

OCHA and the Timor Crisis, 1999

An Independent Study for OCHA

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The opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is an independent study of OCHA's actions before, during and after the immediate crisis period in Timor in 1999. According to the Terms of Reference, the purpose of the study is to "draw out concise and action-oriented lessons" in order that OCHA may "improve humanitarian preparedness, intervention and coordination in future complex emergency environments".

OCHA's Timor response offers a powerful argument for a commitment to a more field-based coordination approach. This report therefore examines the details of the operation and how OCHA can become a predictable field co-ordinating service.

1. Background

In May 1999 UNAMET was mandated by the Security Council to organise a popular consultation in East Timor regarding the political future of the territory. When the final results were announced in favour of independence, pro-Indonesian militia rapidly escalated levels of arson, looting and killings. Several hundred thousand people became displaced. On the 20th September an Australian-led multinational force began to deploy in East Timor. UN agencies and INGOs established an early presence in Dili, with OCHA supporting the Humanitarian Coordinator and providing a range of services to operational agencies and NGOs. In mid-November it began handing over its responsibilities to the humanitarian pillar (HAER) of the transitional UN civil administration (UNTAET). This process formally ended in April 2000.

2. Main Findings: OCHA's Response in Timor

This report confirms the commonly held view that OCHA performed well during the Timor crisis. It achieved many of the duties and functions expected of a coordinating body in general, and a UN coordinating body in particular - in as much as these have been defined. Other stakeholders in the Timor operation report with great consistency on the value and centrality of OCHA to the overall response.

OCHA succeeded through: the rapid deployment of experienced, senior staff to the field; a strong vision for its role within the overall response; favourable contextual factors and an ability to seize the opportunities these presented; and through boldly over-riding the various internal processes and systems that generally acted to hinder and hamper OCHA's performance in the field.

The handover of OCHA's functions to UNTAET's humanitarian 'pillar' did not leave an impression of being driven by the same clarity, and left its stakeholders confused and with a weakened co-ordination service.

3. Main Findings: Wider Issues

Field-Based Coordination

The Timor response suggests that the proactive, field-based approach evident in this case added significant value to the operation, and earned OCHA a high degree of credibility and support in the process. There would seem to be a clear case for OCHA to consolidate its ability to repeat such a performance, as one element of its attempts to substantiate its overall role, relevance and effectiveness within the UN system and more widely.

OCHA lacks the confidence to clarify and regularise its field-based services for fear that this will be interpreted by other agencies as a move towards operationality, occasioning more aggressive inter-agency relations and attempts by some to constrain or even weaken OCHA's role. The evidence of East Timor suggests that a clear and strong service-based approach, where appropriate, is welcomed by agencies on the ground and not interpreted as an expansionist move on OCHA's part. It was also highly important in clarifying OCHA's added value in the eyes of several major donors.

OCHA has inherited and not yet fully adjusted UNDRO and DHA's administrative systems and ethos – neither of which was designed to enable swift and effective field activities in the emergency response environment of recent years. If OCHA's leadership were to decide that it should increase the value it places on field coordination alongside its other priorities, the relevant parts of the change management process and other initiatives should be utilised and reinvented.

The Handover of Coordination Arrangements to UN Civil Administrations

Whilst this subject is deserving of a dedicated study in its own right (that would also be able to take in other experiences, notably Kosovo), it is clear that in East Timor there were major obstacles to a successful transition. These included the lack of an overall strategy created and shared by the main agencies involved, and profound differences in the operating cultures of the humanitarian, political and civil administration bodies. Specific to OCHA, there was a lack of guidance from OCHA headquarters to the field, and the need for an effective strategy for the dissemination to stakeholders of the arrangements regarding coordination.

CAP

CAP's effectiveness and potential within a time-limited emergency requiring hand-over to developmental and political processes is very different to that within an ongoing, year-on-year response. Firstly, the issue of how CAP negotiates the 'gap' between emergency response and transitional/rehabilitative processes is highly relevant here, both in its design and the speed with which it can assist donor governments in their decision-making (thus preventing a "gap" opening up in the first place). Secondly, the Timor experience suggests that a differentiation should be made according to context. For sudden onset and acute situations, strategic operational planning should take the form of a jointly-created CHAP, and should be used to adjust, monitor, and report on the overall response by a group of the main operational partners in the field. A planning document rooted in operational realities will also yield a clearer platform around which hand-over arrangements can be planned. The

CAP as a short-term fundraising document should flow out of the CHAP, and should be utilised as the dialogue between agencies and donors.

4. Recommendations

i) Develop More Integrated Field-Based Competencies for Emergencies

It is recommended that OCHA incorporates a stronger service-based, field-oriented approach for time-limited emergency contexts as a valuable part of its corporate approach to coordination. This requires the involvement of other agencies in order to steer the debate away from inter-agency suspicions of expansionism, and towards one in which OCHA is more thoroughly client-oriented and service-based.

ii) Reinvigorate Aspects of the Internal Change Management Process

A determination to understand the reasons that made the Timor response a high point in OCHA's history does exist within the organisation. It was found that many of the broad areas requiring improvement in order to strengthen and systemise field performance – particularly those relating to field support systems and administration – are already reflected in OCHA's internal Change Management process.

iii) Recruit, Develop and Retain Staff with Field Experience and Skills

A consistent recommendation to OCHA from field partners is to pay more attention to ensuring that OCHA has experienced and technically competent staff for coordinating positions in order to exercise the authority that coordination requires.

iv) Improve Joint Strategic Operational Planning

At the onset of an emergency OCHA should facilitate a rapid and time-limited planning exercise with senior operational managers of other agencies. This would create the overall strategy document that would underpin the more detailed and flexible CHAP.

