

Introduction

Each year this document is published to inform the donor community about the activities planned by OCHA Headquarters and its field offices for the coming year, and to solicit donor support for OCHA to serve the needs of people caught in emergencies. This issue has been prepared under the direction of the new Under Secretary General, whose vision and approach to the work of the Office is outlined in the Foreword.

The first chapter, "OCHA's Vision for 2004", sets out the overall strategic plan that will guide the office during the coming year. It is based on the Office's ongoing strategic planning activities, and the resultant work plan. The chapter outlines how the goals set for the period 2003 - 2005 will be achieved by pursuing key objectives. Subsequent chapters describe in greater detail the activities that will be undertaken in order to fulfill those objectives. Finally, the section on field offices gives an overview of the current humanitarian situation in the countries and regions where OCHA has been called upon to provide its services and delineates the manner in which this will be done during 2004.

OCHA has tried to respond to requests for greater accountability by providing indicators through which the performance of the Office, its components and the projects undertaken by it, could be assessed. This will be helpful to the donor community in reviewing OCHA's performance. In undertaking this exercise for the first time, OCHA has learned a great deal about how it should be approached, and expects to continuously improve the process.

Previous issues of this document reported on the work done and the results obtained in the preceding

year. This has been omitted this year. In the future, this information will be presented in the Annual Report, published each Spring. The first such report was published last March and covered the activities of 2002. The next report will present an account of what is being done during the current year, 2003. The two documents taken together, for instance *OCHA in 2003* and the Annual Report for 2003, should provide a comprehensive picture of OCHA's work for that year.

OCHA is part of the United Nations Secretariat, but only 13 per cent of its requirements come from the regular budget of the UN. For the rest, it depends on funds received from donors without whose cooperation and support OCHA would not be able to provide the services expected of it. The demand for these services keeps growing, as is evident from the situation in many parts of the world. This, of course, means that OCHA's needs have also grown. However, OCHA is also conscious of the fact that the current economic situation, and competing demands, have created difficulties for some donors. OCHA has therefore determined that there will be no growth in real terms in expenditures during the next year. The slight increase in projected requirements, of about 6.9 per cent over last year, is due entirely to inflation, depreciation in the value of the dollar and statutory salary increases approved by the General Assembly. These factors have resulted in a 6.8 per cent increase in costs. The projected expenditure in 2004, therefore, represents no real growth in requirements.

OCHA has been greatly encouraged by the recommendations made at the Good Donorship Conference in Stockholm and is confident that, once implemented,

these recommendations will lead to further improvement in donor support to OCHA and the wider humanitarian community.

Despite strong donor support, OCHA continues to face challenges in the management of financial resources. Over the past several years, contributions have often been received late in the year, and this has resulted in delayed implementation of planned activities. The timeliness of donor contributions is of paramount importance. It is essential that pledges are honored to ensure a full and balanced implementation of OCHA's activities.

Another concern is the imbalance created by earmarked contributions. While funding for field activities increased significantly, particularly in response to new emergencies, contributions for OCHA's core and project activities were considerably less than projected. The level of earmarking by donors has limited OCHA's flexibility to address funding gaps. This tight cash flow situation has compelled OCHA to draw on its year-end carry-over balances to ensure a minimum level of continuity of activities. In particular, OCHA must meet its management and statutory obligations for the following year when staff contracts must be extended and provision made for the operational requirements for the first three months of the year. OCHA is prepared to work with donors to find mutually acceptable solutions to this difficulty.

As the Under Secretary General states in his Foreword, OCHA continuously examines the need for its field presence in the light of the prevailing situation in a country or region. Once the emergency ends or subsides sufficiently for organisations involved in transition and development activities to take over, OCHA

begins preparations for winding down its operations. During the course of 2004, OCHA's presence in Angola, Georgia, the Sudan and the Balkans will be reduced. This will free resources and allow for the reallocation of funds to where they are most needed.

OCHA's relations with donor governments have been excellent over the years and have strengthened with the passage of time. Simple donor-recipient relationships have progressed to strategic partnerships based on policy dialogue and mutual trust. This development has allowed OCHA to work with donors to serve common humanitarian goals. It is OCHA's earnest desire to continue to build on what has already been achieved. In this regard, OCHA is certain that it will continue to enjoy the goodwill and support of the donor community. As always, OCHA holds itself at the disposal of donors for any explanations or requests about the contents of this document.

IRIN: Helping To Give the Silent a Voice

Given the limited resources at their disposal, it is a daily battle for small broadcasters in many developing nations to keep their listeners well informed. Radio stations in Somaliland, in the northwest of Somalia, are no exception. Small wonder then, that staff at Radio Hargeisa were elated at the prospect of being able to download breaking news, record it and transmit it in real time. To be able to do that, however, they needed special equipment—a computer equipped with a satellite receiver. This was exactly what an IRIN team installed.

