insecurity settings and cases where host government partnership may need to be augmented or replaced by partnerships with neighbouring governments and regional bodies, if the government is a party to the conflict).
• The current Policy Instruction does not reflect the actual breadth of OCHA's current activities, and it requires revision as part of a larger policy-formation process in this area • Accountability for preparedness is weak, both within OCHA line management and in inter-agency coordination structures	2. Based on the organisational vision outlined in the policy statement, review and update the Policy Instruction on preparedness to clarify the scope, objectives, and guiding principles of OCHA's operational role in preparedness at all levels. The updated Policy Instruction should define specific preparedness responsibilities and deliverables for the relevant personnel at each level of OCHA, and their placement in the programme cycle. 3. By actively involving regions and field, develop an implementation strategy and guidance for the updated Policy Instruction to ensure corporate observance of its preparedness approach. 6. Engage UNDP in a senior-level dialogue on preparedness to further clarify each other's respective roles, responsibilities, and resource commitments. Avoid a focus on formal mandates; rather, pursue practical joint solutions to the problem of limited capacity for preparedness coordination among international and government actors in countries where OCHA is not present. Consider greater replication of the joint OCHA/UNDP RCO support team mechanism, such as that which exists in Indonesia, as one such solution, and consult with UNDP in the development of future OCHA policy instruction on preparedness. 9. Work with IASC partners to design preparedness accountability frameworks for RCs and UNCTs, building on the IASC initiatives to define and clarify roles in preparedness and resilience.

• The lack of a clear corporate management architecture for preparedness reflects the missing strategic vision; specifically, the role of the Emergency Preparedness Section and its relationship to both the field and the Coordination and Response Division is not clear or well known within OCHA	4. Based on the preparedness responsibilities and deliverables in the updated Policy Instruction, implement a clearer line of management responsibility on preparedness from the Senior Management Team to the Coordination and Response Division in HQ to the field. Define a joint workplan for EPS and CRD that focuses on support and technical assistance for the priority preparedness activities in OCHA ROs and COs.
• Staff perceive a serious risk that the Transformative Agenda (TA) has raised external expectations that OCHA cannot meet, due to the lack of detailed operational guidance on how to implement it. At present, field staff do not understand how to operationalise the TA within their preparedness work	5. Develop and disseminate detailed operational guidance for the Transformative Agenda. Ensure the guidance addresses how the TA's goals for Level 3 emergency response can be operationalised in preparedness activities at the regional and country levels, and how these activities fit within, or can be integrated into, the MPP process.
• In countries with high-capacity governments, a lack of explicit triggers or more flexible options for requesting aid can lead to late and/or weak international responses • The Japan earthquake/tsunami response provided a useful model for how a high-capacity government could tailor the international response to what was needed while avoiding negative externalities of international humanitarian aid	7. Build more specific contingencies and triggers into the MPP process for cases where governments may be uncooperative or unwilling to accept international assistance. 11. Provide instruction to governments that may otherwise be reluctant to request/accept international emergency aid on how they can exercise needs-based selectivity in terms of the international aid they receive. This could potentially be incorporated in the Guide for Disaster Managers.
• Capacity mapping for agencies, NGOs, and host governments is currently weak and under-emphasised as a basic building block of preparedness planning	8. Prioritise capacity mapping for all stakeholders' (host government and international actors in country) preparedness assets as a primary task in preparedness planning. As a first step, identify and request any necessary technical inputs from regional and HQ levels to accomplish this goal.
• OCHA's central budgeting does not involve strategic allocations for preparedness based on relative risk assessment	10. Base budgeting for preparedness on objectively assessed risk, and in a way that does not detract from resources required for response.
• Resource gaps among partners limit preparedness efforts, particularly in countries where there is no OCHA presence	12. To help address deficits in resources for preparedness among partners, consider the possibility of managing regional financing mechanisms, or expanding the terms of reference of existing country-level funds, to fund broader preparedness activities, including capacity support to governments and intergovernmental regional bodies.

• Inter-regional government consultation is currently not used much, but shows promise for lesson-learning and strengthening UN–government coordination in preparedness	13. Make more frequent and consistent use of government–government workshops and trainings, whereby governments can share lessons not only in preparedness, but also in working with the international humanitarian structures.

1. Introduction

Historically, the systems and resources of international humanitarian action have always been structurally oriented toward reactive responses more than proactive preparedness efforts. One by-product of the bifurcation of aid into relief and development spheres has been that preparedness tends to fall into the gray area in between the two. It does not fit squarely into the mandate of either relief or development; roles are unclear, and resources unreliable. Although the logic and basic cost efficiency of investing in preparedness is widely and well understood, there has not been significant pressure on humanitarian actors to emphasise it until recently. Major disasters, such as the Haiti earthquake and Pakistan floods, revealed serious preparedness deficits on the part of national and international actors alike. The issue has been gaining greater traction among international donors and policy makers, as it becomes clear that one major emergency can wipe out years of development progress, trapping countries or populations in a repeating cycle of vulnerability.

As some developing nations begin to take over more of the actual crisis response themselves, which is their primary responsibility as host governments, they look to international actors for different forms of assistance. To remain relevant in higher-capacity host government settings, humanitarians are finding they need to shift their aid roles to more technical and capacity-building support, particularly in preparedness.

1.1 Background and aims of the evaluation

As OCHA embarks on a period of strategic and institutional restructuring, preparedness has come into sharper focus. OCHA's Strategic Framework 2010–2013 calls upon the organisation to better define its roles, responsibilities, and actions in preparedness, making sure that they are based on 'integrated analysis and rigorous learning.' To replace the patchwork of preparedness activities that OCHA typically undertakes across different regions and countries, the Strategic Framework also envisions a 'more predictable and scalable suite of OCHA services and tools.'

In support of these objectives, the Evaluation and Guidance Section of OCHA-NY commissioned this external evaluation. They sought to assess OCHA's past and current preparedness efforts at the global, regional, and country levels. The evaluation also aimed to 'identify lessons and good practices, and recommend adjustments and corrections as appropriate' to help support future decision making and policy development in this area. To do this work, the TOR recognised that the evaluation must first clarify the definition of preparedness vis-à-vis OCHA's coordinating role in the international humanitarian system, and then elaborate the operational aspects of this definition.

1.2 Methodology

The research team consisted of three members of the independent consultancy group Humanitarian Outcomes, supported and managed by a staff member of OCHA Evaluation and Guidance Section who also participated in a portion of the field research and literature review. The evaluation was guided by an Advisory Group, which consisted of OCHA personnel and two representatives from other UN agencies. The Advisory Group provided substantive input on the terms of reference and inception paper. As part of the research planning and design

phase, the team elaborated an evaluation framework matrix that included the following elements: key criteria for assessment; key questions and indicators for evaluating OCHA against these criteria; and prospective sources of information from which to glean these indicators. Input of the Advisory Group revised and expanded the matrix, which is appended to this report as Annex 1. Evaluation criteria consisted of the standard OECD DAC categories of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability, and Coherence, as modified for humanitarian evaluation.

Two factors complicate this particular evaluation. First, the organisation's historical lack of a single accepted definition of preparedness means there is no clear standard against which to measure OCHA's performance. If different country and regional offices were working against different benchmarks, then it is not fair to compare their outcomes to measure effectiveness. Second, the extreme variation between different regions in terms of external factors over which OCHA has no control, such as the stability and capacity of governments, for instance, also makes it difficult to synthesise a single set of evaluation results for the whole organisation. For that reason, this report and its conclusions must be similarly differentiated and nuanced, making it inevitably more complicated than a single set of scores. The structure of the report, therefore, groups findings by level: global, regional, and country. OCHA's activities, structures, and tools are assessed against the criteria, factoring in the prevailing contextual singularities and constraints.

Data collection

Interviews—The researchers conducted key informant interviews, in person and by phone, in OCHA headquarters in Geneva and New York, as well as in the field. Host governments, donor governments, and partner agencies and NGOs were also included in the interviews. In all, the team interviewed 179 individuals on a not-for-attribution basis using a semi-structured interview format that incorporated questions based on the specific evaluation criteria. See Annex 2 for the names and affiliations of persons interviewed.

Field visits—The field research took place in three OCHA regions: the Regional Office for Asia-Pacific (ROAP), Regional Office for Middle East and North Africa (ROMENA), and Regional Office for South Africa (ROSA). Within each of these three regions, 1–2 countries were selected for visits. The criteria for selection aimed for a representative and diverse selection of cases that included:

- Countries particularly prone to natural disasters with strong national response capacities
- Countries prone to natural disasters with limited national capacities
- Countries in chronic conflict conditions
- Countries in post-conflict transition at risk of relapses into conflict
- Countries at risk of disasters with limited or no OCHA presence

Based on these criteria, and in consultation with OCHA HQ, RO, and CO staff, the field visits selected were as follows:

Region	Regional Office	Country Office(s)
ROSA	RO Johannesburg	Zimbabwe
ROAP	RO Bangkok	Indonesia, Lao PDR
ROMENA	RO Cairo	Lebanon

In addition to the above field visits, other country cases were selected for focus in the evaluation. A desk review was conducted of the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC), and the field researcher

for ROAP conducted remote interviews with OCHA country representatives in the Philippines and Papua New Guinea.

Document review—This covered key internal documents provided by OCHA, both from New York and Geneva, as well as the Regional and Country Offices, and included policy, strategy, assessment, planning and programming documents linked to preparedness, as well as monitoring and evaluation documentation. The research team assessed the application of other key documents developed by OCHA such as the Minimum Preparedness Package and the Global Focus Model. The evaluation also reviewed budget financial documents and drew upon findings from the preparedness financing study commissioned by the IASC sub-working group on financing for preparedness. The broader literature review encompassed external policy and academic writing on preparedness and related topics. A bibliography is included as Annex 3.

Limitations

Necessary limitations on budget and time available for this evaluation resulted in an unavoidably small sample of country contexts for first-hand observation in field visits: just four country contexts, with visits limited to the capital cities. While the scope of the field research was fairly standard for this type of evaluation, the evaluators realize that as a result, certain aspects and activities of OCHA's preparedness work at the country level were likely not captured by this evaluation.

A global survey of OCHA staff and partners was initially considered but ultimately not taken forward, given Advisory Group opinions that a concurrent OIOS survey and general survey fatigue among personnel weighed against the potential additional benefit that a survey component would have lent to the research.

1.3 Structure of the report

Following this introduction, Section 2 of the report provides background to the evaluation. It discusses the definitions and interpretations of preparedness, as well as the newly prominent topic of resilience, and how these relate to humanitarian action. This section also examines related issues and particular challenges in the subject area. The following sections present the evaluation findings, synthesising the conclusions of the case studies, interviews, and documents review against the evaluation criteria. The findings are organised by organisational level: global/headquarters (Section 3); regional (Section 4); and country level (Section 5). For each level, the report highlights the key tools and structures that OCHA has developed in preparedness policy and operations. Section 6 concludes the report, with summary findings and recommendations for action.

2. Preparedness, resilience and the operational scope for humanitarian actors

2.1 Defining preparedness

Until quite recently, humanitarians had not articulated a common definition of preparedness and how it relates to their sphere of action. OCHA's 2010 Policy Instruction on preparedness noted the lack of a common humanitarian reference, and offered the following broad understanding of preparedness as 'the knowledge and capacities…to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from the impact of [emergencies]' (OCHA, 2010). This broad definition involves the components of forecasting (i.e., anticipating when and where the next crisis will come, and prioritising resources accordingly), as well as response readiness (i.e., planning and pre-positioning that enable rapid scaling up and deployment of the necessary resources to meet the needs of affected populations). It also implies a need for measures taken in advance to mitigate the potential impacts of emergencies, enabling affected areas to withstand and recover from them.

Budgets and activities of international assistance are divided between humanitarian response and longer-term development aid. As a result, it becomes operationally necessary to distinguish the components of preparedness that pertain to humanitarian actors. The narrow definition of *humanitarian* preparedness is limited to the response-readiness component. This year the IASC put forward such a definition in the form of the Inter-Agency Emergency Response Preparedness (ERP) approach. 'Preparedness in the context of the humanitarian programme cycle refers primarily to actions taken to enhance the readiness of humanitarian actors, both national and international, to respond to a crisis,' through four main activities: 'Risk Assessment and Monitoring, Minimum Preparedness Actions, Contingency Response Planning, and Standard Operating Procedures for the Initial Emergency Response' (IASC, HPC Reference Module on Preparedness, 2012). Because OCHA is a coordinator and not a direct provider of assistance, its role in preparedness arguably must be defined still more narrowly: to coordinate and support the international humanitarian agencies and their national counterparts in their response-readiness activities. This narrow reading was endorsed in OCHA's internal Policy Instruction on preparedness, which states that 'it is OCHA's policy that it will only engage in a limited range of preparedness activities that relate most directly to OCHA's well-defined and accepted humanitarian response role' (OCHA, Policy Instruction on OCHA's Role in Preparedness, 2010). The document goes on to enumerate OCHA's 'three specific responsibilities' in preparedness as:

1) 'to strengthen internal response capacity;
2) to strengthen the capacity of participants in the in-country humanitarian coordination system to respond together to an emergency in a coordinated fashion; and
3) to strengthen the capacity of national authorities and regional organizations to effectively utilize their national coordination systems to request or help mobilise international humanitarian assistance.'

Many OCHA interviewees noted that the 2010 Policy Instruction—the first ever on preparedness—was written during a time of financial constraints, with pressures to focus attention and resources on OCHA's core business. The policy's deliberately limited scope reflects this mindset. Neither the Policy Instruction nor the preparedness objectives in the Strategic Framework 2010-2013 began from a strategic vision for what OCHA sought to accomplish in preparedness. Rather, the documents sought to delimit, consolidate, and systematise the preparedness activities that its offices—in a mostly ad hoc manner—had already been doing. This is not an uncommon means of formulating 'policy' in an organisation; however, it often fails to be instructive or useful

to staff on the ground. Without a clear implementation policy and guidance on how to implement that policy, different offices will continue operating in a distinct and uncoordinated manner, according to their past experience and their individual interpretations, as has been the case with the Policy Instruction on Preparedness.

2.2 Resilience

The 'resilience' dialogue, now underway in aid policy circles, gives the issue of preparedness in humanitarian action new importance. To escape the aforementioned underdevelopment trap that results from recurrent disasters, both countries and populations need to reduce their exposure to and mitigate the effects of disasters. This includes building the ability to absorb and withstand the shocks, thereby minimising disruption to lives and livelihoods. The concept of resilience was introduced in 2011 in the recommendations of the UK government's Humanitarian Emergency Response Review (HERR), and quickly became a buzzword among some key donors and agencies. It requires bridging the development and relief sectors, generating a more holistic approach to supporting disaster-prone developing nations, and doing so specifically by directing resources from development portfolios to building disaster management capacities, as was agreed at the 2011 High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan (OECD 2011). Resilience also offers a potentially more appealing framework to diverse donors and partner agencies, including non-DAC donors and Islamic organisations, many of which have stressed the need for increased attention to disaster prevention, mitigation, and preparedness measures (ECOSOC, 2011). Some have argued that the concept is far from new and not substantively different from disaster risk reduction. Nevertheless, resilience has initiated a great deal of activity, at least in thinking and rhetoric at the headquarters level, as well as interest on the part of developing country governments and a range of donors.[1]

Most agencies are still engaged in the process of creating their own internal definitions and operational guidance for resilience. It remains to be seen how far this activity will translate into a commitment to ensure greater, more predictable financing to mitigate and prepare for disasters, or serve to bridge development and relief actors and systems. Still, the momentum and rhetorical buy-in appear promising. On the humanitarian side, the IASC has issued a statement affirming a humanitarian role in resilience at different phases of emergency preparedness, response, and early recovery (IASC, 2012).