v) Develop CHAP as Primarily a Tool for Strategic Planning and Coordination

It is recommended that OCHA and agencies develop the CHAP as the primary joint operational planning tool during the first phase of emergency responses where transition to other arrangements is likely within six months. Senior managers from the various agencies would take shared responsibility for the overall performance, and not only their own agency. The CAP would derive from the CHAP, but would be solely focused on translating operational plans into appeal documents and a dialogue with donors and non-operational stakeholders.

vi) Study the Transition from Humanitarian to Nation-Building Processes

OCHA is well-placed to contribute to a practical process of gathering experiences and lessons learnt from situations in which agencies have moved from emergency humanitarian operations into working within the overall framework of a UN peace-keeping/transitional administration operation. Experiences before and including the Kosovo and East Timor exercises need to be captured and fed into future thinking.

vii) Increase Donor Engagement with Issues around Field Coordination

OCHA should develop and strengthen a more proactive relationship with its donor group in the area of field coordination. It can capitalise on the fact that many have – on grounds of principle and good practice – a commitment to OCHA's role on this

issue. But OCHA should understand that this will wane if it is not seen to be consistently fulfilling its central coordination function in the field. The donors' collective goodwill and support in this area appears to be under-utilized.

viii) Take a Lead in the Coordination Policy Debate

As the department with a specific coordination mandate within the humanitarian UN, OCHA should have: a well-disseminated, corporately-shared working definition of coordination, a clear vision as to its role relative to such a definition, clear objectives as to how to fulfil that role, and clear indicators that will tell it if it is progressing in the right direction. It is not surprising that others are (or can choose to be) unclear as to OCHA's role in any given situation. It also explains why there is little clarity regarding the services it offers as standard, and why there is little consistency across operations.

OCHA should brave the possible accusations that may follow from operational agencies that fear a more 'operational' OCHA, and take its natural place as a leader in coordination policy, practice and research, particularly in helping to define criteria and indicators for successful coordination in the field.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CAP	Consolidated Appeal Process
CERF	Central Emergency Revolving Fund
CHAP	Common Humanitarian Action Plan
CIMIC	Civil-Military Cooperation
CNRT	Timorese National Resistance Council
DFID	Department for International Affairs (British Government)
DPA	Department for Political Affairs (UN)
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN)
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator (UN)
HAER	Humanitarian Assistance & Emergency Rehabilitation (UNTAET)
HAO	Humanitarian Affairs Officer (UN)
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator (UN)
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
INTERFET	International Force East Timor
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
JAM	Joint Assessment Mission (World Bank)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
PKF	Peacekeeping Force
RC	Resident Coordinator (UN)
SRSA	Swedish Rescue Services Agency
SMSG	Special Representative of the Secretary General (UN)
UNAMET	United Nations Assistance Mission in East Timor
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRO	Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator
UNHOC	United Nations Humanitarian Operations Centre
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNTAET	United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor
UNV	United Nations Volunteer
WFP	World Food Programme (UN)
WHO	World Health Organisation (UN)

1. Introduction

1a) Purpose of the Study

This document is an independent study of OCHA's actions in response to the humanitarian crisis in Timor in 1999. According to the Terms of Reference, the purpose of this study is to "draw out concise and action-oriented lessons" in order that OCHA may "improve humanitarian preparedness, intervention and coordination in future complex emergency environments". The findings and recommendations of this report are intended to feed into a process of defining the tools that OCHA can use to provide a service-oriented role in mobilising and coordinating international responses to emergencies.

1b) The Focus

The focus of the work is on OCHA's performance in:

- The pre-ballot period, in the context of UNAMET and its contingency planning;
- The post-ballot humanitarian crisis phase;
- The transition of emergency coordination structures into the "humanitarian pillar," a part of the nation-building assignment given to UNTAET.

OCHA's Timor response offers a powerful argument for OCHA's commitment to a more field-based coordination approach, as well as a unique perspective on OCHA's role as a non-operational coordinator of emergency and humanitarian action. This report therefore focuses on these aspects of the Timor experience, and less on the well-trodden debates regarding the theory of coordination within the humanitarian sector and within the UN system.

1c) Temporal Scope

As required by the Terms of Reference, the core period examined is June - December 1999, although this study looks beyond both these dates where necessary. Whilst OCHA's gradual absorption into the UNTAET structure makes the definition of a cut-off point' for the organisation's involvement in East Timor imprecise, the 1st January 2000 and April 2000 have been used as formal markers in the process.

1d) Geographic Scope

Given the international, regional and country-level structure of OCHA and other organisations, coordination arrangements and activities are examined with regard to East and West Timor, Jakarta and Darwin, and headquarters in Geneva and New York.

1e) Methodology

Three approaches were used: a document review; semi-structured interviews (either in person or via telephone or e-mail) with over 100 people involved in the operation; and field visits to the main sites of coordination activity (Geneva, New York, Rome, London, Stockholm, Jakarta, Darwin, Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and Dili).

Given the time elapsed since the focal period and the lack of hard data (but the plethora of subjective views on inter-agency behaviour and attitudes), the team attempted to triangulate interviewee responses and views expressed in documentation as much as possible. The identification of a core set of issues and questions assisted this process.

There have been very few methodological tools or approaches developed to evaluate and study an organisation's performance in coordination. The study team found that the application of standard methodologies (such as PRA, control groups and other essentially participatory methods) were problematic, as was a rigorous application of 'generally accepted' standard criteria.¹ This is perhaps because such methods are intrinsically designed, and are best suited, to help evaluate assistance activities that directly benefit affected vulnerable populations, rather than other humanitarian organisations. The few relevant standards and indicators available when appraising humanitarian coordination are briefly considered in Appendix 2.

1f) Structure of the report.

The report has been designed to provide rapid access to conclusions and overview.

OCHA's actions and performance are examined in detail in Chapters 2-6. These are then summarised in Chapter 7 (which looks at OCHA's strengths and weaknesses), before conclusions and recommendations are made.