Several weeks prior, two journalists from Radio Hargeisa had been among 11 Somali broadcasters to complete a one-month training course at the IRIN headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. The staff were provided with training in the use of the new equipment.

Vast numbers of people in African, Asian and other developing countries still have no access to electronic, or even printed, information because of obstacles ranging from poverty and illiteracy to poor infrastructure. Radio is often the only way to deliver information in these circumstances. It is also an effective medium for them to share their experiences and perspectives, their concerns, and their know-how with others in their community.

IRIN Radio was launched in 2001 as a pilot project in Somalia, and later extended to Burundi. Thanks to a US \$2million grant from the government of Japan, it is now a full-fledged project under which many young broadcast journalists from the two countries have received training in reporting and

production techniques, as well as in the use of information and communication technology (ICT).

The aim of the project is to improve the access of vulnerable communities to information on humanitarian issues that directly affect their lives. With this in mind, IRIN has created a network of partnerships with eleven local radio stations in Somalia and Burundi. The project involves providing the radio stations with tools to improve the technical quality of their programming, helping identify their training needs and working with young, enthusiastic local journalists to produce high-quality programmes.

In July 2003, Radio Hargeisa became the first station in Somalia to receive satellite technology installed by IRIN. The same equipment has also been installed in three other partner radio stations in Burundi. The Minister of Information for Somaliland, Mohamed Abdulai Duale, welcomed the provision of satellite capability and expressed confidence that it would make a “very positive impact on the media scene in Somaliland”.



Photo: Brent Stirton

OCHA's Vision for 2004

OCHA's "Change Process" launched in early 2000 put in place systems necessary for the Office to become more accountable, strategic, and transparent in its support of the humanitarian community. The process highlighted a need for OCHA to focus its longer-term vision based on organisation-wide planning. *OCHA in 2003* outlined a medium-term strategic plan for the period of 2003-2005. In the future, the plan will cover two year periods to bring it in line with UN biennial planning and budgeting. For 2004, the overall goals remain valid (with some scope for fine-tuning) as we improve and adapt the strategic plan over time. The plan includes specific objectives for 2004 and guides broader work planning for Headquarters units and field offices.

In line with the United Nations commitment to a results-based management approach, all workplans now contain performance indicators to help measure actual achievements against which field offices and branches will be held accountable. A basic set of performance indicators has also been developed for the year's specific objectives and reporting against these objectives will capture OCHA's performance. Additional performance indicators on humanitarian coordination will be elaborated in collaboration with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in 2004. In order to develop a solid results-based management system at all levels, the current performance indicators will undergo testing and refinement, supported with OCHA-wide training on this approach.

The three strategic goals for 2003-2005 have been revised as follows:

- Effective and accountable leadership for humanitarian coordination in support of humanitarian partners, including member states, donors, UN agencies, the Red Cross Movement, and NGOs.
- Effective and proactive advocacy on behalf of vulnerable populations affected by disasters and emergencies.
- Effective and transparent management and adequate, sustainable financial support.

OCHA has identified ten key objectives for 2004 against these goals (see table on page 9). While workplans will cover the full range of OCHA activities, the objectives focus on particular challenges which require sustained management attention.

Goal One: More effective and accountable leadership

To reach this goal, OCHA will work to achieve improved inter-agency planning, and will develop consistent, shared and systematically applied analytical frameworks to help humanitarian staff ask the key questions at the right time. A sub-set of 'most telling' indicators will be developed to help humanitarian partners monitor humanitarian responses in a more unified, holistic and comparative manner. Beneficiary recourse mechanisms and methods of peer review will also be elaborated to help ensure greater accountability of humanitarians for their response.

To attain more effective and accountable leadership, OCHA will also work to achieve strengthened systems for the provision of timely and quality information. Information products are needed to help overcome information overload and provide the incisive analysis necessary for humanitarian decision-making. Procedures for handing over robust systems of information exchange developed during emergencies are increasingly needed in transitions contexts. Modalities for

handing these over to national and development actors need to be developed.

Effective and accountable leadership demands more predictability in the response to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Indicators that will help partners integrate IDP issues into early warning analysis and planning are needed. OCHA will also work with its partners to clarify issues surrounding reinstatement rights of IDPs by reviewing UN and NGO experience in the Balkans, Caucasus and Angola—particularly as they relate to documentation, employment and property.

OCHA will also strengthen its partnerships in response to natural disasters. Opportunities to build capacity during response to natural disaster could be best seized by bringing more participants into the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) and International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) systems from developing countries.

Finally, OCHA and its partners will examine how assessments are undertaken and elaborate improved joint methodologies. A recent series of studies on humanitarian financing indicated that donor concern regarding needs assessments is having an impact on funding.