For its part, OCHA has produced a series of internal position papers on the subject and formed an OCHA task force on resilience. An August 23, 2012 memo on resilience from the ERC affirmed that 'OCHA has an important catalytic role to play because of the breadth of the networks in country, regional and global levels.' Talk of OCHA entering into the resilience area, however, has been met with some considerable skepticism, as many within the organisation do not see how it is equipped to do so. Whether one thinks of resilience as entailing significant investments into government systems and infrastructures over multi-year periods, or as grassroots community-level interventions into livelihoods and living conditions, neither offers a role for OCHA. The ERC's vision of OCHA in resilience has more to do with bringing humanitarian and development actors together, but even this approach contrasts with the more modest and limited definition of OCHA's preparedness role as stated in its Policy Instruction. The dual nature of the USG's role as both the Emergency Relief Coordinator for the UN on the one hand, and head of OCHA as an organisational entity on the other, can result in two differing sets of interests and priorities, complicating the issue further.

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[1] See for example, USAID's new policy -
http://transition.usaid.gov/resilience/USAIDResiliencePolicyGuidanceDocument.pdf

The most constructive path forward may be in the expanded understanding of preparedness, understood as a critical component of resilience, which the IASC sub-working group on preparedness put forward in October 2012. This IASC 'common vision' consists of the principles that:

1. 'Governments, complemented by civil society, should be in the lead on preparedness for humanitarian crises, wherever this is consistent with humanitarian principles.

2. UN and non-UN organizations need to work better together to facilitate and support the work of governments and communities on preparedness.

3. Funding for Preparedness needs to come from humanitarian, development and climate change adaptation budget lines so that all components of preparedness receive sufficient resources.

4. Preparedness for response, as one of the five priorities under the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), is an essential element of resilience.' (IASC 2012)

These principles are intended to form the basis of a Common Framework for preparedness capacity building that OCHA and its IASC partners would enter into partnership with development actors such as UNDP, DOCO, and ISDR. The proposed compact envisions joint support of RC/HC offices in countries where preparedness capacities are being built—something that OCHA has some experience with already (e.g., in Indonesia). It is early still, and much work remains to be done to solidify cooperation among IASC principals. Yet the proposed compact recognises the crosscutting nature of preparedness and the need for structural, program, and budgetary integration. If it were to be adopted in a meaningful way by the inter-agency community, then it would serve as an important first step toward a resilience roadmap. It does not, however, address the limits of preparedness action in a way that will instruct OCHA on reformulating its own definition, such as whether or not to formally embrace its forays into direct preparedness capacity building with host governments.

2.3 OCHA's engagement with preparedness actors and initiatives

Within the international system, from the community, national, regional, and global levels, many types of actors engage in preparedness. These actors include first and foremost disaster-affected communities, as well as local and national authorities, and local civil society groups, including national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies. In addition to donor governments, select other main international actors include: ISDR; the World Bank; the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC); UNDP; UNICEF; WFP; and other humanitarian and multi-mandated UN agencies and INGOs represented on the IASC. The IASC itself, through its sub-working group and task forces on preparedness, has become an important locus for the development of preparedness policy and best practice.

Acting as a convener and bringing together key organisations on issues of preparedness policy and practice comprise significant elements of OCHA's role in preparedness. This role requires formal and informal partnerships, both bilateral and inter-agency. The partnerships between host governments and humanitarian actors can be especially challenging to navigate. In building preparedness for natural disasters, humanitarian actors ideally undertake these activities in collaboration with the relevant governments, and do so in a supporting role. In complex political emergencies, however, they may need to maintain more distance from the state to safeguard the independence, impartiality, and neutrality of humanitarian assistance. In its coordination role, OCHA has sometimes found itself caught within this tension. In particular, it must navigate between on

the one hand, the institutional 'guardians of humanitarianism' such UNHCR and ICRC, who caution against widening the scope of activities to country-level preparedness and transition, and on the other, the multi-mandated agencies such as IFRC and FAO, for whom government partnership and full-circle programming is their way of work. For their part, host governments vary widely across countries and regions in terms of their capacities and their willingness to accommodate and collaborate with international actors on preparedness activities.

OCHA also works at different levels with BCPR/UNDP, ISDR, and DOCO in the preparedness realm. The Hyogo Framework for Action mandates the ISDR to shepherd policy development in disaster risk reduction, but has no field-level presence, which ultimately limits its support to preparedness work. UNDP has been active in disaster reduction for over a decade. Its activities include institutional reform, developing and establishing disaster management laws, agreeing mandates between institutions and ministries, developing civil protection mechanisms, and DRR planning. UNDP also assist in the mainstreaming of DRR into UN planning and programming processes such as the Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF).[2] It does not, however, have a consistent field-level capacity. Furthermore, its activities are weakly coordinated with IASC actors, including OCHA, and it often falls short of delivering on its mandate. The third significant mechanism in the international DRR system is the World Bank's Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), but it plays a fairly limited role in emergency preparedness. These actors have all made their interests clear along the widened, resilience-oriented path. As a result, OCHA must manage a delicate balance—engaging with this agenda while recognising its own narrower mandate.

The one area of operational coordination that continues to be highlighted within OCHA is the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI) project, a partnership between UNISDR, OCHA, and UNDP, one that recently expanded to include UNICEF, World Bank, and WFP.[3] Created in 2007, it relates to all five priorities of the HFA. CADRI provides capacity-enhancement services to both governments and the UN system at the country level. These include learning and training services, as well as capacity-development services to support governments to establish the foundation for advancing risk reduction. At the July 2010 IASC Working Group (WG) meeting, the WG agreed upon a set of action points, including the request for an initial five countries to receive inter-agency support for national contingency planning (later broadened to emergency preparedness). In response, the sub-working group on preparedness began working with Ghana, Nepal, Philippines, and Uganda (Haiti was added later as a fifth country). They sought to find the best ways to support national preparedness efforts, working via the Resident Coordinators, and engage the services of CADRI. A recent study on country-level capacity development for emergency preparedness found, however, that in some cases there has been no traction, either because the country is already ahead of the point where support would be useful, or because the timing is not right, or because there is a lack of interest.[4] It also found that where the UNCTs or HCTs show little interest in advancing DRR and/or preparedness at country level, there was little means by which to generate demand, partly because the agencies involved hold limited sway over the wider range of preparedness actors at regional and country levels.

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[2] United Nations Development Group (2009) *Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction Into the CCA and UNDAF: A Guide for UN Country Teams,* New York
[3] http://www.cadri.net/
[4] Simon Lawry-White, *Country-Level Capacity Development for Emergency Preparedness,* June 2012

Evaluation findings

3. Global level preparedness

3.1 Summary

The role of OCHA headquarters in preparedness encompasses three main responsibilities, each of which are linked to but broader than the objectives stated in the Strategic Framework. These are, first, to articulate a strategic vision and define objectives for the organisation on preparedness, allocating resources accordingly; second, to ensure that OCHA itself has adequate preparedness capacity for rapid response; and third, to improve system-level preparedness through coordination amongst international partners at the global level. The evaluation found that it has begun to make progress in the third area, but has fallen short on the first two.

At the global level the evaluation focused on the operational relevance of the Policy Instruction on preparedness, the role of senior management, OCHA's inter-agency engagement on preparedness at the IASC, and the work of the Emergency Preparedness Section (EPS) and its relationship to the Coordination Response Division (CRD) and the field. It should be noted that the evaluation was carried out during a time of flux in OCHA headquarters. The downsizing and relocation of EPS to the Program Support Branch in 2012 were still relatively new developments; the new EPS chief had only been in place six weeks when the evaluation began. Many OCHA interviewees professed uncertainty about the future changes being planned for HQ structures. Outside of senior management there was little awareness of the rationale for the changes in the preparedness section. EPS has nevertheless managed to achieve some important progress, both internally, with the finalisation and global rollout of the Minimum Preparedness Package discussed in Section 4.2, and externally, with its contribution to the Common Framework on Preparedness in the IASC. Still, its relationship with CRD and the field remains indirect and unclear. It faces continuing external challenges in its efforts to build an inter-agency consensus on definitions, roles, and responsibilities in preparedness. More significantly, OCHA at the HQ level has not articulated a coherent strategic vision on preparedness for EPS to execute.

3.2 Relevance

To determine whether OCHA's work at the global level meets the criterion of relevance, the evaluation examined whether HQ structures, policy, and guidance on preparedness reflect OCHA's mandate and strategic objectives, and whether those in turn address the critical preparedness issues in the system at large. The evaluation team also examined the flip side of the question: whether the policy reflects what is actually being done at the regional and country levels.

UN Resolution 46/182 embodied the original mandate for OCHA's work in preparedness. In January 1998, however, the General Assembly transferred to UNDP the responsibilities of the Emergency Relief Coordinator for 'operational activities for natural disaster mitigation, prevention and preparedness.'[5] This was seen as an important demarcation of responsibilities between the two organisations, wherein UNDP was to work at the country level building the capacities of governments, a task requiring longer-term presence and funding. Yet

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[5] UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/52/12B, para 16 (1998) Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform, 9 January 1998

the role of *coordinating* preparedness activities among the agencies was never clearly assigned, and OCHA has found itself in many places assuming this responsibility de facto, where UNDP under prioritised or lacked capacity to undertake the work. Recently, in light of resource challenges facing UNDP/DOCO, there have been instances where OCHA has assumed a role in preparedness coordination not only of operational agencies, but also, to some degree, in delivering capacity-building assistance to governments.

OCHA's Preparedness Support Section was established in 2007, shortly after the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) on disaster risk reduction had been agreed. OCHA took on the ambitious role of co-lead for Priority Five of the HFA, which focuses on disaster preparedness.[6] In partnership with ISDR, OCHA developed a guidance and indicator package for implementing Priority Five.[7] The guidance package deals with how countries at national and community levels can strengthen their preparedness for response, which, while welcome, was beyond OCHA's expertise and resources, given that it required a long-term resource commitment and country-level representation. The Preparedness Section took on much of the workload for driving Priority Five forward, which strained its capacity to lead on the traditional activities for OCHA in preparedness (e.g., strengthening preparedness among UNCTs).

The formulation of OCHA's policy on preparedness in 2010 also refocused the HQ preparedness section. The Policy Instruction sought to establish guidance and a corporate framework for OCHA's preparedness work, which until this time had been notable for inconsistent approaches across the regions and at country level.[8] Renamed the Emergency Preparedness Section (EPS), the budget and staffing resources were halved. Emphasis shifted from implementing Priority Five of the HFA to the more limited coordination objectives outlined in the 2010 Policy Instruction. This policy brought about other institutional changes as well, including relocating the Contingency Planning section to Geneva from New York, a move that left behind the Early Warning function to merge within the Coordination and Response Branch (CRD). It also instituted more formal accountability measures on preparedness, including a set of deliverables for the Regional Offices on preparedness and set of internal management commitments in the form of OCHA's Strategic Framework 2010-2013. According to interviewees, this policy also provided momentum for OCHA's engagement with the IASC sub-working group on preparedness on specific inter-agency approaches to support national efforts for preparedness. In 2012, EPS was moved from the Emergency Services Branch to the Program Support Branch.

Stepping back from the attempt to drive the Priority Five agenda demonstrated a realistic acknowledgment of the limits of OCHA's capacities and its appropriate role. It recognised that the task requires the additional concerted efforts, expertise, and budgets of development actors. The pendulum swing from initial overreach to the narrow scope proscribed by the 2010 Policy Instruction, however, did not reflect a clear new vision of OCHA preparedness goals. Instead of articulating strategic objectives and the guidance for pursuing these objectives, the Policy Instruction amounted to more of a pruning or reining-in exercise done at a time of

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[6] Defined as 'the knowledge and capacities developed by governments, professional response and recovery organisations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from, the impacts of likely, imminent or current hazard events or conditions.' This includes short-term readiness measures for effective response (e.g., contingency planning including response and evacuation plans, stockpiling of equipment and supplies, personnel training, and community drills and exercises) and longer-term, institutional preparedness (e.g., coordination arrangements, emergency services linked to early warning systems and public education), supported by legal and budgetary frameworks.

[7] United Nations (2008), *Disaster Preparedness for Effective Response: Guidance and Indicator Package for Implementing Priority Five of the Hyogo Framework*, United Nations, ISDR and OCHA, New York and Geneva.

[8] OCHA, Policy Instruction: *OCHA's Role in Preparedness*, August 2010

financial constraint. Moreover, it has not put a stop to the more far-reaching preparedness work with government that some OCHA field offices are undertaking.

The Policy Instruction, which reportedly was established after a protracted and 'painful' process, has ultimately not been found useful by many in the field, or relevant to the work they are doing in preparedness. At the headquarters level it has also been overtaken to some degree by the emergence of the resilience discourse. New signals from senior management are that it may be expanding OCHA's scope again, adding to the confusion. Preparedness is receiving appropriate rhetorical emphasis, but it lacks the senior-level leadership and strategic vision required to meet the criterion of relevance. Ultimately, very few interviewees expressed the sense that either the work at OCHA headquarters or at the IASC seemed to be in any way directly relevant to their own preparedness efforts in the field.

The Geneva-based UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) mechanism predates EPS and most other preparedness structures and tools in OCHA. UNDAC has undertaken over 200 missions since its initiation in 1993; since 2005, 16 of these have been Disaster Response Preparedness (DRP) missions.[9] Requested by national governments with approval by the Resident Coordinator/HCT, these DRP missions are an important contribution to assessing the preparedness capacities of member states, culminating in a report presented to government and the Resident Coordinator's Office. A 2009 evaluation found that there were no clear criteria for selecting countries receiving DRP missions. The evaluation recommended that OCHA adopt a more proactive approach, including using the Global Focus Model, a vulnerability-assessment tool designed to help predict where international response is more likely to be needed so as to prioritise attention on and resources in those places (discussed in detail in Section 4). It also recommended OCHA use the DRP missions more strategically in relation to the rest of its preparedness work, and to revisit and further develop the DRP methodology to strengthen and make more comprehensive a capacity-assessment tool. The findings from the 2009 evaluation also underscore the gap between OCHA's preparedness policy and the broader range of activities it pursues in the differing regions, as one interviewee reflected: 'If we were to read strictly the current preparedness policy of OCHA, we shouldn't be doing these [missions], because we don't technically cover the government's own capacities—only their ability to receive, not respond.'[10]

3.3 Effectiveness

Have OCHA's preparedness efforts at the global level proved effective in terms of meeting its following objectives, outlined in the Policy Instruction and the Strategic Framework 2010-2013?