Main recommendations in the Executive Summary and the final Chapter are given Roman numerals. Detailed recommendations at the end of each chapter are marked R(number of chapter).(recommendation number) ie R8.4.

Background information and key events are given in Appendix 1 for those less familiar with the Timor context.

For those interested in OCHA's performance in relation to formal indicators of success in coordination, see Appendix 2.

¹ Various given as: coherence, connectedness, coordination, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, timeliness, appropriateness, coverage, amongst others.

1g) Issues and Constraints

- The study was conducted two years after the crisis in Timor. This has had a mixed influence on the team's research.² On one hand, many of the people involved have moved to other postings elsewhere and some memories have inevitably faded or have accrued much hindsight. On the other hand, the main issues have emerged with a high degree of consistency and clarity in the minds of those interviewed.
- Perhaps the biggest constraint relating to the timing of this study is more to do with its utilisation as a lesson learning exercise. Will OCHA corporately view a study on the Timor experience as one which seems relevant and applicable today?
- There were some opportunities for the Terms of Reference to be modified through the inputs of several senior managers within OCHA as well as the consultants themselves. However, these opportunities were not maximised, and the extent of ownership and engagement in the process was unclear.
- The central individual in terms of agency and NGO coordination during the crisis period was the Director of OCHA Geneva. He was simultaneously the Humanitarian Coordinator a.i. for Indonesian humanitarian crisis (as mandated by the UN Secretary General), and the Assistant Emergency Relief Coordinator for OCHA. Whilst in theory a study of OCHA's role and performance might exclude a study of the HC, in practice both Ross Mountain and everyone else saw his dual role as being symbiotic, and so does this study.
- There appears to be few evaluations or reviews of this operation commissioned by UN agencies or other humanitarian actors involved so far, although some have recently been initiated or are planned.

² In terms of suggested 'best practice', this study is late. "Ideally...the first field visits should take place within 6 months of the peak of the operations, though the elapsed times of many of the humanitarian evaluations undertaken to date is 12-18 months" (Hallam, 1998).

2. Preparedness and Early Warning

2a) April-July 1999: Early Signs

As the prospect of a popular consultation on the future of East Timor concretised in the first half of 1999, the UN's SRSG was reporting that despite the presence of UNAMET, international observers and media throughout the territory, some 40,000 people were too afraid to return to their homes and questions were raised about their ability to vote freely.

Many observers foresaw violence if there was a vote favouring independence. Within the international agencies there is clear evidence of dissatisfaction on the question of their own forward thinking.³

Adhering to established UN policy, the UN country team Indonesia did not work in East Timor. Although Unicef had provided limited but some support. Few agencies had built up additional capacity to respond to increased violence in East Timor. A good understanding of East Timor was to be found among the indigenous NGOs, as well as various Australian NGOs. There is no evidence that these resources were tapped systematically by international agencies for information and analysis as the year progressed and violence escalated.

A UN inter-agency assessment mission to East Timor was realised on April 22nd 1999, after a long period of waiting to obtain the agreement of the Indonesian Government. However, a plan of action arising from this mission never materialised.

OCHA's Geneva Desk Officer's visited Indonesia in April, an OCHA presence was recommended in East Timor and in Jakarta to help set up a multi-agency coordinating Task Force on Humanitarian Issues for Indonesia. The ERC and senior managers of OCHA met the RC Jakarta in New York and agreed on the need to establish a preparedness and contingency plan for East Timor with the UN country team in Indonesia. Definite outcomes seem to be lacking.

As UNAMET deployed in May and June, access to information and understanding of the situation in East Timor improved for OCHA. DPA and OCHA agreed that a humanitarian officer would be part of UNAMET, and he was to be a link to OCHA in New York and Geneva. From then on, high quality information came to OCHA via this channel. However, there is little evidence to suggest that any proactive use made of this in New York or Geneva until August.

2b) August: Momentum Gathers

On the 9th August the SRSG summarised the humanitarian situation, and explored possible post-ballot scenarios. These encompassed various degrees of violence, including "a complete breakdown of infrastructure in which large scale humanitarian assistance will be necessary". The report called for the commencement of strategic

³ According to its own report, "WFP did not have an adequate contingency plan...Such planning would have led to an earlier WFP presence in Darwin." WHO's Review of East Timor finds that "There was little evidence that WHO had forecast the events and had made the necessary preparations for early presence in a post-crisis East Timor." The CAP Review concluded that "preparations were made by the military, ICRC and some medical NGOs, but much of the rest of the response was driven by events."

planning “as soon as possible”, and emphasised the need for “a formalisation of coordination structures” in the post-ballot period, given the informal mechanisms so far employed by the relatively few organisations active in East Timor. Most immediately, an inter-agency assessment mission should be sent quickly to define a “policy and structure for the coordination of emergency relief programmes in the period immediately following the ballot”.

An attempt was made by OCHA in emergency inter-agency meeting on the 10th August to establish in principle who should have overall responsibility for coordination. Despite the urgency expressed by the SRSG, agencies present either felt that it was not yet necessary to formalise coordination activities, or that the situation had not yet reached the point at which a Humanitarian Coordinator or lead agency need be appointed, or even that the meeting was not the forum to discuss the issue. The SRSG’s recommendation of an inter-agency mission was, however, accepted. After a week of consultations with the Resident Coordinator in Jakarta, UNAMET and OCHA, the IASC was informed by the Emergency Relief Coordinator of a small, ‘low-key’ mission, in view of the Government of Indonesia’s sensitivities surrounding developments in East Timor.

The mission’s report was sent by the Resident Coordinator on the 3rd September – one day before the announcement of the ballot results and the catastrophic escalation of violence. The report recognised that the situation may deteriorate to the extent that needs would demand a response “beyond the scope of the mission or of humanitarian agencies,” and that in a situation where there were displacements of over 100,000 people, agencies could not make any meaningful contingency planning as all UN staff would have to be evacuated. Indeed the assessment mission’s planning for a continuance of the current UN presence was based on a manageable and gradual level of instability - which it acknowledged was not supported by the recent events!