Goal Two: More effective and proactive advocacy

As indicated in the humanitarian financing studies conclusions, a minority of emergencies continue to receive the bulk of the available humanitarian assistance. Key sectors within emergencies also continue

to face shortfalls. Lack of a common definition of humanitarian assistance contributes to these disparities. OCHA will work to clarify and harmonise definitions of humanitarian assistance in collaboration with its IASC and donor partners. Additionally, OCHA will work to achieve an increased and more equitable distribution of resources across emergencies and a fuller coverage of the needs of all sectors.

Effective and proactive advocacy is required to achieve greater awareness of human rights, international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles—along with an increased capacity to apply these laws and principles. OCHA will launch a public information campaign on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, including more aggressive media approaches. IRIN will expand its Radio Project to improve the flow of information, including humanitarian law and principles, to persons directly affected by conflict. OCHA will also better enable its desk and field staff, through training and practical guidance, to analyse situations for protection and gender issues, thus providing better support to the protection work of its IASC partners.

To develop more effective and proactive advocacy, OCHA will also work to ensure its crisis management decision-making is informed by humanitarian principles, policies and analysis. Protection of civilians in armed conflict and humanitarian independence need to be asserted both as an end, and as an important contribution to peace-building initiatives. In 2004, OCHA will actively engage with the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) to systematically integrate protection concepts into peace-building and peace-keeping efforts, and ensure regular reviews of protection issues in missions mandated by the Security

Council. Similarly, it will continue to engage with military actors to broaden familiarity with the principles underlying UN humanitarian activities in complex emergencies. OCHA will also develop, in collaboration with its IASC partners, an agenda for establishing a stronger concept of pro-active and collective humanitarian security.

Goal Three: More effective and transparent management and sustainable financial support.

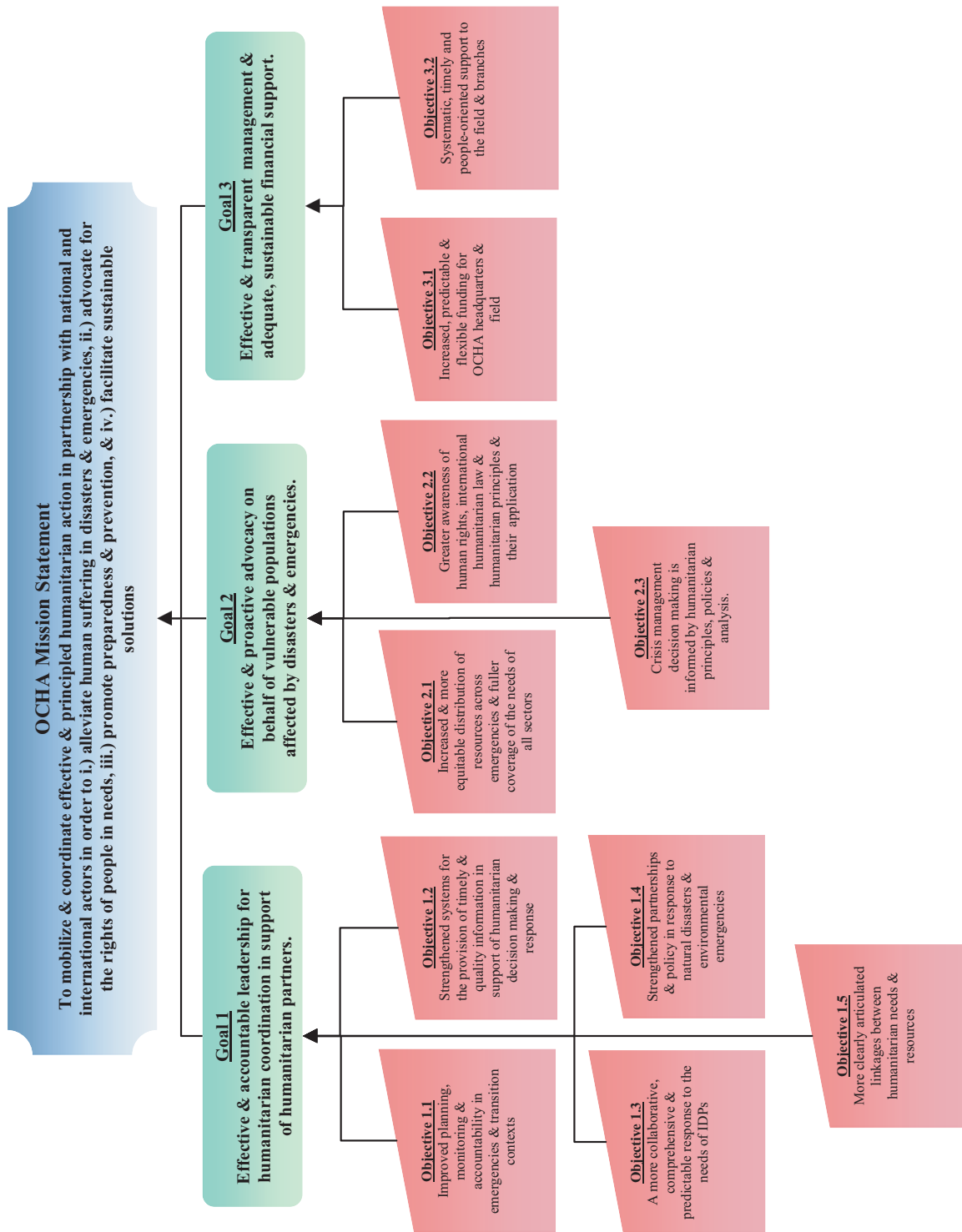
OCHA will work to achieve increased, predictable and flexible funding for OCHA headquarters and the field. Funding continues to be hamstrung by poor liquidity. This undermines response, and creates undue reliance on extra-budgetary resources that fluctuate from year to year and are not necessarily commensurate with the scale of emergencies. To resolve these constraints, OCHA will develop a menu of proposals for donor contributions with a view to increasing predictability. This menu includes framework agreements, multi-year agreements, and a donor model in which coordination funding is a fixed percentage of overall CAP spending. OCHA will also continue to strive for the conversion of its extra-budgetary posts to regular budget funding based on a clear and realistic identification of its core activities.