Objectives of the Policy Instruction on Preparedness:

- 'Strengthen OCHA's internal disaster readiness
- Strengthen the system's capacity for coordinated rapid response
- Strengthen the capacity of national authorities and regional organisations to effectively utilize their internal coordination system to request or help mobilise international humanitarian assistance'[11]

Preparedness objectives in the 2010–2013 Strategic Framework:

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[9] http://www.unocha.org/what-we-do/coordination-tools/undac/overview OCHA UNDAC (2009) Disaster Response Preparedness Missions Report synthesis, OCHA Geneva

[10] OCHA UNDAC (2009) Disaster Response Preparedness Missions Report synthesis, OCHA Geneva

[11] OCHA (2010), *Policy Instruction on OCHA's Role in Preparedness*

- 'Defined roles and responsibilities within OCHA and among international development and humanitarian partners to support member states and regional organizations in response preparedness
- Humanitarian response and response preparedness are underpinned by integrated analysis and rigorous learning
- A more predictable and scalable suite of OCHA services and tools to support leaders and partners in response preparedness, humanitarian response and transition'[12]

When viewed against these (quite broad) objectives, the results since 2010 are mixed at best. The most concrete progress can be seen in the third objective of the Policy Instruction ('Strengthen national and regional capacities to request/mobilise international response'). Yet there has only been some initial progress on the third preparedness-related objective of the Strategic Framework ('A more predictable and scalable suite of OCHA services and tools'), and little on the others. In terms of the first objective, human resources challenges remain the critical stumbling block to effectively improving OCHA's internal readiness, particularly surge capacity. Simply put, in recent major emergencies there were too few staff with the appropriate technical skills and language abilities available for rapid deployment. This perennial challenge faces the entire humanitarian field, not just OCHA. Even in non-urgent scenarios, the placement of professionals well suited to these posts has proved daunting and often slow. The current strategic plan includes strengthening this capacity with a greater 'emphasis on technical and language skills among those taking part in surge initiatives' starting in 2012, as well as deploying 'three roaming emergency surge officers.'[13] While the organisation has increased field staff by 40 percent over the past five years, it continues to be perceived as overly top-heavy, with the majority of senior staffers at headquarters level and the majority of junior staffers in the ROs and COs. OCHA's budgeting process does not lend itself to a strategic allocation of resources for preparedness. Program managers initiate cost planning, and they have a natural incentive to bid high, with no requirement to consider the budget in relation to the needs of other countries/regions. The Global Focus Model is not used to prioritise preparedness budgets for countries according to levels of risk. In addition, because OCHA costs are primarily in human resources, at country and regional level it is not always clear how much is going for preparedness versus response, as those roles might be split. OCHA's 2012-13 budget does not indicate any such division between resource allocation at the regional level or in its Country Offices,[14] and the proportion no doubt varies widely from one office to the next. In ROMENA, for instance, since 2010 resources have been dedicated to response almost entirely. The preparedness section itself has not had a consistent budget or staff complement since it was established. Interviewees also indicate that EPS's strategy and approach have not been adequately formulated, and as a result, have not captured the attention of senior management. Among competing priorities for senior management, preparedness has not galvanised a lot of support.

Efforts at the global level have made a positive contribution towards creating a 'predictable and scalable suite of preparedness tools and services' by adapting and promoting the Minimum Preparedness Package (MPP) concept from ROAP for OCHA as a whole. The MPP brings together various preparedness-support activities (contingency planning, simulation exercises, etc.), and organises them into a cohesive plan geared toward a range of desired outcomes or 'end states' in preparedness that OCHA seeks to achieve. Although the MPP is mainly a tool for OCHA ROs and COs to approach their preparedness work at the country level, it also serves the objectives of strengthening national and regional capacities to request international assistance, as this is built into the outcomes or 'end states' of the plan. EPS was effective in this regard by attaining buy-in from other regions on this approach, and by globalising it for the organisation. The MPP at the global level (being rolled

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[12] OCHA (2011). *OCHA in 2012 and 2013: Plan and Budget* (Strategic Framework, p. 6)

[13] http://www.unocha.org/ocha2012-13/strategic-plan/objective-3_2

[14] OCHA, *OCHA in 2012-13 Plan and Budget*

out in 2012 and 2013) identifies the 15 desirable end-states that constitute a desired level of preparedness, and gives OCHA ROs (and eventually, it is planned, the COs) a plan to work against and be accountable for. The MPP has not yet received an official blessing by OCHA's Senior Management Team, however; something that still needs to be done.

On the objectives of strengthening system-wide preparedness capacity and defining clear preparedness roles between OCHA and its partners, one initial step has been made: EPS is now adapting the MPP for joint efforts with the IASC on emergency-response preparedness at the regional level. EPS has chaired the IASC task team for establishing a new set of guidelines on preparedness. It is driving efforts to both formulate a common IASC definition on preparedness and integrate emergency response requirements in CCA/UNDAF guidelines. Though EPS is beginning to see movements at the IASC level, progress is slow. Its attempts to reform the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI) initiative and to make it more useful and effective (detailed in Section 3.6), face a similarly uphill task. Part of the explanation for the limited progress until recently is that for the first few years of its existence, EPS was focused, as mentioned in the previous section, on an overly ambitious and outwardly directed role for implementing Priority Five of the Hyogo Framework. This focus, combined with a long gap in EPS leadership and an unclear strategic organisation of preparedness within OCHA in general, created an impression of OCHA incoherence on preparedness in international forums. IASC partners noted that they would commonly receive very different messages on preparedness depending on who from OCHA was speaking—CRD, EPS, UNDAC, etc. A few informants both inside and outside of OCHA noted that OCHA takes a 'generalist' approach to staffing. It has not recruited people for their specific skills and experience in preparedness, and this approach has held back progress in preparedness at global level.

Despite challenges, EPS has made some important recent advances, including developing a new online tool called Preparedness Tracker, adapted from a pandemic model. The tool provides country-specific information on the latest contingency planning and simulation results, for example. The IASC sub-working group on preparedness considers it an important and useful contribution. In the future it could be made more useful if it tracked with the MPP benchmarks and enabled direct uploading by country-level preparedness actors.

In terms of the effectiveness of UNDAC's Disaster Response Preparedness missions, the 2009 evaluation found that the missions' recommendations to the affected governments often had limited take-up due to government capacity constraints. In addition, the UNDAC model in the past has been to send a big UNDAC team, produce a report, and then leave, all without connecting conclusions to any program or government priorities—an approach that one informant likened to a 'mission from Mars.' Nevertheless, the missions resulted in some good examples of inter-agency cooperation, including joint OCHA–IFRC work on UNDAC missions covering legal expertise to ensure the missions benefit from the Federation's work on the International Disaster Response Law. The evaluation noted, however, that significant investments in national level capacity mapping (both government and civil society) need to occur if OCHA seeks to establish the linkage between its role and subsequent improvements in disaster response preparedness at national levels.[15]

A few external interviewees expressed the sense that OCHA at the global level was not doing enough to disseminate the organisation's preparedness tools, such as the Global Focus Model, which are 'solid' and 'important' but unfortunately not as well known outside of OCHA as they should be. OCHA HQ has also not helped share the lessons and experiences of OCHA personnel and preparedness capacity efforts at the national

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[15] OCHA UNDAC (2009) Disaster Response Preparedness Missions Report synthesis, OCHA Geneva

level, either in the organisation or with its partners (possibly because these experiences tend to be drawn from outside OCHA's official policy on its role in preparedness).

Early warning activities in OCHA face both institutional challenges and more substantive ones. For a time, the functions of early warning and contingency planning were located in OCHA New York as a package of activities, but contingency planning was moved back to Geneva in 2010, leaving the early warning function in New York. The rationale was that early warning was needed there to inform (and be informed) by the desks in CRD. The split, however, contributes to a wider concern regarding the function of EPS and its relationship to OCHA New York. In addition to contributing to the information needs of the desks, the early warning officer also conducts ad hoc analysis on issues such as seasonal hazards, and contributes to wider inter-agency initiatives, including the *Early Warning-Early Action* reports.

There are recurrent examples of barriers between early warning and early action. In particular, there's no systematic reliance on early warning information, which occurs in a number of ways. First, there is an assumption that the field 'knows best,' and that they are acting on relevant information. In some past situations this has proven not to be the case: for example, in the Horn of Africa crisis in 2011. In the Sahel crisis, the early warning systems worked much better, with joint decisions based on information leading to action (if not to sufficient donor response).[16] Second, OCHA questions whether products such as the *Early Warning-Early Action* report have the necessary influence at the country level given that the information is not especially current by the time it is released to the field. In a recent exercise, the IASC sub-working group on preparedness took the findings from a recent *Early Warning-Early Action* report. They then contacted the RC/HCs of the five countries identified in the report as requiring early actions and requested that these countries comment on the analysis and self-assess their state of readiness to the warning. The sub-working group had committed to offering assistance to help the countries increase their preparedness depending on their response. Only one country office replied, however, which, to the members of the sub-working group, was a worrying sign regarding accountability to early warning.

An additional challenge relates to the type of crisis the information is designed to serve. It is much easier to present information to government counterparts on natural hazards than on political crisis or conflict, and the *Early Warning-Early Action* report is considered by partners to have grown increasingly cautious in recent years due to member state sensitivities.[17] Additionally, the means to collect relevant information on political crises at the field level for political crisis is more challenging. Many of the agencies tasked with tracking the information, such as OHCHR or DPA, have only a limited operational presence.

3.4 Efficiency

The preparedness function could be organised more efficiently with OCHA headquarters structures. As in all efficiency issues, OCHA is perennially challenged by its headquarters being split between Geneva and New York offices. Unless this structure changes, certain inefficiencies and administrative obstacles are unavoidable. Apart from that, the delivery mechanism and management lines for the preparedness function are particularly

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[16] Save the Children and OxFam. (2012). A Dangerous Delay: The cost of late response to early warnings in the 2011 drought in the Horn of Africa. Joint Agency Briefing Paper

[17] The EWEA report was recently reviewed as a product, and the findings recommended the need to strengthen early warning analysis to provide a stronger base for action, and targeting audiences that need to take specific preparedness action. *Summary of the Early Warning Early Action Report Review Process*, 23 February 2012

convoluted. One interviewee observed that the responsibility for preparedness is defused between ROs, COs, and HQ entities, with 'no central coordination platform and no one who is ultimately accountable. Also [there are] no clear objectives on what we are trying to accomplish.' At HQ level, 'Preparedness in Partnership' comes under Corporate Programmes, but the Regional and Country Offices report to CRD. Another interviewee described this as a discouraging situation for ROs, who do a lot in preparedness but have no incentive to promote it if CRD does not see it as something for which they are accountable. Preparedness then runs the risk of being something to do with whatever time is left over when not doing response, a structure that would not support predictable relationships with partners, or deliver against the Hyogo Framework.

Two other significant disconnects affect efficiency: first, between EPS in Geneva and CRD in New York; and second, between EPS and the regional and country offices. For the moment EPS is a section that is not well understood; it is a resource not being tapped into enough. Neither EPS nor CRD staff had a good explanation for why this is so. The confusion may well have to do with the past year's reshaping and relocation of the section, and the long vacancy of the chief position, but EPS is not yet working closely with operations. It was also suggested that EPS was looked at, fairly or unfairly, as a sort of think tank, more of a standard-setting body than an operational one. Interviewees affirm that this is more the case for preparedness than for any other thematic areas. The Protection and Assessment sections, for example, have greater engagement with CRD and are perceived to be more operationally active. One interviewee said that 'we talk to those [protection and assessment] people a lot, and they are out to the field a lot,' but not with EPS. This view may change once the MPP end states are included in country office accountability frameworks. Once they become compulsory to report against both, they and their CRD desks will have more incentive to make the link with EPS. Overall, there was general agreement that EPS needs to solidify its role and work out how it can support or lead preparedness for the organisation. Preparedness is critically linked to response, and indeed has no value unless that linkage is made; preparedness success is measured by the quality of the response. For some it would follow that unless EPS is working closely with CRD, it will be marginalised and can add little value. Stronger and clearer leadership on preparedness from the most senior levels of OCHA headquarters could help strengthen this working relationship.

3.5   Impact/sustainability

In evaluation terminology, 'impact' is defined as the long-term consequences, or the net-change result, of any intervention. In general, it is difficult to assess OCHA's work in impact terms because its role in humanitarian action is an indirect, process-oriented one. It operates as a coordinator and convener of international assistance, not a direct implementer.

It is far too early to say whether OCHA's activities at headquarters level will demonstrate a long-term, lasting positive effect on system-level preparedness, and whether the tools and systems it is attempting to put in place for global preparedness will be sustainable over time. The preparedness elements of the current Strategic Framework and the work of the newly reconfigured EPS have just begun. Prior to 2012, a long gap in EPS leadership, as well as the much noted disconnects, limited EPS's ability to make sustained progress within the Sub-Working Group on preparedness. One possible exception may turn out to be the Global Focus Model (discussed in Section 4). Although for a variety of reasons it has not yet been widely shared with partners, those that have been exposed to it attest to its value as a planning and prioritising tool, one that can have a major

impact on system-level preparedness efforts. As one example, the IASC sub-working group on preparedness intends to use it for their annual workplan process.

3.6 Coherence

As highlighted in Section 2, within the international system a large range of international actors is engaged in preparedness or broader disaster risk reduction and resilience work. There are overlapping mandates and a lack of clarity regarding areas of responsibility and accountability. These overlaps have been acknowledged and well documented for nearly a decade but there has been little progress on reconciling the blurred lines.[18]

Interviewees from other UN agencies have observed that OCHA seems to have swung to and fro on the issue of preparedness; for outsiders it has been difficult to understand their focus. One interviewee said that '[a] few years ago it was all about capacity development of national actors; then it shifted to the rather narrow preparedness for response; then [it] shifted back again; and now it's gone to the extreme end and linked preparedness to resilience, but the link really isn't well made.' Several interviewees also made reference to the Transformative Agenda (TA), where initially the preparedness element seemed to be missing, despite how the TA was intended to hone in on critical elements for improved humanitarian performance. Perhaps it can be argued that because the TA focuses on achieving better responses to Level 3 disasters, the entire initiative is actually about better preparedness. Interviewees, however, felt this perspective was not well articulated from the beginning.

It is undoubtedly a strength of OCHA's preparedness work that much of it grew from operations in the regions and countries, rather than from a template issued at headquarters in a top-down process. Yet the challenges in coherence and other criteria described above suggest that a necessary strategic/leadership piece is missing.

IASC activity

As a vehicle for encouraging common agency-wide approaches to preparedness, the IASC has so far fallen short as a unifying mechanism. Structurally, the dialogue on preparedness resides in multiple places, including the Principals, Working Group and Sub-Working Group levels; only recently has there been a serious attempt at crafting a shared definition of preparedness (wide ranging concepts currently in vogue in the IASC span from resilience to response readiness). Tensions exist between the multi-mandated and core humanitarian agencies at the working levels as to whether there is a need to embrace a wider concept or keep the focus and dialogue narrow. IASC members described OCHA as 'struggling' in this debate, not clear on its own organisational role or operational definition of preparedness.

In early 2011, the IASC Principals identified the development of national preparedness capacities for emergency preparedness as one of five themes for the Transformative Agenda (TA). The World Bank and UNDP were tasked to write a paper on Strengthening National Capacity for Emergency Preparedness and, following progressive revisions through 2011, the Principals agreed to a set of action points on Preparedness at their December 2011 meeting. The main coordination forum for disaster preparedness is IASC sub-working group on preparedness. Currently UNICEF and WFP jointly chair it. This body meets quarterly, and has produced some important work, including an undertaking of regional simulations, as well as providing training and

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[18] See for example, Christoplos, I., Yasemin Aysan, Alexandra Galperin (2005) *External Evaluation of the ISDR*, June 2005

producing the quarterly *Early Warning-Early Action* report, as highlighted earlier. Due to a lack of leadership in EPS for a significant period, OCHA has not been perceived as a significant contributor to the IASC on preparedness issues until quite recently. The operational and preparedness split between Geneva and New York adds to the challenges on IASC engagement; interviewees noted that this was the case whether the issue was a thematic- or crisis-specific one. For example, in relation to the Syria response, the Director of CRD has been asked to be more involved in preparedness in Syria for non refugee-related regional response. EPS, however, is not at all involved, which inevitably impacts the quality of the dialogue within the IASC sub-working group.