On the 4th September the results of the referendum were announced, and the displacement, for which no meaningful contingency planning had been designed, now occurred. Within another five days most UN personnel were, indeed, evacuated. There was no overall plan as to what to do next, and August was much too late for OCHA to significantly influence the lack of substantive and coordinated preparedness evident within the humanitarian UN.

2e) Conclusions

Politics versus Humanitarian Preparedness

- Humanitarian readiness was not helped by the UN’s engagement with Indonesia, and East Timor was primarily a political issue until mid-August 1999. This involved an agenda predicated on both the success of the ballot process, and on a cultural disconnect between political and humanitarian agencies within the UN system.

Lack of Humanitarian Coordination in Jakarta

- Working relationships between the RC and with the humanitarian agencies and NGOs in Jakarta do not seem to have been particularly close.

- The NGOs in turn had a wide range of partners in Indonesia, and had only weak coordination mechanisms between themselves.
- The primary focus of the humanitarian groups remained developmental, and some interviewees felt that the skills and approach prevalent in Indonesia at that time were not conducive to emergency-oriented forward planning.

UN-Agencies Prevarication in August

- The SRSG's unequivocal warnings in early August of serious violence, increasing humanitarian concerns, the need for an early formalised coordination structure and for immediate strategic planning came late: a month before the obvious trigger date for that violence.
- There was then prevarication at the inter-agency meeting to discuss coordination structures in New York.
- The joint assessment mission delivered its report urging coordination and further assessments the day before the start of the massive destruction. Even then, it did not plan on catastrophic instability, despite its recognition that recent events pointed that way.

OCHA's Coordination Role⁴

- As long as the UN's engagement was primarily political in nature, and as long as the humanitarian element of the UN engagement in Timor was small, OCHA had limited influence in humanitarian preparedness planning.
- OCHA used its influence through the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the IASC mechanism to attempt to achieve some early coherence in the contingency planning, but without success.
- OCHA attempted to improve humanitarian coordination in Jakarta via the RC as early as April, but the predominantly political agenda meant a lack of impetus.
- OCHA acted swiftly in August, trying to establish coordination mechanisms and coherence in the humanitarian agencies' preparations for the post-ballot situation.
- OCHA did not take significant steps in preparing itself for a high level of personnel activity in the field in the post-ballot period. There is no evidence that it had a mobilisation plan

Recommendations

- R2.1 As part of an evolving political crisis or a UN political mission in a crisis country, OCHA should ensure that it fulfils its role to take the initiative for humanitarian scenario and contingency planning at earliest possible time.
- R2.2 OCHA should involve UN agencies and INGOs/NGOs in such planning.

⁴ OCHA's role in supporting the coordination of humanitarian preparedness measures is well formulated in its mission statement: "To mobilize and coordinate the collective efforts of the international community...to meet in a coherent *and timely* manner the needs of those exposed to human suffering." It therefore "monitors humanitarian developments throughout the world...to identify crises with humanitarian implications", and with its partners, it "makes contingency plans for possible interventions".

R2.3 OCHA should also advocate for early close involvement with DPA and/or DPKO planning processes. It is crucial for OCHA to assume the responsibility of bridging the political-humanitarian disconnect through such an engagement.

3. The Emergency Phase

This chapter examines the primary elements that constituted OCHA's performance from the outbreak of mass destruction and violence on the 4th September to the start of the transition process less than two months later. These elements include key actions, services and other outputs such as the CAP. OCHA's performance in the area of relationship-building is examined in Chapter 5.

3a) The Context

- There was willingness to provide coherent political support for the humanitarian response, which aided coordination.
- The multi-national military force was under a strong unified command,
- Population displacement and international evacuation meant that there were no indigenous military or political institutions, no local NGOs, no INGOs and no existing UN structure with which the emergency operation had to coordinate and adjust to.
- Between the 9th and 20th September, a few international agencies and INGOs were together in Darwin. This gave crucial opportunities for joint planning and initial coordination arrangements to be made, although these largely excluded Timorese inputs.
- There was a limited and manageable number of humanitarian actors in the initial stages of the operation.
- There was a strong operational need to coordinate: the lack of physical resources and assets in East Timor, plus its distance from Darwin and the security situation, meant that agencies and NGOs had to collaborate in order to make their own programmes successful.
- OCHA and the humanitarian operation had the important facility of twenty Landrover Discoveries (with fuel), and a pool of people (especially evacuated UNVs) through the previous presence of UNAMET in East Timor and NGOs.
- There was a weakened UNAMET presence which had an unclear role and few resources. This minimised conflict over the coordination role.

3b) Speed of Response

On the 6th September, three days before the general evacuation, a senior OCHA complex emergency manager managed to fly into Dili, where he remained as one of only two international humanitarian representatives in East Timor until re-entry on the 20th. He stayed on in the early period of the humanitarian deployment and was crucial in designing the profile of the role of OCHA.

The HC arrived in Jakarta on the 13th September. Some OCHA staff members were requested to take on short term field assignments whilst the recruitment and deployment system recruited longer term field staff. A senior desk officer stayed in Jakarta to drive the coordination and the information flow as support to Dili and as a service to the humanitarian community in Jakarta.

By the 20th September, when INTERFET and the HC deployed to Dili, the HC and his OCHA team had worked with agencies in Darwin for almost a week in planning and relationship-building.

Therefore, in terms of a rapid deployment to the strategic sites in Jakarta, Darwin and Dili, OCHA succeeded in being able to support the HC.