To attain effective management, OCHA will continue its work to achieve systematic, timely and people-oriented support to the field and branches. To this end, OCHA will develop a concise and practical Field Administration Manual that will clarify and standardize service, including through agreements with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United

Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) and World Food Programme (WFP). OCHA will continue to strive to secure terms and conditions for its field staff comparable to those considered standard for staff from UN agencies and programmes.

The overall objective of OCHA's ongoing strategic planning process is to ensure that it is continuously improving its structural, financial and managerial ability to respond to increasingly complex and evolving challenges of its mandate. This will allow OCHA to better monitor and adapt its response to the changing international working environment. Ultimately, OCHA's mission is to improve the lives and day-to-day living conditions of the people at the heart of one of the UN's core mandates—those affected by disaster, calamity and the scourge of conflict.

2004 Strategic Plan



Executive Management

Office of the Under-Secretary General/Emergency Relief Coordinator; Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator; Director, New York; and Assistant Emergency Relief Coordinator/Director Geneva

Office of the USG/ERC; DERC; Director, New York and AERC/Director Geneva				
Planned Staffing	Regular Budget	Extra Budgetary	Projects	Total
Professional	6	5	4	15
General Service	4	5	1	10
Total	10	10	5	25
Staff costs (US\$)	1,490,460	1,130,646	743,450	3,364,556
Non-staff costs (US\$)	203,260	411,772	104,977	720,009
Total costs (US\$)	1,693,720	1,542,418	848,427	4,084,565
Total requested (US\$)				2,390,845

OCHA's Senior Management Team

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is a department of the UN Secretariat, headed by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, who is designated as the Emergency Relief Coordinator. As Under-Secretary-General (USG), he is the advisor to the Secretary-General on Humanitarian Affairs and a key participant in the Secretary-General's approach to integrated crisis management. He chairs the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA). As Emergency Relief Coordinator, he leads the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), comprising UN humanitarian agencies, Red Cross and NGO partners. The Deputy to the USG, who is also Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator (DERC), is responsible for key coordination, policy and management issues, and also deputises for the USG in his absence. The DERC ensures coherence between New York and Geneva, and provides a senior link to political, peacekeeping and development partners.

Reporting to the USG and the DERC are two Directors, one for New York functions/ branches and one for functions/branches based in Geneva. The Geneva Director also carries the title of Assistant Emergency Relief Coordinator. In New York, the Director has responsibility for policy, advocacy and information management, and is responsible for overall financial, personnel and administrative management. In Geneva, the Director/AERC is responsible OCHA's field based activities, particularly support to humanitarian coordinators, through the provision of staff, mechanisms and tools. He is responsible for providing leadership among field based humanitarian partners, particularly as chair of the IASC working group.

The Senior Management Team, in addition to the USG/ERC, the DERC, and the New York and Geneva Directors, includes the Deputy Director Geneva, and the Chief of the Office of the Under Secretary-General.

Priorities in 2004

To achieve the overall goals set out in OCHA's 2004 Strategic Plan (see page 9) and in pursuit of OCHA's General Mission Statement of making humanitarian action more effective and efficient, the Senior Management Team has committed itself in 2004 to focus on:

- Strengthening the collaborative approach for Internally Displaced Persons.
- Supporting the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative, including better outreach to new and non-traditional donors.
- Promoting equitable assistance to beneficiaries in "forgotten emergencies".
- Enhancing advocacy efforts on the protection of civilians, in particular on the needs for systematic and safe access to all vulnerable populations.