Gender issues in preparedness

The Guidance and Indicator package for implementing Priority Five of the Hyogo Framework promotes gender as a core factor in both disaster risk and the reduction of risk. In particular, it highlights that differences in gender roles will lead to differing risk profiles for women and men in a disaster, and that women are often well positioned to manage risk due to their roles as economic providers, as caregivers and community workers, and as both users and managers of environmental resources. As such, the package calls for the need to identify and use gender-differentiation information to ensure that risk-reduction strategies are correctly targeted at the most vulnerable and effectively implemented through the roles of both women and men.[19] OCHA has encouraged the participation of gender specialists in assessment, including through the MPP, and has contributed to the development of 'gender markers' for better mainstreaming gender-equality programming in humanitarian action.[20] In addition, there's a range of other support, including guidance to GENCAP advisors in disaster preparedness.[21] Much of the work, however, focuses on natural disasters and hazards, rather than political crisis or conflict. OCHA staff in ROMENA, for example, doubted it would be easy to promote gender issues in a dialogue in the Maghreb/North Africa. OCHA staff pointed to limited available data to adequately discuss gaps and weaknesses, as well as concern about whether OCHA was the right institution to promote it. They expressed a preference to embed it in a wider dialogue rather than a single aspect of the preparedness agenda. In Cairo, a regional office for the new UN Women has been established to promote gender more actively in the region. OCHA identified this institution as a vehicle for more effectively promoting gender issues related to preparedness, and also for increasing data collection.

From an operational perspective, closer work with UNFPA would support its role in focusing on reproductive health needs in crisis. This work could also help prevent, as well as respond to, gender-based violence (GBV) in emergencies. Much of the work thus far has been geared to response rather than preparedness. GBV coordinators, for example, tend to work with cluster leads to consider interventions in response to GBV. IASC guidelines on GBV exist that elaborate on all of the preparedness tasks to be undertaken. Greater coordination between OCHA and UNFPA on disseminating and encouraging the implementation of these preparedness tasks would be useful.[22] Also, the Minimum Initial Services Package (MISP) for Reproductive Health in crisis situations could be promoted widely by OCHA.[23]

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[19] ISDR (2011) Disaster Preparedness for Effective Response, Guidance and Indicator Package for Implementing Priority Five of the Hyogo Framework

[20] http://oneresponse.info/crosscutting/gender/Pages/Gender.aspx

[21] Guidance Note on Disaster Preparedness - Entry Points for GenCap Adviser

[22] http://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/GBV%20Guidelines%20(English).pdf

[23] http://iawg.net/resources/MISP%20Advocacy%20Sheet%20-%20IAWG%20FINAL%20Nov09.pdf

4. Regional level preparedness[24]

4.1 Summary

Most of the innovations in tools, systems, and approaches for preparedness developed in OCHA have come out of the Regional Offices (ROs). These offices have preparedness support as one of their primary objectives, along with supporting response efforts with surge capacity and technical expertise. The Global Focus Model and the Minimum Preparedness Package (MPP) described below are two such innovations. Both were developed (and in the case of the MPP, adapted) in the Regional Office for Asia-Pacific (ROAP), where OCHA has also made the most far-reaching inroads into developing preparedness capacities with governments. Not all of OCHA's regions can be equally proactive; the findings suggest specific conditions that support robust preparedness action. These conditions include collaborative governments with relatively high pre-existing capacity and a hazard profile of mainly sudden-onset and short-lived natural disasters, ones with long periods between response interventions that allow for (and even demand that) international actors engage in preparedness efforts in advance of the next disaster. Both ROAP and ROLAC fit this mold. Regions with low-capacity governments and chronic or frequently repeating crisis conditions (like ROSA) have a limited ability to affect change, particularly when resources at the national level are highly constrained. Those marked by political instability and conflict-related emergencies (like ROMENA) naturally have less time, resources, and scope for preparedness work. For these regions it makes sense to follow the narrow frame of the 2010 Policy Instruction. ROMENA, given its resource and capacity constraints, used the Policy Instruction on preparedness to rein in its activities, as well as limit the potential to go into broader areas of capacity building or risk reduction. In support of this approach, OCHA has relatively strong working relations with the other main DRR actors in the Middle East and North Africa region, including UNDP, ISDR and IFRC, with increasing recognition amongst these four of their respective roles and responsibilities.

These regional differences in terms of external contextual conditions mean that the evaluation criteria need to be measured somewhat differently for each case.

4.2 Relevance

Prioritising preparedness—risk assessment, forecasting and the Global Focus Model

To date the humanitarian field has generally not adopted economic and statistical theory regarding the use of forecasting and probability as a planning tool. The concept of organisational risk management, which a few agencies[25] have begun to embrace, and vulnerability indices such as the Global Focus Model, represent the closest this field has come to developing a more rigorous, objective basis for decision-making. Risk management involves analyzing potential hazards, assigning likelihoods of their occurrence, and determining the gravity of consequences should they occur. Once risk is assessed in this manner, resource decisions can be made, with

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[24] As noted in the methodology, the evaluation examined three OCHA regions in detail - the Regional Office for Asia-Pacific (ROAP), Regional Office for Middle East and North Africa (ROMENA), and Regional Office for South Africa (ROSA). Within each of these three regions, one to two countries were also visited for in-depth examination. A desk review was conducted of the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC) and where relevant findings from this region are also included in this section. The team has also drawn on findings from a recent evaluation of the Regional Office for West and Central Africa (ROWCA) Steets, J., Meier, C., & Reichhold, U. (2012). *Evaluation of OCHA's Regional Office for West and Central Africa.* GPPi.

[25] Including WFP and UNICEF: https://www.unjiu.org/en/reports-notes/archive/Review%20of%20enterprise%20ri sk%20management%20in%20the%20United%20Nations%20system.pdf

avoidance or mitigation measures implemented by the organisation. At present this model is used—if used at all—mainly in terms of security threats and other hazards potentially affecting the organisation itself. Yet expanded versions of it could be applied to forecasting humanitarian needs.

In this regard, the Global Focus Model (GFM) signals a welcome step. ROAP, regularly confronted by sudden-onset disasters in the Asia-Pacific region, developed the GFM as a vulnerability-assessment and planning tool. Designed to help predict where international response was more likely to be needed, the tool assisted ROAP by prioritising attention and resources on those places. The resulting GFM compiles data on hazards, vulnerabilities, and coping capacities of each country. It then calculates their scores, or risk ratings, as a measure of the likelihood that an OCHA response will be needed—a ranking that is updated annually (OCHA, 2012). Those familiar with the model appreciate and respect it. One interviewee called it 'the best humanitarian risk model that we've seen.' At headquarters, the CERF Secretariat uses the GFM to inform planning for underfunded emergencies allocations; they find it a 'decent measure.' Most interviewees considered it an important tool for headquarters' decision making, in particular to inform resource allocation. As yet, however, it lacks systematic usage across OCHA, and budgets are not designed to reflect the annual priority countries. Also, a licensing issue has thus far prevented it from being more widely disseminated beyond OCHA as an IASC-wide tool. At the regional level, ROAP, not surprisingly, has used the tool most. ROAP uses the GFM to strategically select countries that would receive the most benefit from preparedness support. It then notes a gain in efficiencies from implementing other activities, including the MPP (discussed in the next section) based on the GFM index. In other regions, however, the tool has had less influence. Staff in both ROMENA and ROSA found that, as presented, the GFM does not provide enough information on national capacities to make adequate comparisons and, therefore, comparisons on which it would be meaningful to act. ROMENA has undertaken a separate mapping exercise based on the indicators of the MPP and documented how each country is doing with respect to each indicator. Once ROMENA has a complete picture of preparedness requirements, their aim will be to identify priority countries and develop plans of actions for 2013 (together with MENA, the regional inter-agency group) to address preparedness gaps.

In its next strategic planning process, OCHA has the opportunity to decide whether it will continue the limited use of the GFM or take it forward and further develop both it and other forecasting tools for more comprehensive and systematic application across the organisation. While the potential usefulness of the application of forecasting humanitarian emergencies has long been understood, real-world experiments with it have been scant, partly due to the limited availability and complexity of data required, and partly to a lack of knowledge, interest, or confidence that decision makers should be employing Bayes Theorem when making staffing or budget allocations.[26] Data-driven forecasting is not guaranteed to be correct in all instances; there are unknown risks and uncertainties, potential 'black swans' that may end up manifesting in the largest disasters (the Haiti earthquake, for example). Yet such forecasting can still serve as a firmer foundation for planning and prioritising resources than the backward-looking and supply-driven approach currently being used. Forecasting also improves through iteration and continually updating assumptions with the latest available information. It would enable and push humanitarian actors to at least consider the remote-disaster probabilities such as major pandemics, nuclear or chemical disasters/attacks, bioterrorism, etc. OCHA, moreover, possesses important assets that argue for the further development of more extensive risk assessment and forecasting: its datasets.

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[26] The ISDR, the World Bank's GFDRR, and UNDP do employ disaster risk models/vulnerability indices of their own, however there are no unified criteria for ranking countries according to disaster risk. Datasets are also fragmented across the field. The Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED) has noted, 'there is a lack of international consensus regarding best practices for collecting these data. there remains huge variability in definitions, methodologies, tools and sourcing.' http://www.emdat.be/about

With the Common and Fundamental Operational Datasets (COD and FOD), the Financial Tracking Service (FTS), and the Online Project System (OPS), OCHA rests on a wealth of data that could be put to more use. Thus, it will be critically important that the databases be functionally linked, as at the moment they do not 'talk' to one another.

Minimum Preparedness Package

Perhaps the most influential of OCHA's innovations in preparedness is the Minimum Preparedness Package (MPP). The package derived from the Minimum Preparedness Actions developed by ROSA in 2007. It was further developed in ROAP from 2010, and now is recognised as a global tool to be rolled out in all regions.[27] The approach brings together the various preparedness support activities (e.g., contingency planning, simulation exercises), and organises them into a cohesive plan geared toward a range of desired outcomes or 'end states' in preparedness that OCHA seeks to achieve.[28] The MPP, therefore, works as a means to bring an individual country up to a minimum level of necessary preparedness in a specified timeframe (OCHA ROAP, 2012a). The two key preparedness tools are intended to be used in unison: the Global Focus Model, for example, would provide Regional Offices with a basis for prioritising MPP implementation. Currently, however, this approach is only underway in the Asia-Pacific region. The rollout began with a pilot in PNG in 2011, and is now being rolled out in Myanmar, Mongolia, Cambodia, Bangladesh, and Lao PDR.

In addition to the agreed regional rollout, the 2011 RO performance framework incorporates the MPP in that it is also being rolled out in some COs, as agreed to by OCHA participants at the Emergency Preparedness Forum in Geneva; at the time of this writing, however, it has not yet been approved by senior management. Despite the RO-wide agreement on the approach and methodology, the MPP has not been a focus of all regions until recently. ROMENA, operating primarily in response mode, only recently started a mapping exercise to assess capacity within the region. In 2011, it also started partially rolling out the MPP with a number of UNCTs and HCTs to improve different aspects of preparedness, including staff training on humanitarian tools and services (Morocco), staff training and contingency planning (Iran), information preparedness (Lebanon), contingency planning (Syria and Yemen), and crisis communication (Kyrgyzstan).

Despite the generally positive reception of it, the MPP entails some challenges and weaknesses at the country level that are discussed further in the section 5.3. As with the Global Focus Model, some of OCHA's partners outside of the Asia-Pacific region lack awareness of the MPP. There is a need for more communications, particularly with donors, on this score.

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[27] In ROAP the earlier version of the MPP was dubbed the Country-Led Integrated Preparedness Package for Emergency Response (CLIPPER)

[28] At the global level the MPP has 15 end states 'covering country response capability, regional reinforcement, and OCHA's own readiness to respond,' and at regional level there are eight

4.3 Effectiveness

Regional Office effectiveness was assessed against the key RO roles in preparedness: coordinating regional level partners, engaging with and supporting regional intergovernmental agencies, supporting country-level preparedness actions, and ensuring surge capacity for response.

Regional inter-agency coordination

All regional offices reviewed in this evaluation faced some challenges in the basic tasks of preparedness coordination due to the different locations of regional hubs, geographic distance, and language capacities. It is unlikely that all international actors will view their coverage of a region in the same way. OCHA's regional offices are arguably the best placed for overall effectiveness, but there remain challenges and drawbacks. For OCHA's preparedness responsibilities, the most challenging regional locations are those that lack critical partners in the broader DRR/resilience agenda, such as UNDP, ISDR, and IFRC. This is the case for ROSA at present. IFRC and ISDR have no presence in Johannesburg, while UNDP is moving to Addis Ababa in early 2013. The institutional fragmentation of DRR actors in this region places considerable additional pressure on OCHA: to support the broader coordination in a region that requires a coherent framework of action for DRR and resilience. An added challenge for ROSA is that the regional entity, the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), is based in Botswana. ROAP also faces the challenge of geographic distance given that different organisations have their regional hubs in different countries. Despite this also being the case for ROMENA, staff members maintain that the current location has the highest concentration of regional offices and provides easier access to key regional bodies such as the League of Arab States (LAS) and the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).

Regional inter-agency preparedness meetings, when they can be held, are considered to be coordinated effectively in every region reviewed. ROMENA and ROSA coordinate these meetings as informal, informational forums. When they are held at the Director level, which is the case in ROAP, these meetings can function as decision-making bodies, which contribute to their effectiveness and efficiency. ROSA chairs a regional inter-agency fortnightly meeting, but a number of interviewees pointed out that given the overall stability in the region, the regularity of meetings was not necessary, particularly in the dry season. It also jointly hosts with SADC an annual *Regional Emergency Preparedness and Response Forum* for NDMAs and international partners.

The expected benefits of greater regional coordination include: first, bringing regional resources to bear on national-level response; and second, generating innovation of regional-level instruments such as possibly new funding mechanisms, better early warning, or regional resource pooling and disaster insurance schemes like those that exist in the Latin America/Caribbean region. When regional preparedness support to UN Country Teams comes piecemeal from different sources (e.g., OCHA on one area, ISDR on another, BCPR on yet another), interviewees pointed out that this lack of systematicity places a greater coordination burden on the country level. It also strains government capacity to engage, as it is often the same one or two government focal points (the ones who speak English) that go to all the international meetings.

Engagement with regional entities

All of the regional offices recognised the importance of working with regional entities, and they prioritised those relationships accordingly. Yet each office also struggled with the considerable lack of capacity the regional mechanisms have, combined with their limited resources. OCHA's support of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) represents one of the more developed regional mechanisms. SADC has an

established DRR Unit, and has recognised disaster management as part of its responsibilities for over a decade. Similar to the challenge in other regional entities, however, the issue has never been given real policy priority within the secretariat, and it has no operational budget.[29] Architecturally, DRR sits in the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation; amongst those weighty issues, DRR, not surprisingly, receives relatively limited attention.[30] OCHA was described as a 'very good partner' to SADC, highly collaborative and supportive in promoting SADC's DRR strategy and its goals. While OCHA acknowledges SADC's limitations, it also recognises that member states tend to listen to the regional body more than UN. ROSA's Head of Office concurred that it would be beneficial to have a fulltime OCHA officer integrated into SADC's headquarters in Botswana.

ROAP has been proactive and largely effective at nurturing relationships with the key regional actors—ASEAN and its AHA Centre and SAARC—despite these bodies' current lack of capacity to play critical roles in response. Two of the donors that fund these regional organisations have expressed an appreciation for OCHA's handling of this relationship and its efforts to develop both MOUs and standard operating procedures with the regional organisations. Like ROSA's relationship with SADC, this relationship building is considered an important preparedness measure, if only because the governments in the region will look to the regional organisations first, and ROAP has recognised the need for the time being to lead from behind.