3c) The Scale of the Crisis

During the preliminary planning done in Darwin, use was made of the experience of the organisations that were familiar with East Timor to consider what were the most likely and most pressing humanitarian needs in East Timor. But there were many unknowns. There was, and remained, a lack of understanding of the numbers of displaced and their situation. While the pre-ballot displacement figures used were 40-60,000 persons, it was estimated that hundreds of thousands of people were displaced during the weeks from 4th September to end of September when INTERFET started deploying in the country.

In West Timor there were 250,000 persons in forced or voluntary exile. A lot of people had taken refuge close to their towns in the “hills” and started returning to the towns fairly soon after the return of the internationals. While the destruction was widespread and the causes of the displacement were brutal, the period of displacement was relatively brief and people had some food reserves. On arrival in Dili, the internationals took over a large stock of Indonesian Government-owned food in accordance with a prior agreement negotiated between WFP Jakarta and the Indonesian Government. Once in country it was evident that the challenges were security and access and protection of people, internal transport to reach out to all areas of the country and the destroyed administrative infrastructure. The population as polled for the registration of voters was about 800,000. 250,000 were now refugees in West Timor. While there were some evident challenges, the scope and scale of the operation was not the largest that the humanitarian system had had to address during the nineties.

3d) Rapid Response Tools

On the appointment of the HC on the 12th September, OCHA Geneva issued a standby order to its UNDAC system. On the 15th the request for deployment went out and a first group from the Pacific region responded. The HC made an early request for support by a CIMIC team to help establish a working interface with INTERFET. Standing agreements with DFID and the SRSA were activated and two UNDAC support modules, which arrived 3 days after entry, were a key resource for the early phase of the deployment given the almost total destruction of Dili. These provided OCHA with relevance and credibility through an initial service which other agencies and NGOs could not do without. By the 25th September, 5 days after re-entry, a UN Humanitarian Operations Centre (UNHOC) was established, and the first INGOs began to arrive.

The timely request for, and delivery of, standby emergency response tools was a noticeable feature of the OCHA operation – and in that they provided services that were operationally valuable to other agencies and NGOs, they established OCHA at the heart of the international response at a very early stage.

3e) Leadership and the Mandate.

Several observers noted that the HC/OCHA stepped into a vacuum and took the lead. The vacuum varied according to the location. In Jakarta there was a lack of overt focus on East Timor, and limited experience of humanitarian emergencies. In Darwin

agencies had either been evacuated from Dili or were just arriving – both groups were in need of (and desired) focused and efficient coordination as they waited for re-entry. In Dili, security and access was a high concern, requiring an effective and coherent interface with INTERFET, whilst the UNHOC and its facilities provided essential operational start-up facilities. OCHA’s leadership had demonstrated an ability to seize opportunities, to deploy limited but much-needed resources, and to quickly create a service-driven approach in relation to its role within the humanitarian community. As importantly, OCHA managed to deploy staff whose seniority, experience (and, in the HC’s case, mandate) allowed OCHA to become a credible leader and coordinator in the first days of the crisis.

For the UN system, the leadership position of the HC role was formally clear. But NGOs and others knew little about the inner workings of the UN system, and OCHA was not a well-known entity to most of the actors in this region. The HC recognised this, and worked hard to ensure their inclusion and participation through a combination of personal skills, seniority, a clear sense of direction backed up by some vital resources, and an approach of openness towards the non-UN groups. However, it would seem that OCHA needs to make more efforts to disseminate its services, structure and role to non-UN humanitarian actors (and to potential peacekeeping militaries).

Nevertheless, a self-assessment by the humanitarian actors involved in the CAP process concluded that: “the early days were marked by the presence of very senior OCHA staff, with sufficient emergency expertise to win the respect of the military as well as civilian – and in particular UN – constituencies.”⁵

3f) The Overall Coordination Mechanism

There was unanimous agreement amongst those interviewed that the HC/OCHA coordination meetings in Darwin and Dili were appropriate, effective and professionally chaired. NGO participants in the early meetings felt that there was a genuine desire and possibility for consultation, which aided the planning and appeal process. A mechanism soon took the shape of a general daily meeting, with sectoral meetings to discuss and share information on specific areas. The system became relatively complex - with the additional security briefings, district-level meetings that reported back to Dili and press briefings – but maintained its overall shape and clarity.

It was widely noted that the HC would chair the general meetings whenever possible, and that this hands-on approach by the senior UN coordinator added credibility and a strong sense of direction and leadership to the coordination effort. According to one experienced emergency aid operative, “it was the first operation I’d ever known where it was clear who was in charge.”

3g) Task Allocation

Whilst still in Darwin, the HC attempted to formalise already emerging groups of agencies and NGOs according to their mandates, capacities and technical expertise. The formal establishment of this arrangement occurred once agencies were in Dili. Whilst amongst the UN agencies technical competency decided their roles to some extent, there were areas that required adjudication. Most prominent were the areas of

⁵ CAP Review Phase I, p. 70

joint logistics and shelter – sectors for which no UN agency then had a sole mandate. In terms of capacity and competence it made sense for WFP to take responsibility for joint logistics.⁶ WFP required 6 weeks to achieve full operational capacity. UNHCR accepted the lead responsibility for the large and ultimately problematic shelter sector, although staff interviewed indicated that, with hindsight, the agency should have been more cautious in accepting this role. Overall, however, task division amongst the major agencies and INGOs was swift, appropriate, without major dispute and was in the interest of effective planning and delivery.

3h) Sectoral Coordination Mechanism

Seven sectoral Working Groups with coordinating focal points were agreed, as well as five Working Groups addressing cross-cutting issues such as coordination, governance and logistics.⁷ These groups included seven UN agencies and eleven NGOs in Darwin, though this expanded once in Dili. The groups were responsible for their own coordination, and the success of the Working Groups and the sectoral programmes themselves were variable. The HC and OCHA participated little in these discussions except when progress seemed to be problematic: at some of the later shelter meetings, for example. The focal points would formally represent their groups for the purposes of information sharing at the general daily coordination meeting, as well as providing sectoral inputs to cross-sectoral planning initiatives such as the Preliminary Assessment and the CAP.