In addition, the Senior Management Team will strive to make OCHA, as an organisation, more coherent and service oriented by:

- Developing performance indicators to assess OCHA's ability to achieve its humanitarian purpose.
- Ensuring an understanding of gender is developed in all aspects of humanitarian management.
- Continuing to improve OCHA's ability to support field staff in the performance of their duties.

Performance Assessment

- Timely attainment of OCHA's ten objectives for 2004.

New York				
Planned Staffing	Regular Budget	Extra Budgetary	Projects	Total
Professional	5	3	–	8
General Service	3	3	–	6
Total	8	6	–	14
Staff costs (US\$)	1,225,368	623,055	–	1,848,423
Non-staff costs (US\$)	156,500	232,780	–	389,280
Total costs (US\$)	1,381,868	855,835	–	2,237,703
Total requested (US\$)				855,835

Geneva				
Planned Staffing	Regular Budget	Extra Budgetary	Projects	Total
Professional	1	2	–	3
General Service	1	2	–	3
Total	2	4	–	6
Staff costs (US\$)	265,092	507,591	–	772,683
Non-staff costs (US\$)	46,760	178,992	–	225,752
Total costs (US\$)	311,852	686,583	–	998,435
Total requested (US\$)				686,583

Strengthening Donor Relations Capacity Project

Donor Relations Project				
Planned Staffing	Regular Budget	Extra Budgetary	Projects	Total
Professional	–	–	4	4
General Service	–	–	1	1
Total	–	–	5	5
Staff costs (US\$)	–	–	743,450	743,450
Non-staff costs (US\$)	–	–	104,977	104,977
Total costs (US\$)	–	–	848,427	848,427
Total requested (US\$)				848,427

The Donor Relations Section (DRS) has a presence in New York and Geneva, and is the focal point within OCHA for all relations with donors, particularly those issues related to funding. The separation of the DRS in Geneva from the Consolidated Appeals Process Section in April 2003 has strengthened both of these important aspects of OCHA's work. The Section advises the Senior Management Team on policy issues related to interaction with donors and resource mobilisation. In addition, DRS plays a key role in facilitating the interaction of all entities within OCHA, both at headquarters and at the field level, with donor representatives.

Within the scope of the overall goal of "effective and transparent management and adequate, sustainable financial support", the Donor Relations Section will support OCHA Management to obtain increased, predictable and flexible funding both for headquarters and field requirements.

Priorities in 2004

- Provide policy advice to the senior management by analysing funding patterns and trends, ensuring timely and accurate information, and making recommendations on both strategy and specific actions to be taken by senior management. The
- Section will work together with the Chair of the OCHA Donor Support Group to ensure focus on, and implementation of, strategic priorities for 2004.
- Promote an effective interface between OCHA and its donors by ensuring a tailored and prioritised approach to each donor, advocating for wider humanitarian action and support by donors, and advising the Senior Management Team on utilisation of existing donor coordination mechanisms, such as the Humanitarian Liaison Working Group, the Good Humanitarian Donorship Implementation Group (GHDIG) and the OCHA Donor Support Group.
- Aim to increase the resources available to OCHA by deepening the existing donor base, strengthening OCHA's relationship with its most important donors through enhanced dialogue and active engagement, and presenting a menu of options to optimise balanced and increased funding as well as improving donor reporting quality and frequency; broadening the donor base both by targeting under-supporting G-8 and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, by developing relationships with emerging donors and, together with other Sections of OCHA, engaging new donors through training and meetings; and advocating and making suggestions

New York				
Planned Staffing	Regular Budget	Extra Budgetary	Projects	Total
Professional	–	–	1	1
General Service	–	–	–	–
Total	–	–	1	1
Staff costs (US\$)	–	–	164,985	164,985
Non-staff costs (US\$)	–	–	32,770	32,770
Total costs (US\$)	–	–	197,755	197,755
Total requested (US\$)				197,755

Geneva				
Planned Staffing	Regular Budget	Extra Budgetary	Projects	Total
Professional	–	–	3	3
General Service	–	–	1	1
Total	–	–	4	4
Staff costs (US\$)	–	–	578,465	578,465
Non-staff costs (US\$)	–	–	72,207	72,207
Total costs (US\$)	–	–	650,672	650,672
Total requested (US\$)				650,672

to donors for improving the ‘quality’ of money received, by addressing issues of flexibility, timeliness and predictability.

- Quality of advice and information provided to Senior Management and managers; and
- Improved interaction with and support to the GHDIG on behalf of Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).