ROMENA has also made significant headway in developing networks and establishing relations with some of the key regional entities. Unlike in ROSA and ROAP, ROMENA's regions host a more complex web of regional political entities, including the League of Arab States (LAS), the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). ROMENA has focused significant time in building relations with the LAS and OIC, especially to strengthen collaboration, but ROMENA staff note there is still a considerable way to go. Also, ROMENA has sought to provide more tailored services in the region, such as Arabising training (e.g., targeted to Arabic speakers, all-Arabic presenters, and translating key tools and documents). There is also a roster for Arabic speakers (although this is generated from headquarters and no one commented on how successful it has been). OCHA's understanding of the region is considered much stronger as a result. Partners complemented OCHA's understanding as a relatively new but important shift in engagement in the region. The challenge, like with other regional mechanisms, is that the LAS is a vast institution with limited resources, no capacity to implement, and responsibility for humanitarian issues locates across a number of departments. As a result, OCHA and other partners have looked to the OIC and GCC as increasingly important regional partners. In comparison to the League, both these entities have the capacity to make timely decisions regarding policy or support to interventions.

Supporting countries
The regional offices not only differ in their capacities to provide support directly at the country level, but also in the emphasis they place on this role. For ROAP and ROSA, direct support to the country level functions as the most effective way of operating, though both regions also invest significantly in supporting intergovernmental and inter-agency dialogue and preparedness efforts. ROMENA, on the other hand, has found it more feasible to work at the inter-agency level or with partners in country, as well as with regional entities, not directly with governments. ROMENA contended that this approach generated the most value, given their available resources, resistance from governments, and weak responsiveness on the part of some RCOs and UNCTs to preparedness support. The most effective in-roads have been made with some of the

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[29] http://www.sadc.int/
[30] Defence Departments have an emergency capability so the rationale for embedding DRR Unit in this portfolio might makes sense during response time, but not during 'peace' time

low-risk disaster profile contexts such as UAE and Qatar. Because of the relatively high capacities of governments in the Latin American/Caribbean region, OCHA has a light presence at the country level, working mainly through National Disaster Response Advisors (NDRAs). It is able to focus relatively more attention on the regional and sub-regional preparedness platforms that are more developed in ROLAC than in the other regions.

In general, governments coping with chronic humanitarian needs and serious capacity deficits often cannot place preparedness at the top of their agenda, even if they see it as an important need and OCHA as a relevant partner. In Southern Africa, ROSA's approach to preparedness in the region involves a push-pull strategy to ensure the process is government-led. The reason for this strategy is two fold: partly based on a rationale that interventions will be more sustainable if initiated by the government, and partly based on the need to stimulate interest from the government first to catalyse international engagement. By generating the interest among government officials to initiate the activity, the otherwise-preoccupied UNCT will take notice and follow suit. This strategy works in contexts where government relationships are well established, and where the issues of concern are primarily natural hazards, not the more politically sensitive issues of IDPs or protection. Angola, for example, is one of the more challenging operational contexts in the region at present because it sits outside the classic natural hazards response work. In Zimbabwe, work in preparedness is complicated by political sensitivities that have affected the dialogue on the full range of preparedness needs. As an example, the Contingency Plan, developed with the government and international agencies, focuses on contingencies for natural disasters, not contingencies for protection or displacement needs. As part of the transition process, this year OCHA and the RCO conducted consultations with partners on the criteria for humanitarian needs and how these should be coordinated. Recently the HCT approved a reduction in clusters from eight to four: WASH, Health, Food, and Protection, and adopted strict criteria for humanitarian projects for the (final) 2013 CAP. It was agreed that all other 'chronic' needs would be addressed through development programming.

ROMENA is undoubtedly the hardest of OCHA's regions in which to conduct preparedness at present. Until 2010, the preparedness work in its countries had been based on planning for the pandemic H1N1 and for natural disasters. Conflict and civil unrest were rarely discussed. In addition, there was a limited dialogue with governments on preparedness, either through the RCOs and UNCTs or directly. Government counterparts were wary of engaging in a dialogue on preparedness, and were described as 'quite cold to the idea of outsiders coming into their space.' Preparedness for national authorities was perceived as an issue of national security. In a number of contexts, the UNCT and RC's were also reluctant to raise the issue of preparedness because the government was not going to ask for help. As a result, co-owned contingency plans, common in Southern Africa, are not common in this region. Most governments have separate contingency plans from their international counterparts. Any preparedness work on issues of civil unrest/political instability was undertaken confidentially within the UN system. This work was neither shared nor discussed with government counterparts, and often, not even with non-government partners. OCHA staff at the regional office recognise well the challenge of maintaining such a siloed approach. To develop relevant and effective contingency and scenario planning requires a good deal of knowledge. For example, it may require knowing what infrastructure and facilities exist; and then, the analysis derived from this awareness needs to be shared among all relevant actors. Only in this way can contingency plans be both appropriate and coherent. In many countries, however, accessing such information was not possible. On this basis, OCHA and other agencies acknowledge they were simply not prepared for the Arab Spring events.

Partly due to its resources being fully stretched in response since 2010, and partly due to the resistance by some governments and UNCT to a preparedness dialogue, ROMENA has sought to minimise its engagement with

the more capacity-building aspects of preparedness. Instead, they have opted, as articulated in the Policy Instruction, to focus on the narrower elements of response preparedness such as financial instruments, contingency planning, and trainings for preparedness like UNDAC training. In Iraq, for example, the government requested that OCHA establish an emergency management cell, but OCHA deferred to UNDP, given the longer-term nature of the support required. This circumscribed approach, is perfectly in keeping with OCHA's stated policy and a realistic appraisal of available resources.

Of the 37 countries and 16 territories in ROAP's vast region, OCHA maintains field presences in 10 countries that include those deemed most likely to experience a major natural disaster in the near future. Because some of these countries have newly minted middle-income status and rapidly developing independent response capacities, ROAP has had to think beyond conventional approaches about how it can remain a relevant and useful partner, one that assists governments to meet their evolving preparedness needs and priorities, while still ensuring that the international system remains ready for response if an emergency overwhelms a government's capacity to cope. This approach was variously described by ROAP staff as 'leading from behind,' and focuses on cementing key relationships. In the words of one staffer, 'We need to be far cleverer to get them to let us help them.' Maintaining a longstanding country presence, also unusual for OCHA (the last head of office for OCHA Indonesia was in Jakarta for four years), greatly facilitates this approach. ROAP sees itself as 'right sized' and appropriately placed in the region for the moment. Yet many of its inter-agency and government counterparts at the country level expressed a desire to see OHCA expand its presence and take on more of the direct preparedness burden. Staffing capacity can be so stretched, both in the clusters and in the government ministries and NDMAs. As a result, OCHA is frequently called upon to do things well outside its mandate as a coordinator, including the act of providing direct technical assistance and training to government personnel, as well as facilitating communications and joint efforts between clusters and their focal points in the line ministries.

ROSA staff maintain that their government-led approach to preparedness in the region is more sustainable, and therefore a more effective way to harness the UN system into joint and common action.[31] In other words, they argue that it is important to stimulate the need for government to act as a catalyst that then changes the nature of international engagement. Part of the rationale for this approach is that the RCO and the UN Country Teams in the region are development minded and do not tend to prioritise resources to preparedness work. In ROSA's experience, the RCOs in the region generally have sufficient knowledge and interest in promoting preparedness, but the UNCTs are less flexible; without the commitment of the country team, little meaningful preparedness work can take place. As a result, OCHA identified a 'work around' by generating the interest from government officials first. This strategy may succeed in contexts where government relationships are well established, but not in all countries in southern Africa. As an example, OCHA has made little headway in Angola, which also sits outside the classic natural hazards response work.

In Latin-America/Caribbean, ROLAC staffers believe that their intensive and time-consuming efforts to strengthen UNCTs have been successful overall. One indicator of success at country level that ROLAC notes has been an improved frequency and quality of emergency simulations. There has been less success, however, in updating country-level response plans.

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[31] *OCHA ROSEA Approach to Emergency Response Preparedness*, OCHA Johannesburg, (not dated)

Lastly, a recent evaluation of the RO for West and Central Africa notes that ROWCA has had minimal success in preparedness work in the region, partly due to weak human-resources capacity in both numbers and the appropriate skillsets.[32]

Surge

Regarding surge deployments, OCHA has come under general criticism (though not specific to any single region) that it lacks a centralised deployment strategy, and that the multiple sources of surge—from the region, from headquarters, and from the SPP roster—made the system more confusing. In the case of ROWCA, the evaluation noted that surge capacity is a critical function of the RO's support in the region, but it 'cannot make up for OCHA's recruitment and deployment problems' that limit the RO's effectiveness.[33]

At the regional level, and unlike in emergency response, regional offices cannot do surge deployments for preparedness, despite how staff constantly travel to countries. In ROSA and ROMENA they travel based on ad hoc requests, while in ROAP they travel during key points in the planning process. ROMENA has been the only region in recent years that has faced a constant, unprecedented, and unpredicted level of crisis. There were mixed views as to the timeliness of OCHA's deployments. Many interviewees pointed to the slow scale-up in Yemen as inadequate to the critical and deteriorating situation in the country. The speed with which OCHA set up an office in Libya in 2011 was commendable, but the abrupt shut-down 11 months later was less welcome; many agencies argued that the national counterpart capacity was too weak for OCHA to be handing over responsibilities. In Syria, the slow granting of visas slowed down the deployment process, as did the need to identify acceptable nationalities, but still it was regarded as faster and more efficient by most.

4.4 Efficiency

There are significant differences between the regions in terms of efficiencies. In both ROMENA and ROSA, the offices were considerably more stretched in terms of human and financial capacity than ROAP. Not only is this discrepancy due to the differing nature of crisis and capacities at country level, but also to the innovation from ROAPs having developed and applied a set of tools that created a more efficient office. According to interviewees in ROAP, efficiency has generally improved with the introduction of the MPP. In years prior, when preparedness activities took place on a piecemeal and unsystematic basis, the travel costs and staff time spent on various components of preparedness in various countries (e.g., contingency planning, information-management training, running simulations) were considerable, but did not generate concrete, comprehensive results in country-level preparedness. Simulations in particular are quite costly to run, and before MPP they were sometimes used as a diagnostic tool to identify preparedness gaps. The current methodology proceeds more logically and cost-effectively. It uses the Global Focus Model to strategically select the countries that would receive the most benefit from preparedness support, working systematically to achieve all eight necessary preparedness outcomes, and then uses simulations to test and revise the new preparedness plans and structures that have been put in place.

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[32] Steets, Meier, & Reichhold, 2012
[33] Ibid., pp. 6-7

An additional challenge in ROMENA is that the need to respond to ongoing emergencies and deploy staff for extended periods of time has tended to undermine preparedness work, which requires engagement with partners and country teams over a longer period of time. The office also has suffered from a level of staff turnover that makes the longer-term work of preparedness and broader DRR difficult as well, a difficulty enhanced by the system being slow to replace people.

Whereas ROAP has benefited from the active engagement of a regional donor (Australia) keen on promoting preparedness in the region, there is a general impression in ROMENA and ROSA that donors are not willing to fund preparedness. In ROSA this is partly due to the lack of any significant regional- or country-level emergency in the last four years, which renders fundraising efforts for preparedness increasingly challenging. The critical needs in other parts of Africa (such as the Horn and Sahel) have also shifted donor attention from the region. This risks undermining the investments in the region's development. In ROMENA, the nature of the crisis in the region primarily produces a lack of interest in preparedness support, with donors responding to political crises as they occur and with little interest in longer-term resource planning for preparedness work. ROMENA is also hesitant to ask for more resources unless a stronger demand from the countries emerges. Often met with resistance from the RC's office and the UNCT, ROMENA argues that it is important to use their resources efficiently, and in doing so, recognise the limits of their influence.

In 2008, ROSA launched a promising initiative in the form of a regional preparedness CAP.[34] Concerned about the upcoming rainy season, and understanding that disaster preparedness was often overlooked in traditional CAPs and Flash Appeals in favour of supporting 'immediate, life-saving' needs, OCHA launched the *2008 Southern African Region Preparedness and Response Plan*. Lessons from this initiative confirm that even when designed in advance with specific preparedness measure in place, it was difficult to convince donors of the need to invest. As a result, the preparedness aspects of the appeal were not funded. Another lesson was that there wasn't enough standardised data to compare preparedness needs between countries. As a result, in Malawi, for example, there was a much wider definition of 'affected' than bordering countries, which only counted those at risk of total displacement. Other disparities were not explained properly, such as the high cost of doing business in Zimbabwe as compared to other countries in the region. Some donors also rejected the mechanism of a CAP for preparedness or broader DRR financing, arguing that this type of work requires a more sustainable mechanism beyond a single year, and that it needs to be predictable and clearly targeted.

4.5 Impact/sustainability

The eight MPP outcomes or 'end states' are appropriate to OCHA's role, but they are mostly directed at specific outputs and process outcomes, not impacts. The short-term process nature of the MPP outcomes is illustrated by ROAP staffers speaking of a 'three-year shelf–life' of the preparedness outcomes before the process needs to be repeated, to account for changes in the context and turnover of personnel. The nature of the preparedness structures entail that working relationships be forged among the few key individuals and governments and across the clusters. These can be disrupted as staff leave to take other positions. Therefore, high turnover in regional offices has a significant impact on this process. ROLAC, for instance, has a relatively strong pool of human resources for preparedness and OCHA staffing has been stable. The 'internal' circulation of staff within the region, the relatively long focus on preparedness, and the relatively low security challenges mean that key staff often stay in posts for extended periods. This duration solidifies working relationships with government

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[34] UN OCHA, *Southern African Region Preparedness and Response Plan*, Geneva: United Nations, February

representatives that are all the more important due to a noted aversion on the part of governments in the region to signing formal agreements and MOUs with international aid actors.

The regional offices have all successfully developed strategies to support their regional entities, which provide support to the collective of national disaster management authorities of the member states. In ROMENA, however, the LAS and OIC have no demonstrated ability to influence their membership on preparedness issues. By convening the Regional Humanitarian Partnership meetings, ROAP has made further inroads into governments' disaster-management structures and has assisted them with understanding and navigating the international humanitarian system. In addition to supporting the intergovernmental entities such as ASEAN and its AHA Centre and SAARC, ROAP is also cultivating relationships with individual governments of strong states in the region, not only, for example, China and India, but also up-and-coming middle-income states like Malaysia and Brunei, recognising their potential as future interlocutors and donors in the region.

There is also a need for regional offices to learn to measure their successes in ways other than their own active involvement, including developing indicators to monitor the effectiveness of national leadership in a response. Based on some broad indicators, OCHA recently reviewed the collective experience of governments and partners in the region. The following improvements were highlighted:[35]

- More timely relocation of populations prior to floods (Namibia, Zambia)
- Better search and rescue (Mozambique, Zambia)
- Faster response times (Madagascar, Zambia, Namibia, Mozambique, South Africa)
- Strengthened coordination response between government and international partners (South Africa, Zambia, Madagascar, Namibia, Angola)
- More effective resource mobilisation (Madagascar, Namibia, Mozambique)

In ROMENA, there was little discussion on the outcomes of any possible preparedness work. ROMENA staff highlight that the nature of the political crisis faced in the region creates difficulties for demonstrating outcomes. Political deadlocks, for example, can mean there is little chance to plan and execute activities despite the best intentions. In Lebanon, it was noted that the frequent changes of government result in the need to change all plans because each government comes with a new agenda—which only adds to the challenges of sustainability. Finally, the instruments and planning processes, such as the CAP and other short-term financing and planning tools, do not lend themselves to more sustainable impact-oriented work. For example, in Yemen's various (food security and political) crises in recent years, the only planning tool made available was the CAP (with the UNDAF put to the side); as such, the HCT had to use the CAP to link recovery to longer-term developments.