Whilst this complex but highly inclusive coordination structure demanded focus and energy on the part of the HC, OCHA and participants, most actors questioned as part of this study or the CAP Review expressed satisfaction. It was seen to be consultative, mostly representative of differing perspectives, and effective as a system through which macro-planning could be decided and articulated. However on occasion some felt that the activities and interests of NGOs under the sectoral lead agency were under-represented at general meetings or in OCHA situation reports, which acted as minutes of these meetings.

3i) The CAP

Using the mechanisms outlined above, the HC and OCHA led an intensive planning exercise, from the period in Darwin before re-entry of the aid community into East Timor, to the final CAP document released in late October. Planning initially found its form in a Preliminary Assessment document, which was released on the 27th September. This acted both as a (successful) preliminary appeal and as a CHAP, and provided the basis for many of the funding decisions on the part of the donors – although some may have formally waited for the CAP to be released. Given the speed of its release, the prevailing field conditions, the degree of involvement by the main humanitarian actors, and its usefulness as an initial resource generator, the Preliminary Assessment would appear to have been an effective document.

Given the CAP's relatively late appearance and timing (over a month after operations in Dili began, and only a few weeks before a World Bank-led assessment report), the

⁶ Review of WFP Assistance During the Emergency Operation in East Timor (WFP Dili) p. 12

⁷ Food: WFP, Shelter: UNHCR, Health: WHO & UNICEF, Wat/San: OXFAM, UNICEF, UNHCR, Agriculture: CARE/FAO, Education: UNICEF, Infrastructure (UNDP). Cross-cutting Working Groups included: Protection (West Timor): UNHCR, Central Logistics: WFP, Coordination: OCHA, Governance (UNDP), Rehabilitation: UNDP and IOM; Logistics: WFP.

Preliminary Assessment was the touchstone collective planning document for the early phase of the operation.

The process and the performance against CAP's stated objectives have been fully reviewed in a three phase CAP Review, conducted in May 2000.⁸ It drew various conclusions, with which the present team mainly concurs. These are summarised in Appendix 2. But there are two broad issues that were reinforced during the present study:

CAP: Planning Document or Fundraiser?

A familiar dilemma.⁹ According to the CAP Review, "CAP is first and foremost a planning tool. Failure to adequately explain this may be the single most important underlying cause of NGO discontentment with the UN systems and OCHA in particular".¹⁰ In the Timor case, it was useful for the fundraisers and donors in the short term. But a confusion in the minds of partners in the process as to what extent CAP was a fundraising document or an expression of strategic intent brought heightened expectations and over-reliance. After a positive consultation process to produce the CAP, many NGOs felt deeply alienated from it once the document had been produced. NGOs hoping to get funding from the UN sectoral focal agencies through the CAP process had to wait to receive funds that had already been disbursed to the UN up to six months before. And some received no funds at all, as funding priorities were changed and project proposals were scrapped or re-parcelled by the disbursing agency with no consultation with the NGOs.¹¹

OCHA, having made a point of visibly taking the coordination leadership role in the CAP process, was then blamed for these delays, and whilst technically this is unfair, there is a responsibility lying with OCHA to address these problems if it simultaneously claims to locate itself at the centre of the process. In the context of East Timor, this should have involved: ensuring that NGOs and agencies were aware of the constraints of CAP as a fundraising tool during its creation;¹² attempting to reconcile the agencies various proposal, disbursement and reporting criteria; and utilising the CERF in order to help NGOs waiting for CAP proceeds to begin implementation.

⁸ This Review examines the CAP from three perspectives: agencies and NGOs who participated in the operation, the local community, and a team of external consultants. This exercise would appear to be a unique and an invaluable document in the history of the CAP. However, it was never consolidated into a coherent set of lessons or messages for wider dissemination and remains relatively under-utilised.

⁹ Even in 1998, at an OCHA-organised seminar in Stockholm aimed at learning lessons in humanitarian coordination, it was concluded that "Increased coherence between programming and resource mobilisation mechanisms, particularly those of the CAP...was still needed" (in 'Humanitarian Coordination – Lessons Learned')

¹⁰ CAP Review Phase I p.73

¹¹ As one example, the Evaluation of WHO's operation notes "problems regarding WHO's funding and contracting process", and recommends an improvement in "conceptual, administrative and management factors that resulted in delays to...WHO's transfer of funds"

¹² In the Self-Assessment Phase of the CAP Review, UN agency feedback recommended that "Understanding of what the CAP is and what agency responsibilities to implementing partners are should be explicitly laid out" (p. 76)

CAP as a Joint Management Tool

By the time it has become a public document, the CAP document was already too cumbersome and detached from the evolving operational context.¹³ If an OCHA-led joint planning process is to integrate with the ensuing operation (and provide accountability to donors) it must be monitored and adjusted. A continual dialogue must take place between the formal objectives, assumptions and programming targets, and the fluctuating needs, resources and conditions in the field. Baseline information, vulnerability analysis, the identification of critical indicators: such simple emergency management technologies would need to be applied and monitored in order to adjust the overall direction of the operation, and provide accountability regarding performance against objectives.¹⁴ Funds may need to be reallocated or prioritised in order to meet its primary objectives. For sudden onset, time-limited emergencies, a more flexible CHAP format – which in effect was the Preliminary Assessment in this case) would seem to be more appropriate than a CAP.

The obvious extension of OCHA assuming coordinating leadership for the CAP is for it to then take responsibility for the coordination of its ongoing utilisation. It is not clear whether OCHA either wants this role, or cannot develop the capacity or competencies required, or fears it will meet opposition from other agencies who might interpret this as assuming a ‘lead role’ in overall UN operational management and command.