Performance Assessment

- Increased level of funding from existing and new donors;
- Funding received with more flexibility and earlier in the calendar year;



Photo: Jemmy ChurInternational Medical Corps

Executive And Administrative Offices

Executive Office and Administrative Office				
Planned Staffing	Regular Budget	Extra Budgetary	Projects	Total
Professional	4	9	1	14
General Service	4	16	1	21
Total	8	25	2	35
Staff costs (US\$)	785,976	2,823,286	217,521	3,826,783
Non-staff costs (US\$)	6,700	62,263	597,092	666,055
Total costs (US\$)	792,676	2,885,549	814,613	4,492,838
Total requested (US\$) Common Costs NOT included				3,700,162

Executive Office New York				
Planned Staffing	Regular Budget	Extra Budgetary	Projects	Total
Professional	2	3	–	5
General Service	3	2	–	5
Total	5	5	–	10
Staff costs (US\$)	506,880	580,354	–	1,087,234
Non-staff costs (US\$)	2,400	33,900	–	36,300
Total costs (US\$)	509,280	614,254	–	1,123,534
Total requested (US\$)				614,254

New York Common Costs				
	Regular Budget	Extra Budgetary	Projects	Total
Staff & non-staff costs (US\$)	749,070	636,637	–	1,385,707
Total requested (US\$)				636,637

The common support requirements of the different branches in New York and Geneva have been integrated into a separate table "Common Costs" for each duty station. These common costs include general operating requirements such as external printing, news agency services, communications, supplies and materials, office furniture and equipment, and hospitality. Other non-staff costs that can be linked directly to the respective branches, such as travel, consultants, training and retreats are shown under each branch's resource requirements.

The Executive Office, comprising the administrative services of the New York and Geneva Offices, assists the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator and Senior Management in the discharge of their financial and administrative responsibilities. It provides administrative and programme support for the activities of the Office, both at headquarters and in the field.

The administrative service in New York serves as the Executive Office, overseeing and coordinating the overall administration of all OCHA offices at New York, Geneva and those in the field. The Executive Office coordinates all management reporting, planning and policy review in the areas of programme budget and human resources management. It represents the department in Task Forces of the UN Secretariat on

administrative matters and assists the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator in presentations before inter-governmental bodies to explain and justify budgetary requests. It also deals with all Internal and External Audit observations.

In addition to these responsibilities, the Executive Office assists the Emergency Relief Coordinator in the administration of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF). This includes ensuring compliance with the rules and procedures governing the use of the Fund, monitoring advances and replenishments, ensuring financial reporting from organisations utilising the Fund, and preparation of the required documentation for distribution to Member States, inter-governmental bodies, non-governmental organisations and United Nations operational agencies. The Executive Office also manages the Trust Fund for Strengthening of OCHA and the Special Account for Programme Support, which serve as the main extra-budgetary sources of funding for OCHA's core activities, as well as other Trust funds administered by the New York Office. It also serves the administrative needs of

OCHA's Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) offices in the field.

The Executive Office implements the Action Plan on Human Resources and helps in implementing the recommendations of the management review of OCHA, including the development and consolidation of critical tools, and enhancing staff-management relations.

The Administrative Office in Geneva assists the Director in his financial, personnel and general administrative responsibilities. The Office provides budget, financial and human resources support to OCHA's core programmes in Geneva, Geneva-based extrabudgetary projects and field offices. It manages the various Trust Funds under the responsibility of the Geneva Office, most notably the Trust Fund for Disaster Relief Assistance, which serves as the main vehicle for funding of OCHA's activities in the field.

The Administrative Office provides a dedicated capacity for field support through its Human Resources Section, which includes a Staff Development, Training

Aministrative Office Geneva				
Planned Staffing	Regular Budget	Extra Budgetary	Projects	Total
Professional	2	6	–	8
General Service	1	14	–	15
Total	3	20	–	23
Staff costs (US\$)	279,096	2,242,932	–	2,522,028
Non-staff costs (US\$)	4,300	28,363	–	32,663
Total costs (US\$)	283,396	2,271,295	–	2,554,691
Total requested (US\$)				2,271,295

Geneva Common Costs				
	Regular Budget	Extra Budgetary	Projects	Total
Staff & non-staff costs (US\$)	721,880	476,892	–	1,198,772
Total requested (US\$)				476,892

The common support requirements of the different branches in New York and Geneva have been integrated into a separate table "Common Costs" for each duty station. These common costs include general operating requirements such as external printing, news agency services, communications, supplies and materials, office furniture and equipment, and hospitality. Other non-staff costs that can be linked directly to the respective branches, such as travel, consultants, training and retreats are shown under each branch's resource requirements.

and Career Development Unit and its Finance Section, which is structured in regional clusters to ensure full support and accountability for servicing the regional desks in the field. It also provides administrative support to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), and the Internally Displaced Persons Unit (IDPU).

In 2004, the Executive Office will aim to provide more effective management and sustainable financial resources.