The measurement of success is still perceived to be an area of weakness in ROLAC as well. OCHA staff there put a lot of work into the regional performance framework, but recognise that some indicators, while measurable, are not particularly meaningful. This not-uncommon problem may be more pronounced in ROLAC, where OCHA's work centers on the art of influencing governments and the ability to build strong partnerships. ROLAC staff used the example of Guatemala where, in a recent earthquake and notwithstanding an eventual request for international assistance, there was a strong sense that ROLAC's work on preparedness had made a real difference; the need for international assistance had been diminished. Such success, however, was hard to quantify in concrete terms.

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[35] *OCHA ROSEA Approach to Emergency Response Preparedness*, OCHA Johannesburg, (no date)

4.6 Coherence

Of the three regions the evaluation reviewed in detail, ROMENA was the only region that demonstrated an equal interest in and commitment, on the part of the key DRR actors, to work towards a coherent approach within their respective roles and responsibilities. This may be due to the limits OCHA set on its role in the Middle East and North Africa region, as well as the strict interpretation of the Policy Instruction on preparedness. If this had not been the case, and OCHA had pursued an expanded mandate, then there might have been more competition between and duplication of the key actors. ISDR, for example, was highly positive about OCHA's role in the region in terms of bringing coherence, recognising that UNDP and OCHA are its most important partners in the field. ISDR also acknowledged the important role OCHA plays in coordinating between ISDR and rest of agencies in, for example, on the DRR strategy for the region. For their part, UNDP saw significant improvements in its relationship with OCHA. One example is the recent co-location of OCHA, ISDR and UNDP in the same office, which has allowed for more discussion regarding respective roles and responsibilities. Engagement between the three actors is not systematic, though, and there is a constant need to resist the tendency to work in silo. In ROAP, country-level actors and regional donors expressed some confusion about OCHA ROAP's role in preparedness vis-à-vis bodies such as UNDAC and ISDR. While ROAP staff who were interviewed were mostly confident that the roles are more complementary than overlapping, one donor suggested it would be helpful for OCHA to convene a meeting or workshop for stakeholders that would introduce and explain the various roles. ROSA is potentially facing the most challenging situation, with the key DRR partners gone or nearly gone from the regional hub of Johannesburg. As noted above, this isolation places significant pressure on OCHA to meet the expectations of the remaining regional partners. These partners see the need to develop a coherent strategy and framework of action for DRR, not preparedness, and most see OCHA as best placed to fill the vacuum and deliver.

These issues highlight the broader identity issues OCHA faces in the area of preparedness. Long criticised by some among the agencies at the global level for overstepping its coordination mandate, at the regional level OCHA can find itself continually pulled into new areas and roles by filling vacuums. ROAP, operating with greater efficiencies than most regional offices, has taken a practical and context-based approach to these issues, neither empire–building nor constraining itself to work within formal mandate lines. ROAP has sought to proactively address the needs of preparedness in a region where governments are firmly in charge and fail to see the point of the institutional walls that international actors have built between response, recovery, development, and preparedness.

Donors have a role to play in supporting coherence of policy and programming, but in ROSA, for example, their weakening presence has not contributed to developing a coordinated, strategic approach to their engagement.

5. Country level preparedness

5.1 Summary

On balance, where OCHA has been engaged at the country level in close collaboration with host governments it has improved the baseline preparedness status of that country. Paradoxically, OCHA efforts had a larger impact on those countries that were more developed with a larger pre-existing capacity for preparedness. The higher a government's development level, the more interest and space it had to prioritise preparedness, and hence, the greater scope for OCHA action.

Inevitably, OCHA's preparedness role is more effective in countries where it has a presence, as opposed to supporting government and UNCTs remotely. OCHA is not present in all or most countries in any region. Its presence is mainly determined historically, a holdover from past emergency responses rather than a strategic positioning in countries most at risk of a future emergency—and therefore most in need of preparedness. (Although ROs, particularly in Asia, are increasingly looking to objective data to determine where OCHA should focus preparedness resources and make the case for a new, continued, or expanded presence. Bangladesh is an example of a new OCHA presence in service of humanitarian-preparedness objectives.)

Most of OCHA's measurable progress on enhancing preparedness at the country level has been made over the past two years, in the context of delivering the Minimum Preparedness Package. The strongest results, however, have been in countries where OCHA had been present for a long period of time with low staff turnover, and so had already managed to build solid working relationships with their government counterparts.

5.2 Relevance

To determine the relevance of the OCHA's work at the country level, the evaluation examined first whether it was in line with host government priorities, and directed to addressing the most pressing preparedness needs as defined by the country. It also considered the perspectives of inter-agency partners present at the country level and the Resident Coordinator's office on whether OCHA was directing its resources into the most relevant areas for preparedness.

In Asia-Pacific, OCHA has taken a considerably government-centered approach to its preparedness agenda that is aligned with host government priorities. Its coordination and capacity-building activities typically revolve around the government body for disaster management. In countries with high-capacity governments like Indonesia, where the government has prioritised preparedness planning, OCHA is a trusted and valued partner. OCHA has also helped lower-capacity governments, such as Lao PDR and Papua New Guinea, to begin to prioritise their preparedness needs, and identify capacity gaps that international support could fill.   This focus involves not only setting up the systems for coordinating with the international aid providers and identifying roles and responsibilities, but also helping to effect critical mechanisms within the government for more effective information management and communications: for example, by providing tools and training on rapid needs assessment (since it is typically local government or Red Cross/Red Crescent personnel who are making the initial assessment in a disaster). OCHA's focal points and government disaster management seemed well aware of the MPP process and goals. They were particularly engaged in the contingency-planning component, which, in countries like Indonesia and the Philippines, was incorporated into national legislation. Government interviewees in Asia-Pacific generally affirmed the relevance of OCHA's support, and did not suggest that there were important areas of priority that OCHA was not addressing. There was one preparedness need that

governments would like OCHA to emphasise more: formalising a role for OCHA to assist the government in managing and coordinating the offers and disbursement of international assistance in large-scale emergencies when they occur. This is something ROAP staff agree is important, and are beginning to think about how to develop new, more flexible and selective models for governments to receive international humanitarian relief aid.

5.3 Effectiveness

In terms of engaging constructively with host governments and the inter-agency community, as well as making timely and appropriate use of preparedness tools and systems, OCHA has demonstrated effectiveness at the country level in places where it is present and where the preparedness agenda is more advanced. The MPP has been a boon to OCHA's effectiveness in its preparedness work, especially because the end states represent clear objectives and serve as a yardstick to measure success or failure. Where it has systematically implemented the MPP (a process that is still just beginning in most countries), OCHA has been largely effective at reaching objectives. It is not possible at the time of this writing to assess the MPP's broader, ultimate effectiveness (i.e., will preparedness translate into effective rapid response?) because there has not yet been a major, large-scale emergency occurring in any of the countries where these new plans and standard operating procedures have been established. Pre-MPP preparedness support implemented by OCHA in Indonesia, however, was credited by the RC as making a measurable difference in the 2010 Merapi eruption. Most affirmed that the humanitarian structures in the country are much better positioned to respond to the next emergency because of these efforts. Another successful use of the preparedness mechanisms established through the MPP was seen in the quick and coordinated mobilisation in response to Typhoon Washi in the Philippines in late 2011.

Information management has been a core area of OCHA's work. It was noted by stakeholders as an important component of OCHA's capacity in emergency preparedness, recognising that OCHA is one of only a few institutions that can provide such a service. Governments also expressed an appetite for more technical assistance from OCHA in information management. OCHA efforts to stand up information management systems for the international aid community have been slow to be stood up country level, mainly due to weak or non-existent information management capacities within the clusters. Many agencies lack personnel with information management skillsets, and often confuse the information management role with information technology.

Areas in which OCHA has been less effective at the country level, and less effective across all the regions examined, include: mapping pre-existing preparedness capacities and common needs assessment tools; and working with local administrations below the capital level.

Defining triggers, options and work-arounds for crisis intervention

Interviewees with government officials in most of the countries visited demonstrated that government stakeholders understood OCHA's role and objectives in preparedness for the country and within the United Nations system. How far this understanding extended beyond the key focal points for the international aid community was not clear, but the forthcoming Guide for Disaster Managers should serve to widen this understanding among host country governments. This handbook, formerly titled Guide for Governments, was developed by ROAP and, similar to one used in Latin America/Caribbean, will provide affected governments with a simple and accessible way to see how the international community may be of assistance. It also aims to potentially alleviate fears of a humiliating and disruptive 'humanitarian invasion' (although it would presumably

be less helpful in conflict-related situations where the government wants to avoid international interference on sensitive issues like protection.) Unsurprisingly, stakeholders in the countries where OCHA was not present were less familiar with the regional preparedness initiatives and OCHA's role and objectives. Overstretched multitasking RCOs may not be able or willing to push the preparedness agenda to the same extent that OCHA CO staff would.

Even in the most well developed contingency plans and preparedness structures that are embraced by governments and international actors, a fatal flaw may be lurking if an emergency occurs without a timely official request or 'welcoming' of international assistance from the government. The entire international humanitarian response machinery, from assessments to cluster activation to funding appeals, hinges on this formal transaction. Governments, particularly those that have recently made development capacity gains, will naturally seek to avoid the impression that they are unable to cope with a crisis. Apart from political pride, they also have well founded practical concerns of the potential disruptive effects of an influx of aid agencies, such as the type that occurred in the tsunami and Haiti responses. The danger of not clearly specifying how and when an international response mechanism will be activated is that government will not request, or it will request late. As a result, there will be acute unmet needs and other potential gaps as the international community waits at the sidelines. This kind of scenario occurred in a recent flood emergency in Lao PDR. A number of the national contingency plans that partners have developed with government NDMAs define a 'major' crisis threshold number of beneficiaries, for example, from which, it is understood, the government will request international assistance. Without an automatic mechanism to launch a rapid-needs assessment, however, it is unclear how the threshold will be determined, and how long it will take for a decision on whether to request international intervention. Some in OCHA say this concern is overstated. They argue that in the case of a truly major emergency, the government would not hesitate to request, and the international community would begin finding ways to stand up in response. Others admit that this is a serious weakness of the MPP and the contingency-planning documents. They feel, however, that if the initial plan is in place, it can be used as both a prompt for the governments and an advocacy tool for the international community to push for the request.

Lebanon poses a different but equally challenging scenario. At the time of the field visit, UNHCR viewed the Syrian crisis as a 'refugee situation,' and the response effort in Lebanon (as well as Jordan and Turkey) was primarily being coordinated with registered refugees as the priority. Donors and a wide range of agencies interviewed, however, were calling for a shift in the approach, to address a wider range of groups and needs, including non-registered Syrians, Lebanese returnees, the host community in the border areas, and the possible internal civil unrest/conflict that is anticipated if the refugee numbers continue to grow, as UNHCR predicts.[36] Many interviewees saw the period as a window for increased preparedness from the RCO and OCHA in Lebanon. As one interviewee argued, 'it gives us all the opportunity to scale up, and we can't say we've been caught short.' Yet two main challenges affected bringing about this shift in approach. First, UNHCR was concerned to maintain its responsibility and accountability for the refugee influx, the case load for which is growing and becoming more complex. Second, and partly due the government's reluctance to highlight its support for a growing case load of new refugees within its borders, the RCO and UNCT have taken a cautious path in how the crisis is handled both publicly and internally. In Lebanon, the majority of interviewees suggested that there is not sufficient clarity on the triggers for establishing crisis-response mechanisms such as standing up the HCT and clusters, a process made more complicated due to lack of leadership from the government.[37]

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[36] At the time of the visit, UNHCR's High Commissioner signaled an estimated 120,000-130,000 Syrian refugees would enter Lebanon by the end of the year.

[37] ROMENA Mission Report, *Emergency preparedness mission to Lebanon*, 27-29 February, 2012

The Syrian crisis has triggered a corporate emergency in OCHA (similar to Haiti in 2010 and the Horn in 2011), although many interviewees were not aware of the criteria for how corporate emergencies are determined.

Understanding national preparedness capacities

Preparedness capacity mapping of governments and international humanitarian actors represents an area of preparedness that seems fundamental to contingency planning, but it has not seen a great deal of progress. OCHA-led efforts to quantify and map the resources that the government could bring to bear in an emergency, as well as register the in–country resources (and easily accessible regional stockpiles) of agencies, where they are under way at all, are only just getting started. In most countries, this work is beginning after the contingency/response plans have already been written up. In cases where the host government is not naturally forthcoming with information, there is some skepticism about whether this mapping will ever be fully realized. In Lao PDR, for example, even the national Red Cross Society will not share information with international partners unless they get the greenlight from the central government; in Zimbabwe there is no appetite for open discussion, particularly of IDPs or other politically sensitive issues.

Common needs assessment

No commonly accepted rapid needs assessment tool is at hand for the MPP and contingency planning process in countries. Interviewees indicated that the tools developed by the Needs Assessment Task Force in Geneva, such as the MIRA, have not been getting out to the field, and that the experience with the CASPER roster in the region has been mostly disappointing to date. In at least two countries, the NGOs came up with needs assessment tools[38] that were adopted by the cluster system and government counterparts for common use in the MPP. Interviewees stressed that although the NGO tools are not perfect, experience has shown that preparedness requires a standing tool for a 'quick and dirty' rapid assessment. Cumbersome, overly comprehensive assessments can delay the entire process, particularly if local government officials are afraid to release numbers that might later prove to be incorrect. It is a credit to the pragmatism of OCHA and the MPP process that they did not try to delay anything or impose an external tool. Rather, they took advantage of immediately available solutions. Still, it raises questions on why, after seemingly so long in the works, the international humanitarian community has no readily available, methodologically appropriate common-needs assessment templates at country level.

Getting beyond the capital

The MPP approach to preparedness is fairly top down. This is unavoidable if the process is to be fully owned and led by the national governments, especially given that OCHA and most of the UN agency presence is located in the capital. This deference to the national government has meant, however, that a few important areas of preparedness have not been fully achieved yet. One of these is capacity building for local government actors. In all countries visited, OCHA has focused nearly all its efforts at the national level. Decentralisation of disaster-response authority to more proximate levels, which is the trend to varying degrees across some regions, has resulted in some cases of local government authorities being in the unenviable position of having responsibility for disaster management without the necessary capacity. Local government capacity building remains a gap that could weaken the whole endeavour.

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[38] For instance, the Indonesia tool came out of the NGOs' Emergency Capacity Building (ECB) project, and in Lao PDR it was created within the NGO consortium in that country

5.4 Efficiency

In Asia-Pacific, the following model makes a certain sense: establishing OCHA presence in those countries assessed as at-risk for potential Level 3 emergencies in the future, and otherwise deploying RO technical assistance staff to the RCOs of the non-CO countries. OCHA's preparedness objectives, however, cannot be achieved in the non-OCHA countries unless there is absorptive capacity on the part of the RCOs to receive support and guidance from ROAP while implementing the work themselves. In light of evident capacity deficits, OCHA in the region has been considering new ways to help partners fund preparedness implementation. As one example, the OCHA Indonesia is allocating 10% of its HRF (a standing emergency response fund for small grants that are available to NGOs) specifically for preparedness projects. In Zimbabwe, OCHA developed an ERF to provide support to local NGOs through capacity-building activities, although it is not clear if there is a distinct preparedness allocation as a component. The (final) 2013 CAP for Zimbabwe, however, explicitly focused on interventions that contribute to developing national capacity in disaster preparedness and response, with specific focus on preparedness, including strengthening disaster early warning and surveillance systems. The interventions are intended to situate in the framework of strengthening both government-led national capacity for disaster-risk management and civil society.[39]

When questioned directly on the theoretical possibility, ROAP stakeholders reacted quite favorably to the idea of OCHA establishing and managing new funding mechanisms, at the country or regional level, for preparedness activities. All regions, however, might not attract the same level of interest. ROSA's experience with the regional CAP, for example, suggests that there will need to be considerable innovation and vision in the strategic approach of the mechanism for donors to support preparedness financing.