The obvious course of action is for OCHA to replicate the approach it used when helping to generate the Timor CAP document: create joint teams of the senior agencies and NGOs which would jointly monitor and report on the progress of the overall operation according to the plan. Modifications to the operation and more responsive programming would then be possible in a coherent fashion. If no one takes the position of overseeing the *consolidated* roll-out of the *Consolidated* Appeal Process, its basic weaknesses will remain.

CAP and the Gap

A third issue is that of the most appropriate extent to which CAP should address itself to transitional planning. This is examined in Chapter 4 below.

3j) The UNHOC

An important part of OCHA’s coordination services involved the provision a basic physical infrastructure in which coordination could take place. A few days after arrival in Dili, OCHA located one of the few usable buildings and began to adapt it as a base for the then small UN and NGO community, and established itself as the operator and administrator of that centre, or the UN Humanitarian Operations Centre (UNHOC). A set up that was originally intended for just 30 humanitarians grew in a few weeks to a tent camp housing 150 people. In the first few weeks meals were provided. As noted, the early arrival of two support modules from DFID and SRSA were crucial in the creation of this basic facility, without which OCHA and all other humanitarian actors would have struggled just to cater for their own basic needs while aiming at quickly starting up service programmes.

¹³ The CAR Review found that “few of the agencies and none of the NGOs used the CAP as a programme planning tool.”

¹⁴ All of these were absent in any meaningful degree until at least early 2000 in East Timor.

The UNHOC served as a coordination hub in three ways. Firstly, instead of a dispersal of the relationships and contacts formed in Darwin, the ‘OCHA Camp’, and subsequently the ‘OCHA House’ kept people together in the crucial first eight weeks. Secondly, this compound with its basic administrative facilities, focal points for information and enquiries, and service-oriented, helpful staff, was immensely appreciated. It was a place where all shared the same facilities and conditions. Coordination meetings, messages and ad hoc discussions were therefore easy to arrange, and information flow between the actors was intense. Shared resources such as contact lists, ID badges, pigeon holes, lists of meetings, a meeting room, photocopier, security, flight and convoy notice boards were all provided and welcomed. Thirdly, OCHA’s central role in the running of the UNHOC provided a visible example of the value of coordination in the eyes of field operatives.

The compound is an excellent service to provide. But to function fully it has to be developed further. The modules used were only created to service 30 people, 9 of who were the managers of the modules. Through flexibility and will, the extensions were made that allowed the compound to service hundreds of people. Excellent use can be made of administrative staff and module compound managers to create a more replicable module. An analysis has to be made regarding what staff should come with the module and what staff should be hired on site or close to the area of operations.

3k) Travel and Telecommunications

OCHA played an important role in the initial coordination of humanitarian passenger lists for the UN and INTERFET flights, in effect controlling which agencies and NGOs came to Dili and when. Whilst congestion and conflicting priorities for limited seats did cause frustration, no major disputes arose, and OCHA’s role here was useful in determining the inflow of humanitarian workers in relation to the capacities of the camp and other resources. OCHA also sought to provide what the Preliminary Assessment called a “communications architecture”. This involved a SRSA radio room with basic voice telecommunication equipment. Whilst useful for a brief period, this was soon seen to be too basic, and WFP and UNHCR jointly provided more updated communications facilities that covered the increasing areas of access. SRSA also managed the joint vehicle pool of 20 vehicles on loan from UNAMET.

3l) District Level Coordination

OCHA considered that in order to provide consistency it ought to be present at the district level to replicate some of its Dili service mechanisms. A network of coordinator functions, or Humanitarian Affairs Officers (HAOs), was established gradually towards the end of the year 1999 and the early 2000. The job was combined with the UNATAET district officer functions. In the context of Timor they were well-equipped: each had a vehicle, laptop, satellite phone and digital camera. Their effectiveness varied – partly due to the varying levels of their experience, their personal relationships with their counterpart agency and NGO operatives, and partly due to the extent and nature of the coordination workload in their district.

3m) Information-Sharing, Collation and Reporting

This was a focal activity for OCHA, and took various forms. As mentioned above, operational information, including that regarding security, was disseminated to the humanitarian community through daily and ad hoc meetings, and via communal systems such as message boards. Field level information was sent originally by pouch

(which could be delayed by up to two days) and later by satellite e-mail. Sectoral focal agencies would act as rapporteurs for their groups. The daily coordination meeting minutes would take the form of a situation report, which was then disseminated via Geneva. Given the practical difficulties involved, the standard and daily frequency of these reports was impressive.

Many NGOs – and indeed sister UN agencies - found great additional value in OCHA’s collation of information, as they could use this as the basis of their own situation reports to their HQs or donors. As one interviewee said: “Being able to cut and paste with confidence saved me hours and probably days”.

3n) Humanitarian Database:

OCHA took the initiative to establish a database (the East Timor Information and Mapping Unit), which aimed at providing structured data to agencies and others seeking information about East Timor, the results of sectoral and geographic needs assessments and surveys, and the activities and locations of the increasing numbers of humanitarian actors. This potentially gave OCHA a pivotal role in information collation and processing which other agencies and towards which NGOs were happy to contribute. However, the database creation proved to be too slow a process, not being ready until early 2000 – too late to be of much value in the emergency phase. OCHA would need to develop ways to establish such a service more rapidly: requiring a pre-prepared software package, start-up and operating procedures, and a pre-agreed approach to the early gathering of the required information from other agencies and INGOs.

3o) The NGO Information Centre

This resource was a concrete and widely used example of OCHA’s coordination service to the overall operation. It was established in October. Its activities included the creation of a register of NGOs, briefing information regarding the East Timor context, known activities, capacities and plans of the various agencies and NGOs, and general advice, troubleshooting and orientation.