Priorities in 2004

- Strengthen support to the field, including through the development of the Administrative Manual and other mechanisms/tools in the areas of financial, human resources, and general administrative management.

- Conclude service provider agreements with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Programme (WFP), and United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG).

Performance Assessment

- Improved conditions of service in the field, better morale and increased productivity of the staff;
- Favourable consideration by the United Nations General Assembly for OCHA's regular budget requests; and
- Finalised service provider agreements.



Photo: Nadine Hutton/International Federation

Civil-Military Interaction in Complex Emergencies

Since the early 1990s, military involvement in humanitarian activities has increased and raised issues of principle and policy, in addition to creating operational difficulties. These concerns have assumed even greater importance in the wake of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, which have brought into sharper focus the explicit linkage between military, political and humanitarian aims. The military's encroachment into what was traditionally regarded as humanitarian space underlines the fundamental difference in cultures between the two sets of actors, with clear command structures of the military and the more networking approach of a diverse humanitarian fraternity.

Cooperating with the military offers several advantages to humanitarian workers. The main advantage is the military's ability to rapidly deploy large numbers of personnel, equipment and supplies. To benefit from this capacity, humanitarian workers must establish interactive mechanisms. Yet this can create a perception of too close an affiliation with the military and can have adverse consequences if it imperils the humanitarian principles of "neutrality" and "impartiality". These are crucial to maintaining local networks and delivering assistance to all populations in need and to ensuring that the lead role of humanitarian actors is safeguarded and their operational independence is not restricted. Humanitarian actors must have full control over staff selection, retain complete freedom of movement of their personnel and maintain free communications with the media and other humanitarian agencies. A perception of too close an affiliation with the military may even imperil the security of their personnel and operating environment.

Such considerations have led to the formulation of the *Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA) to Support United Nations Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies*. The Guidelines, which were officially launched in June 2003, are the result of nearly three years deliberations between Member States, International and

Regional Organisations and Agencies from both the humanitarian and military communities. This generic document is meant to provide the framework for drafting guidelines for particular operations in specific emergencies.

One such guidance paper was the *General Guidance for Interaction between UN Personnel and Military and Civilian Representatives of the Occupying Power* that was prepared by OCHA for the Iraq crisis. Based on the MCDA document, it was adapted to the realities and requirements of the particular situation in Iraq and provides clear guidance on permissible and non-permissible actions of humanitarian actors in their contacts and interaction with military forces in Iraq.

The imperative of bringing relief to the suffering population necessitates a pragmatic approach built on sound foundations. By making a clear distinction between military and humanitarian actors, the Guidelines, and specific guidance papers based on them, can help to promote that objective.

OCHA Staff Development and Training Project

Staff Development and Training Project				
Planned Staffing	Regular Budget	Extra Budgetary	Projects	Total
Professional	–	–	1	1
General Service	–	–	1	1
Total	–	–	2	2
Staff costs (US\$)	–	–	217,521	217,521
Non-staff costs (US\$)	–	–	597,092	597,092
Total costs (US\$)	–	–	814,613	814,613
Total requested (US\$)				814,613

The goal of the Staff Development and Training Project is to strengthen the capacity of OCHA staff both at headquarters and in the field in their mission to carry out effective and accountable humanitarian response coordination, advocacy and strategic planning.

Through the design, development and implementation of specific training programmes and by disseminating information on various training opportunities, the Project aims to enhance and support the continuous learning and improved competencies of OCHA staff.

facilitate a proactive response to the training needs and priorities of each department and field office.

- Develop a distance learning module to enhance writing skills of all OCHA staff.

Performance Assessment

- Increase in the number of OCHA headquarters and field staff who receive relevant and satisfactory training.

Priorities in 2004

- Continue to expand the Emergency Field Coordination Training in Geneva and in the field.
- Introduce standardised procedures, including an induction package to support the orientation and integration of new OCHA staff both in the field and at headquarters.
- Establish training and support mechanisms to address stress in the workplace, particularly for those staff working in difficult or dangerous duty stations.
- Design and implement a structured training system on OCHA financial and administrative procedures.
- Strengthen the Training Management System to centralise all training related information that will

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee/Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs Secretariat

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs assist the Emergency Relief Coordinator as strategic coordination and consultation mechanisms among key humanitarian actors.

IASC develops humanitarian policies, agrees on a clear division of responsibility for the various aspects of humanitarian response, identifies and addresses gaps in response, and advocates for effective application of humanitarian principles.