5.5 Impact/sustainability

The results of successful implementation of the MPP in the target countries will be smoother and more effective coordination between national and international humanitarian actors when the next emergency strikes. This work has only recently begun, and has not yet had the opportunity to be tested in a serious emergency. No one claims or expects that emergency response in MPP-completed countries will go perfectly to plan; there is explicit recognition that many elements of the plan reflect ideal states rather than reality. The opinion of the majority of interviewees, however, is that these efforts have resulted in an improvement of baseline readiness of the humanitarian system in the countries where it has been implemented, at least in terms of clarification of roles, responsibilities, and steps—a 'common script'—between and among government and international actors. If the preparedness–coordination plans have only short-term (three–year) results before they have to be renewed, OCHA has the opportunity to achieve deeper and longer-term impact in preparedness, in its work with both governments and regional intergovernmental partners, if it moves somewhat past its formal mandate.

In Zimbabwe, there was little work done on measuring the impact of OCHA's preparedness support. Most of the evidence points to effective performance (rather than impact), and is related to response, rather than preparedness work. Although this focus has recently shifted, central to OCHA's exit strategy is to leave behind a government counterpart equipped to undertake this work independently. OCHA is working with the government counterpart to provide the 'soft skills' necessary to effectively carry out the coordination of preparedness and response activities within Government and with various line ministries. Despite years of

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[39] *Outcomes of HCT Working Group: Humanitarian Planning* (no date)

support from UNDP and more recently OCHA, the government counterpart has limited capacity and depends heavily on international funding.

5.6 Coherence

Some country-level actors and donors in Indonesia, Lao PDR, and Zimbabwe were unclear about how OCHA's role in preparedness relates to the other international preparedness/coordination bodies such as UNDAC, UNDP and ISDR. There have been a few instances of friction between UNDAC and the regional- and country-level staff of OCHA in ROAP, for instance, on the question of whether an UNDAC team should be deployed to the Philippines in the aftermath of Typhoon Washi (ultimately it was not). While ROAP-interviewed staff were mostly confident that the roles are more complementary than overlapping, one donor suggested it would be helpful for OCHA to convene a meeting or workshop for stakeholders that could introduce and explain the various roles. When roles and responsibilities are not coordinated at the regional or headquarters level, an interviewee in Lao PDR pointed out, it adds to the coordination burden on country-level personnel. They end up having to service a number of different entities, all working on preparedness.

Until recently in Zimbabwe, OCHA was more effective at delivering on the response elements of its mandate rather than preparedness. In recent months, however, OCHA has shifted its focus to support a transition process, including more deliberate work with the government to support its needs and capacities. OCHA recognised that a coordinated approach to supporting the preparedness needs of the government is critical in moving forward in the transition phase, particularly with UNDP. Until recently, the dialogue between OCHA and UNDP on their shared responsibilities under the Hyogo Framework has been inadequate, including both a lack of joint planning and weak knowledge of each other's work in this area. More recent work on the development of a Disaster Risk Management strategy has increased engagement with UNDP and has brought together a wider group of national and international stakeholders on this issue. The independent reporting lines to New York have also necessitated increased communication lines between ROSA and the Zimbabwe Country Office to discuss the implications of the transition process. ROSA's knowledge of needs and capacities in Zimbabwe will be critical to support a smoother transition to regional assistance when the country office closes down.

In Latin America/Caribbean, country-level coordination is, not surprisingly, strongest where UNCTs and OCHA National Disaster Response Advisers (NDRAs) are in place. In a number of contexts, especially where NDRAs are not present, UNDP carries out capacity building in risk reduction with no OCHA consultation. This was noted as leading to gaps when a response took place.

An OCHA senior staffer in New York took a dim view of current prospects for coherence with development partners: 'The big issue is inter-agency coordination and collaboration in the field. At the end of the day, there is still no practical coordination at field level. UNDP has just not stepped up. In Geneva, BCPR has just slashed jobs and capacity. It is hard to see exactly where they are going with this.'

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

Although OCHA has been engaged in certain elements of preparedness activity since its earliest days, it is fair to say that only recently has it seized the preparedness agenda in a systematic and results-driven manner. The MPP outcomes were a watershed development for OCHA's approach to preparedness, and the enterprise has benefitted greatly from the introduction of data-based tools such as the Global Focus Model. The evaluation findings suggest that important early progress has been made in developing country-level tools and approaches that have proven effective in certain contexts. Yet considerable work remains to be done in terms of organisation-wide preparedness strategy, capacity, and accountability.

This work needs to begin at the headquarters level, which according to the perceptions of a majority of OCHA staff and partners, has added the least value to preparedness of the three levels of the organisation. Accordingly, the bulk of recommendations are focused on headquarters-level action. Starting from the need to articulate a clearer strategic vision for OCHA in preparedness, the recommendations below aim to address the key internal and external hindrances to preparedness efforts in policy, tools, structures, and partnerships. These hindrances include: unclear roles and responsibilities among OCHA internal divisions, as well as its external partners; gaps in the MPP process regarding host government acceptance of aid and capacity mapping; and both external resource deficits and internal inconsistencies in risk assessment.

The recommendations are arranged in a matrix, indicating the level at which the recommended action would be taken, and ordered according to their status as either 'critical,' 'important,' or an 'opportunity for learning.'

Critical		
HQ/ global level	1. Develop a policy statement in consultation with UNDP and other IASC partners that sets out OCHA's vision for its institutional role in preparedness. The policy statement should: draw from the most current internal and external thinking on preparedness; take into account the full range of OCHA's actual activities in preparedness to date; and give special thought to the challenges around preparedness for conflict-related emergencies (e.g., contingencies for high-insecurity settings and cases where host government partnership may need to be augmented or replaced by partnerships with neighbouring governments and regional bodies, if the government is a party to the conflict).	ERC and SMT
	2. Based on the organisational vision outlined in the policy statement, review and update the Policy Instruction on preparedness to clarify the scope, objectives, and guiding principles of OCHA's operational role in preparedness at all levels. The updated Policy Instruction should define specific preparedness responsibilities and deliverables for the relevant personnel at each level of OCHA, and their placement in the programme cycle.	EPS coordinating with PDSB and CRD
	3. By actively involving regions and field, develop an implementation strategy and guidance for the updated Policy Instruction to ensure corporate observance of its preparedness approach.	EPS coordinating with CRD
	4. Based on the preparedness responsibilities and deliverables in the updated Policy Instruction, implement a clearer line of management responsibility	SMT coordinating

	on preparedness from the Senior Management Team to the Coordination and Response Division in HQ to the field. Define a joint workplan for EPS and CRD that focuses on support and technical assistance for the priority preparedness activities in OCHA ROs and COs.	with PDSB, CRD and EPS
	5. Develop and disseminate detailed operational guidance for the Transformative Agenda. Ensure the guidance addresses how the TA's goals for Level 3 emergency response can be operationalised in preparedness activities at the regional and country levels, and how these activities fit within, or can be integrated into, the MPP process.	CRD
	6. Engage UNDP in a senior-level dialogue on preparedness to further clarify each other's respective roles, responsibilities, and resource commitments. Avoid a focus on formal mandates; rather, pursue practical joint solutions to the problem of limited capacity for preparedness coordination among international and government actors in countries where OCHA is not present. Consider greater replication of the joint OCHA/UNDP RCO support team mechanism, such as that which exists in Indonesia, as one such solution, and consult with UNDP in the development of future OCHA policy instruction on preparedness.	ERC with EPS support
Regional level	7. Build more specific contingencies and triggers into the MPP process for cases where governments may be uncooperative or unwilling to accept international assistance.	ROs coordinating with COs and EPS
Country level	8. Prioritise capacity mapping for all stakeholders' (host government and international actors in country) preparedness assets as a primary task in preparedness planning. As a first step, identify and request any necessary technical inputs from regional and HQ levels to accomplish this goal.	COs with RO and EPS support
Important		
HQ/ global level	9. Work with IASC partners to design preparedness accountability frameworks for RCs and UNCTs, building on the IASC initiatives to define and clarify roles in preparedness and resilience.	PSB with CRD support
	10. Base budgeting for preparedness on objectively assessed risk, and in a way that does not detract from resources required for response.	CRD with EPS support
Regional and country levels	11. Provide instruction to governments that may otherwise be reluctant to request/accept international emergency aid on how they can exercise needs-based selectivity in terms of the international aid they receive. This could potentially be incorporated in the Guide for Disaster Managers.	RO and CO staff with EPS support
	12. To help address deficits in resources for preparedness among partners, consider the possibility of managing regional financing mechanisms, or expanding the terms of reference of existing country-level funds, to fund broader preparedness activities, including capacity support to governments and intergovernmental regional bodies.	RO and CO staff with PRMB support

	Opportunity for learning	
Regional and country levels	13. Make more frequent and consistent use of government–government workshops and trainings, whereby governments can share lessons not only in preparedness, but also in working with the international humanitarian structures.	RO and CO staff

Annex 1: Evaluation Framework

GLOBAL LEVEL			
Criteria	Questions	Indicators	Information sources
Relevance	Do the policy and planning guidance on Emergency Preparedness reflect OCHA's mandate? To what extent does the Policy reflect the work and role of OCHA in the various operational contexts? Has it been successfully implemented? Through which mechanisms? Are there risks associated with OCHA's preparedness role and activities? Are these risks identified, analysed and mitigated?	The preparedness Policy Instruction and its operationalisation in the role and work of OCHA is well understood by staff Recent examples of implementation of the policy, that staff can cite Risk assessment/analysis was undertaken	Perspectives of OCHA staff at HQ level (interviews and survey) Perspectives of external partners/stakeholders (interviews with global actors, including agencies, donors, INGOs) Internal policy documents and guidance, evaluations
Effectiveness	Have preparedness activities undertaken at the global level contributed to meeting OCHA's stated objectives? 4 Strengthen OCHA's internal disaster readiness 5 Strengthen system's capacity for coordinated rapid response 6 Strengthen national and regional capacities to request/mobilise international response Is OCHA adequately resourced - in monetary and human terms - to fulfill its objectives?	OCHA emergency rosters prepared/expanded; standby staff appropriately skilled; contingency plans developed; improvements in UNDAC system; OCHA-facilitated joint contingency planning exercises held; common performance standards developed; joint training and simulation exercises held; shared logistics; and joint evaluations of preparedness; examples of time	Perspectives of OCHA staff at HQ level (interviews and survey) Perspectives of external partners/stakeholders (interviews with global actors, including agencies, donors, INGOs) Perspectives of host country authorities OCHA, IASC, and other inter-agency reports, policy guidance and evaluations
Efficiency	Is preparedness work organised efficiently within OCHA structures?	There are (no) duplications and redundant costs (including in staff time) related to preparedness work	OCHA HQ and RO budgets and expense reports related to preparedness Perspectives of OCHA staff (interviews and survey)
Impact and sustainability	Can OCHA's activities demonstrate a long-term, lasting positive affect on system-level preparedness?	With OCHA facilitation and support, individual agencies have made	Budgets, rosters, and organisational structures within OCHA

	Have measures been put in place to ensure sustainability of the tools and systems for global preparedness? What are the challenges in building preparedness capacities of recipient governments and national civil society given available resources?	internal changes and materially contributed to inter-agency structures and systems for preparedness Stability (or managed growth) of resources and institutional mechanisms for preparedness over 5-year period	Perspectives of OCHA staff (interviews and survey) Host government perspectives (interviews)
Coherence	Are OCHA's activities in preparedness complementary with other humanitarian actors? How do they jibe with the roles and priorities of other aid actors and political entities? Is there internal coherence between the preparedness activities at different levels of OCHA?	Demonstrated understanding of OCHA's role/niche in preparedness on the part of other global humanitarian actors Complementarity of efforts and results between CO, RO and HQ levels	Perspectives of external stakeholders (interviews) Perspectives of OCHA staff (interviews and survey)

REGIONAL LEVEL			
Criteria	Questions	Indicators	Information sources
Relevance	Do the activities of RO and the services and tools offered respond to specific preparedness needs of national and regional authorities and humanitarian agencies present in the region? Is the prioritisation among the different activities in line with needs of national and regional authorities/humanitarian agencies and with OCHA's overall goals? Are the tools prepared and disseminated by the Regional Office presented in the right format and accessible to targeted partners?	Assessment and prioritisation exercises undertaken by OCHA RO in collaboration with relevant country level and regional level partners Endorsement by regional and national actors of OCHA's role and plan, and of usefulness (or potential) of outputs	Perspectives of OCHA staff (interviews and survey) Perspectives of external partners/stakeholders (interviews with regional- and national-level actors) OCHA and regional organisation documentation
Effectiveness	How has the RO supported regional bodies and national authorities to strengthen their	Examples of regional developments in	Perspectives of OCHA staff (interviews and survey)

	disaster preparedness plans and institutional mechanisms? Has OCHA encouraged regional cooperation, joint contingency planning, common performance standards, joint training and simulation exercises, shared logistics, and joint evaluations in the area of preparedness at the regional level? Were the RO's surge deployments timely, and have they improved coordination in the region and in relation to specific emergencies? Has the RO developed and maintained productive working relations with key regional partners?	preparedness supported by OCHA Examples of OCHA-led or facilitated regional exercises, approaches and initiatives in preparedness over the last 2-3 years Favorable reviews of past deployments by partners Regular and open communication, formal and informal, between OCHA RO and key partners. Focal points for this communication designated in RO	Perspectives of external partners/stakeholders (interviews with regional-level actors) OCHA and regional organisation documentation
Efficiency	Have adequate monetary and human resources been allocated to preparedness at regional level? Are these resources achieving objectives without duplication from other budgets? Are OCHA's activities in preparedness implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?	Budgets match assessed costs for priority needs identified in assessments and plans No additional office or external actor is duplicating expenditures	OCHA RO budgets and planning documents Perspectives of OCHA staff (interviews and survey) Perspectives of external partners/stakeholders (interviews with regional-level actors)
Impact and sustainability	Can OCHA's activities demonstrate value added to regional capacities in preparedness? Are the new tools and systems able to be sustained for use beyond the next emergency? Were they replicated in other regions?	Tools and systems were replicated for wider use throughout the region and used in subsequent emergencies Tools and systems were adopted/adapted by other ROs Lessons learned from previous crises in the region and beyond informed the Regional Office's approach and work	Evaluations and reviews Perspectives of OCHA staff at RO level (interviews and survey) Perspectives of external stakeholders in region (interviews)

| Coherence | Are OCHA's activities in preparedness complementary with those of other regional humanitarian actors?

How do they mesh with the roles and priorities of other aid actors and political entities in the region | A written understanding or policy document exists at the regional level to guide cooperation in preparedness

OCHA and its partners/ stakeholders in the region are clear on each other's plans, activities and roles | Perspectives of external stakeholders in region (interviews)

Perspectives of OCHA staff at RO level (interviews and survey)

Documentation from OCHA and regional bodies |

COUNTRY LEVEL			
Criteria	Questions	Indicators	Information sources
Relevance	Is OCHA approaching preparedness in a way that is in line with host country priorities? Do its activities address the most pressing needs in preparedness? Is its role and objectives clearly defined and well understood by stakeholders?	Host governments (dis)approve of OCHA's performance and (dis)agree with its stated role in preparedness Internal and external humanitarian actors do (not) express a clear and shared understanding of OCHA's preparedness function and what it seeks to achieve	Perspectives of OCHA staff (interviews and survey) Perspective of OCHA partners/stakeholders (interviews with government, international and national actors in country) Host country media citations
Effectiveness	How have OCHA's preparedness activities undertaken in country contributed to meeting the following objectives? 7 Strengthen OCHA's internal disaster readiness 8 Strengthen system's capacity for coordinated rapid response 9 Strengthen national and regional capacities to request/mobilise international response	Outputs and outcomes of CLIPPER and MPPs achieved in countries where they were implemented/piloted Time interval before action by international community in response to early warning signals compared to past emergencies Time interval between acute onset of crisis and declaration of emergency	Internal and external reviews/evaluations of past responses Perspectives of OCHA staff (interviews and survey) Perspectives of external stakeholders (interviews and survey)

		by national government compared to past emergencies	
Efficiency	Is preparedness work organised efficiently within OCHA structures? Did OCHA make efficient use of resources at the country level?	There are (no) duplications and redundant costs (including in staff time) related to preparedness work in different sections of OCHA HQ/ROs COs can point to concrete achievements in preparedness as 'RoI' for preparedness resources expended	OCHA CO budgets and expense reports related to preparedness Perspectives of OCHA staff (interviews and survey)
Impact and sustainability	Can OCHA's activities demonstrate a long-term, lasting positive affect on country-level preparedness? Were tools and systems that were put in place sustained for use in subsequent emergencies? Were they replicated in other countries?	Preparedness inputs are integrated into national plans, structures and processes Preparedness activities are compatible with long-term development goals Performance of systems and tools over time: subsequent emergencies in the same country Adoption of tools and systems by other COs, and their experience implementing them	Evaluations and reports Host country authorities' perspectives (interviews) Perspectives of external stakeholders (interviews and survey) Perspectives of OCHA staff (interviews and survey)
Coherence	Are OCHA's activities in preparedness complementary with those of other humanitarian actors? How do they mesh with the roles and priorities of other aid actors and political entities in the country context?	A written understanding or policy document exists at the national level to guide cooperation in preparedness OCHA and its partners/ stakeholders in country are clear on each other's plans, activities, and roles	Perspectives of external stakeholders (interviews and survey) Perspectives of OCHA staff at HQ, RO and CO levels (interviews and survey) Host country authorities' perspectives (interviews)

Annex 2: People Interviewed

Global level (NY and Geneva)

Name	Title	Affiliation
Eltje Aderhold	Head of Humanitarian Affairs	MFA, Germany
Aimee Ansari	Humanitarian Policy Representative, Geneva	Oxfam
Agnes Asekenya-Oonyu	Chief, Asia-Pacific Section and Preparedness Focal Point, CRD	OCHA
Sandra Aviles	Senior Liaison Officer	FAO
Pierre Bessuges	Chief, Emergency Preparedness Section	OCHA
Alf Blikberg	Deputy Chief, Asia-Pacific Section,	OCHA
Neil Buhne	Director, Geneva Liaison office of BCPR	UNDP
Kate Burns	OiC, Policy Development and Studies Branch	OCHA
Ali Buzurukov	Planning Officer, Strategic Planning Unit	OCHA
Tony Craig	Head of Emergency Preparedness	WFP
Kelly David	Chief Strategic Planning Unit	OCHA
Hannes Goegele	Humanitarian Affairs Officer, Asia-Pacific Section	OCHA
Paul Handley	Officer in Charge, Surge Capacity section	OCHA
Michel le Pechoux	Chief of Preparedness and DRR, EMOPs	UNICEF
John Long	Deputy Director, Emergency Preparedness Section	OCHA
Daniel Longhurst	Humanitarian Adviser	FAO
Matthew Hochbrueckner	Planning Officer, Office of the USG/Strategic Planning Unit	OCHA
Yves Horent	Humanitarian Adviser	DFID
Simon Lawry-White	Senior Evaluation Specialist	IASC
Marie Okabe	Chief, Communications and Information Services Branch	OCHA
Gareth Owen	Humanitarian Director	Save the Children
Mark Prasopa-Plazier	Chair of the Sub-working Group on Preparedness, IASC	IASC
Anton Santanen	Early Warning, IASC Working Group on Preparedness UNDAC & INSARAG Americas focal point INSARAG Secretariat	IASC
Christophe Schmachtel	Field Coordination Support Section, Emergency Services Branch	OCHA
Gwi-Yeop Son	Director, Corporate Programme	OCHA
Andrew Thow	Humanitarian Affairs Officer, Policy Development and Studies	OCHA
Katarina Toll Velasquez	Humanitarian Affairs Officer, Emergency Preparedness Section	OCHA
Rogie Villalobos	Humanitarian Affairs Officer, Asia-Pacific Section	OCHA
Andrew Wiley	Acting Head of Emergency Preparedness	OCHA
Jo Scheuer	Coordinator of the Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery Team, BCPR	UNDP

Asia-Pacific Region

Bangkok

Name	Title	Affiliation

David Carden	Head of Office, OCHA Philippines	OCHA
Supavadee Chotikajan	Coordination Analyst, Office of the Resident Coordinator	UNDP
Michael Ernst	Regional Advisor, OFDA	USAID
Royce Escolar	Senior Regional Program Manager	AUSAID
Sanny Jegillos	Regional Program Coordinator	UNDP
Ruger Kahwa	Head of Office, OCHA Papua New Guinea	OCHA
Oliver Lacey-Hall	Head Regional Office for Asia-Pacific, Bangkok	OCHA
Romano Lasker	HAO, ROAP, Partnership Unit	OCHA
Yindee Lertcharoenchok	Deputy Head, Preparedness and Response Unit 1	OCHA
John Marinos	Information and Advocacy Unit, ROAP	OCHA
Kirsten Mildren	Information and Advocacy Unit, ROAP	OCHA
Barbara Orlandini	Chief, Office of the UN Resident Coordinator, Thailand	UNDP
Andrew Pendleton	Head, Preparedness and Response Unit I	OCHA
Sebastian Rhodes Stampa	Head, Preparedness and Response Unit II, ROAP	OCHA
James St. John Cox	Information and Advocacy Unit, ROAP	OCHA
Samir Wanmali	Regional Program Officer	WFP
Markus Werne	Deputy Director, ROAP	OCHA

Indonesia

Name	Title	Affiliation
Tom Alcedo	Country Representative	American Red Cross
Akbar Ali	Research and Development Manager	PKPU
Abdoul Karim Bah	Emergency Operations Coordinator/ Agriculture Cluster Coordinator	FAO
El-Mostafa Benlamlih	UN Resident Representative, RC/HC	UNDP
Said Faisal	Executive Director, AHA Center	ASEAN
Rajan Gengaje	Head of Office, OCHA Indonesia	OCHA
Willy Gosal	Disaster Response Specialist	Hope Worldwide Indonesia
Harlan Hale	Regional Advisor, OFDA	USAID Indonesia
Edy Junaedi Harahap	Head of Division Information and Controlling	Regional Agency for Disaster Management (BNPB) Government of Indonesia
Matt Hayne	Australian Co-Director, Australia-Indonesia Facility for Disaster Reduction (AIFDR)	AUSAID
Adelina Kamal	Head of Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance Division, ASEAN Secretariat	ASEAN
Knarik Kamalyan	Deputy Head of Office, OCHA Indonesia	OCHA
Titi Moektijasih	Government Liaison & Coordination Analyst	OCHA
Agustinos Aribowo Nugroho	DRR/ER manager	Karina
Jeong Park	Disaster Management Advisor	AUSAID
Claire Quillet	WASH Specialist/ WASH Cluster Coordinator	UNICEF
Mindaraga (Iwan) Rahardja	ERF Manager	OCHA
Nova Ratnanto	Emergency Response Officer	OCHA

Cecep Rustana	Education Specialist	UNICEF
Air First Marshal Sunarbowo Sandi	Director of Operations and Exercise, Indonesia National Search and Rescue Agency (BASARNAS)	Government of Indonesia
Peter Sane	Regional Program Coordinator	IFRC
Somalee Sterup-Hansen	Head of DRR and Supply Chain	WFP
Yenni Suryani	Country Team Leader	CRS Indonesia
Yusra Tebe	Emergency Response Specialist	Plan
Faizal Thamrin	IM Associate	OCHA
Sugeng Triutomo	Deputy Chief for Prevention and Preparedness	National Agency for Disaster Management (BNPB), Government of Indonesia
Wayne Ulrich	Community Safety and Resilience Coordinator	IFRC
Yuniarti Wahyuningtyar	Emergency Information and Program Monitoring	WHO
Wawan Yulianto	DRR Coordinator	Islamic Relief
Spica Yutoyo	Education Specialist	UNICEF

Lao PDR

Name	Title	Affiliation
Mahboob Ahmed Bajwa	Emergency Focal Point	UNICEF
Sissel Brenna	Emergency Project Manager	FAO
Maya Lindbergh Brink	Head, Office of the RC	UNDP
Bruno Cammaert	Head of Environment Unit	UNDP
Phaivanh Changnakham	Head of Mission	Caritas Luxembourg
Laoly Faiphengyoa	President	Lao Red Cross Society
Mona Girgis	Country Director	Plan International
Vilayvanh Halatmanivons	HEA Coordinator	World Vision
Souksamone Khantry	Emergency Head of Sector	Save the Children International
Phetdavanh Levangvilay	Technical Officer	WHO
Hannah Lewis	Epidemiologist/Public Health Emergency	WHO
Eeva Nyyssonen	Programme and Communication Officer, Water and Sanitation Section II	UN Habitat
Minh H. Pham	Resident Coordinator	UNDP
Kamran Rzayev	International Operations Manager	UNFPA
Ghulam Sherani	Head of EPR Unit	WFP
Vilayphong Sisomvang	Director	National Disaster Management Office, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
Vilon Viphongxay	National VAM Officer	WFP
Sarah Whittaker	Operations/Programme Quality	World Vision Laos

Middle East and North Africa Region

Name	Title	Affiliation
Abdulhaq Amiri	Head of Office	OCHA

Amjad Abbashar	Head - Regional Office for Arab States	ISDR
Seydou Dia	Emergency Specialist-Regional Office Northern Africa and the Middle East	UNICEF
Mollie Fair	Programme Specialist, Humanitarian Affairs	UNFPA
Josiane Khoury	Programme Specialist	UNFPA
Ahmed El Ganainy	Operations Manager, Emergency Preparedness	WHO
Fernando Hesse	Regional Disaster Response Adviser	OCHA
Samir Elhawary	Humanitarian Affairs Officer	OCHA
Zubair Murshid	Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Advisor	UNDP Regional
Adam Taylor-Awny	Senior Middle East Policy Adviser / Head of Office	Oxfam
Jean Luc Tonglet	Deputy Head of Office	OCHA
Stephane Quinton	Head of Office	ECHO
Martina Salvatore	Logistics and Operations Officer	IOM
Angela Santucci	Programme Officer	IOM
Irene Omondi	Programme Officer	FAO
Mohamed Aw-Dahir	Regional Food Systems Economist	FAO
Hossam Faysal	Disaster Management Coordinator	IFRC
Rania Hedeya	Programme Officer	UNDP Egypt

Lebanon

Name	Title	Affiliation
Raghed Assi	Programme Manager, Social and Local Development Programme	UNDP
Olivier Beucher	Emergency Focal Point	Danish Refugee Council
Christina Blunt	Humanitarian Affairs Officer	OCHA
Jean Paul Cavalieri	Deputy Representative	UNHCR
Alexander Costy	Head of Office	Office of the Resident Coordinator
Rita Delage	Deputy Head of Office	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Hawraa Harkous	IT/GIS Specialist	Office of the Resident Coordinator
Heba Hage Deza	Head of Office	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Hala Helou	Ministry of Social Affairs	Government of Lebanon
Ruba Khoury El Zoghbi	Country Director	Save the Children International
Tala Khatib	UNHCR secondee	High Relief Council
Hagop Kouyoumdjian	Coordination Officer	Office of the Resident Coordinator
Colin Lee	Country Director	International Medical Corps
Rajae Msefer Berrada	Deputy representative	UNICEF
Jurg Montani	Head of Delegation	International Committee of the Red Cross
Cosette Maikyi	Donor Liaison and Project Development Coordinator	IOM
Alissar Rady	National Professional Officer	WHO
Luca Renda	Country Director	UNDP

Shombi Sharp	Deputy Country Director	UNDP
Anissa Toscano	Adviser, Chase OT	DFID
Nathalie Zaroour	Project Manager, Strengthening Disaster Risk Management Capacities	Prime Minister Office

Southern Africa Region

Name	Title	Affiliation
Timothy Bainbridge	Regional Director	Save the Children
Bill Barclay	Senior Regional Programme Advisor	WFP
Kelly David	Chief Strategic Planning Unit	OCHA NY
Cindy Holleman	Regional Emergency Coordinator	FAO
Gary Jones	Humanitarian Response Advisor	UNAIDS
Ignacio Leon-Garcia	Head of Office	OCHA
Elias Mabaso		WFP
Joao Manja	VAM Officer & acting EPR Officer	OCHA
Kennedy Masamyu	DRR Unit	SADC Secretariat
Alexander Matheou	Regional Representative for Southern Africa	IFRC
Phumzile Mdladla	Regional Technical Manager	FEWS NET
Noroarisoa Rakotondrandria	Acting Deputy Head of Office and Chief EPR Unit	OCHA
Patricia Rwasoka-Masanganise	Regional Food Security Specialist	FEWS NET
Daniel Sinnathamby	Regional Humanitarian Coordinator	Oxfam
Aliuo Dia	DRR Adviser	BCPR UNDP

Zimbabwe

Name	Title	Affiliation
Natalia Perez y Andersen	Programme Director	IOM
Felix Bamezon	Country Director & Representative	WFP
Elliot Bungare	Head External Relations Office	Meteorological Services Department
Chingirai Chimbwanda	Programme Officer	WFP
Pascal Cuttat	Head of Regional Delegation	ICRC
Jacopo Damelio	Communications & Information Officer	FAO
Peter Hinn	Regional Director	GAA/Welthungerhilfe
Carol Jenkins	Food for Peace Officer	USAID
Godfrey Kafera	Technical Director	FEWS NET
Rupert Leighton	Country Director	ACF
Ambrose Made	Programme Specialist	DRR, UNDP
Dr Amos Makarau	Director	Meteorological Services Department
Sydney Mhishi	Director of Social Services	Government of Zimbabwe

Thabisani Moyo	Food Security Specialist	USAID
Peter Nicholas	Lead Operations Officer	World Bank
Daison Ngirazi	Assistant National Technical Manager	World Bank
Alain Noudehou	RC/HC/UNDP Res Rep	UNDP
Ofor Nwobodo	Country Representative	IFRC
M. S. Pawadyira	Director of Department of Civil Protection	Ministry of Local Government
Benoit Pylyser	Humanitarian Affairs Officer	OCHA
Marc Rubin	Deputy Representative	UNICEF
Sibangani Shumba	Programme Director	Save the Children
Samuel Tafesse	Senior Operation Officer	World Bank
Paul Thomas	Deputy Head of Office	OCHA
Inmaculada Vazquez-Rodriguez	Technical Expert	ECHO
Ruth Wutete	Social Protection specialist	World Bank

**Interviews with cluster coordinators – WASH, Nutrition, Livelihoods, Protection, Education

Latin America and the Caribbean

Dario Alvarez	Regional Disaster Response Advisor	OCHA ROLAC
Fabio Franz	Representative	World Vision Panama
Gianni Morelli	Regional Disaster Response Advisor	OCHA ROLAC
Douglas Reimer	Head of Office	OCHA ROLAC

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