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)

IASC was established in 1992 following the General Assembly Resolution 46/182 that called for strengthened coordination of humanitarian assistance. It is a unique inter-agency forum for coordination, policy development and decision-making involving the key UN and non-UN humanitarian partners. Under the leadership of the Emergency Relief Coordinator, the

Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA)

ECHA is one of the four Committees created by the Secretary-General in the framework of the UN reform with the aim of enhancing coordination among UN agencies in various fields. Chaired by the Emergency Relief Coordinator, ECHA meets on a monthly basis in New York. ECHA's membership, notably with the par-

New York				
Planned Staffing	Regular Budget	Extra Budgetary	Projects	Total
Professional	–	2	–	2
General Service	–	2	–	2
Total	–	4	–	4
Staff costs (US\$)	–	444,307	–	444,307
Non-staff costs (US\$)	–	27,120	–	27,120
Total costs (US\$)	–	471,427	–	471,427
Total requested (US\$)				471,427

Geneva				
Planned Staffing	Regular Budget	Extra Budgetary	Projects	Total
Professional	–	1	–	1
General Service	–	1	–	1
Total	–	2	–	2
Staff costs (US\$)	–	188,258	–	188,258
Non-staff costs (US\$)	–	54,240	–	54,240
Total costs (US\$)	–	242,498	–	242,498
Total requested (US\$)				242,498

participation of UN Departments, adds a political and peacekeeping dimension to humanitarian consultations.

A single Secretariat in OCHA serves the IASC and the ECHA. This arrangement ensures that parallel discussions in the two Committees are based on a common understanding of the problems and on effective decision-making processes. The Secretariat has a strategic role in supporting the Emergency Relief Coordinator in his capacity as the chairman of both committees, and the Assistant Emergency Relief Coordinator in his capacity as the chairman of the IASC Working Group, to ensure that they function effectively and in a coordinated manner.

Priorities in 2004

- Support the Emergency Relief Coordinator in development of a clear strategy for IASC and ECHA to enhance accountability and effectiveness of both mechanisms.
- Support systematically inclusive process of inter-agency discussions and decision-making on all major humanitarian issues through IASC and/or ECHA.
- Ensure that the workplan and agenda of both committees is guided by the requirements and needs of the field and thus strengthen the linkage between the field operations and IASC/ECHA processes.
- Ensure timely follow-up to the decisions taken in the IASC and the ECHA at the headquarters level and ensure that information on decisions is disseminated widely and in a timely manner to the field.
- Support and monitor the work of IASC subsidiary bodies and ECHA's working groups, covering a broad range of technical and policy issues related to humanitarian action.
- Facilitate and monitor implementation of the IASC 2004 workplan.

Performance Assessment

- Establishment of a strategy for more effective use of the two committees;
- Timely dissemination of IASC and ECHA decisions to the field and timely follow-up at the headquarters level;
- Identification of gaps in follow-up to IASC and ECHA workplans through continuous monitoring;
- Efficient and wide dissemination of IASC policies and related information to IASC and non-IASC members; and
- Degree of implementation of the IASC workplan.



Photo: Christopher Black/International Federation

Early Warning for Preparedness

The earlier the signs of impending disasters are recognised, the better prepared to deal with them individuals can be. Disasters stem from natural causes, such as drought and flood; and can also be man-made, such as civil conflict or political emergency. In either case, the aim of the humanitarian actors is always to minimise loss of life, mitigate suffering, provide immediate relief, and help in rehabilitation and recovery. OCHA endeavours to provide early warning of emerging situations that could prove to be catastrophic.

An example of OCHA's early warning capacity and its usefulness to the international community is provided by the activities of the field office in Ethiopia. The first signs of the coming drought were observed by its field staff traveling to the Afar region, in the north-east of the country, as part of routine monitoring to review the overall humanitarian situation and collect data. The field monitors noticed an increasing number of deaths among the livestock, including those of hardy camels. This was an unmistakable sign that humans would soon be affected. OCHA warned that a failure or delay in the rains would cause the Afar and other ethnic groups to face a hazardous situation. Detailed and accurate field reports and special alerts were issued to the donor and NGO community, the United Nations and the Government. The office initiated weekly meetings with Government, donor and NGO communities to share technical information. The media was also kept informed about the emerging situation.

The situation deteriorated in Afar and rains failed in other areas, and OCHA's staff continued to report on the escalating problems of malnutrition and a shortage of seeds. As a result of OCHA's timely dissemination of vital information, loss of life was averted.

Guinea Bissau was on the verge of a different kind of crisis when OCHA's strengthened early warning mechanism includ-



Photo: UNDP/ (Eskinder Debebe)

ed it in a list of a dozen or so countries most at risk. A thorough analysis had revealed that, given the existing political and economic conditions, there was a strong possibility of serious political instability, which could lead to a humanitarian crisis. Consequently, in collaboration with the relevant humanitarian and development agencies, an umbrella contingency plan was prepared to coordinate a comprehensive humanitarian response. The UN Country Team has expressed its gratitude to OCHA for conducting this exercise and feels more confident in responding effectively to a humanitarian crisis should it occur.