It increasingly became the focus for the creation of a dialogue between the international aid community and the local East Timorese NGOs. It developed bilateral funding channels, a start-up grant for the East Timor NGO Forum, and identified funding for staff and running costs, workshops, seminars, translation services and English language training. East Timor NGO Forum members increasingly used the Centre’s equipment and office space. It facilitated, on the 6th December, a seminal workshop to debate the role of East Timorese NGOs in relation to UNTAET, INGOs, CNRT and other groups.

For INGOs, the Centre provided information such as the results of needs assessments, donor activities and interests and some logistical information. It increasingly became involved in policy and best practice issues, such as the dissemination of SPHERE, approaches to NGO capacity-building, the establishment of a standard salary scale for local employees of INGOs, guidelines for working conditions of local staff, drafting NGO Regulations with UNTAET’s Legal Affairs team, and developing a legal framework for a tax policy regarding NGOs.

Above all, the Centre was important as the key forum where INGOs could connect with East Timorese NGOs, and where local NGOs could begin to learn how to talk to the complicated UN system, especially UNTAET (see Chapter 5 for a fuller examination of the issues surrounding local engagement with the international humanitarian response). It was eventually handed over to the East Timor NGO Forum in mid-2000.

Recommendations

- R3.1 OCHA should ensure that its role and functions are known to key potential stakeholders globally (including governments and military), prior to emergency events. A strategy for dissemination to ensure prioritisation and coverage in high-risk areas should be drafted and implemented.
- R3.2 OCHA should seek to gather senior representatives of relevant UN agencies in the first 24 hours of a major emergency to agree basic capacities, levels of engagement, operational focus and intentions.
- R3.3 OCHA should coordinate a joint operations management team of the senior representatives of the main agencies and NGOs to oversee the progress and adjustments to the CHAP or CAP. Simple tools to enable this should be used. Donor reporting and accountability should flow from this process.
- R3.4 OCHA should ensure that, in a CHAP/CAP process involving NGOs, the limitations and constraints of the system (particularly those of fundraising and disbursement) are explained, and that a common position of CAP's function is agreed and that a transparent information flow is upheld.
- R3.5 In the case of disbursement of funds to NGOs through UN agencies, OCHA should attempt to facilitate and rationalise agency proposal, disbursement and reporting procedures in favour of operational effectiveness.
- R3.6 OCHA should define its portfolio of minimum field services that may be utilised and adapted in support of the wider humanitarian effort.
- R3.7 OCHA seems to be weak in its focus on disseminating key processes to other humanitarian actors locally, both local and international, as well as to local populations. This includes information about the basic intentions of the humanitarian community, major changes in the operation, and arrangements regarding post-emergency phase handover to national bodies or to UN administrations.
- R3.8 An NGO Information Centre should be developed as an option for standard deployment, focusing on providing a service base and clear dialogue point with INGOs and NGOs particularly on its role as promoter of best practice, advocacy positioning, and as the operational information point for NGOs in an emergency context.

- R3.9 Standard operational start-up kits and procedures should be prepared, including administrative and office kits, field financial tools for accounting and financial information.
- R3.10 The humanitarian database should be developed quickly, with an aim to create simple, standardised user-friendly software and information-gathering pro forma.
- R3.11 OCHA should avoid to implement telecommunications, logistics or other such technical services in future operations, but should have pre-operational agreements with other UN agencies to ensure the predictable and timely provision of such services. And a clear agreement on what the options are if the responsible UN agency is unable to perform its role.

4. The Transition Phase

While OCHA's performance during the emergency phase may be characterised as successful, the transition period – in which some of its key functions were integrated with the new UN civil administration UNTAET – gave a more mixed impression.

4a) The Planned Timeframe for OCHA Action

The first preliminary assessment document mentions a planning horizon for action of three months. The CAP, when it was launched, had changed the vision to nine months and explained its purpose: "The role of the humanitarian agencies in East Timor is to provide basic services to people while a new civil administration is established... Humanitarian activities are expected to come under the umbrella of UNTAET once appropriate coordination structures are created, in the next few months. In the interim, humanitarian agencies continue to operate under the OCHA coordination framework."

This was a realistic adjustment to the speed at which events were to develop over the first year of the UNTAET build-up. OCHA had not been given any clear indication of the timeframe it ought to consider as appropriate for its own planned phase-out. Its efforts to transfer its coordination role into the Humanitarian pillar of UNTAET were also complicated by systemic issues such as the very short period for UNTAET's planning and preparation, and its difficulties in finding staff to carry out even the most basic functions, as well as some of the senior leadership posts. In addition, whilst the UN had a very recent interim administration in Kosovo to look to as a precursor, there was hardly sufficient time to digest and apply the lessons from that operation to the somewhat different context of East Timor.

4b) No Overall Plan

OCHA in New York became involved in the concrete advance planning for UNTAET as the emergency aid phase started. It was party to the information flow between DPA (which had been in charge of UNAMET) and DPKO. The humanitarian sector was crucial for the generation of goodwill towards the UN in East Timor, both in terms of staffing and in terms of financial resources producing clear inputs for the basic welfare for the East Timorese, whilst the results of much of UNTAET's work would inevitably take longer to be visible and concrete.

Whilst OCHA New York requested the field office in Dili to propose a plan for a functioning structure for the next phase, this request was not accompanied by any guidance on the parameters to apply, or advice based on existing policy, or theoretical best practice. The field office leadership established a basic handover blueprint that seemed reasonable from the Dili perspective, without having any partners or any over-arching strategy to refer to. In New York, the negotiation of the proposed staffing plan with DPKO was related to budgetary consequences rather than to a strategic view of how the transition period should be resourced to achieve concrete objectives. There was surely an intention to avoid building a humanitarian empire but instead rapidly progress towards rehabilitation and recovery programming.

The period between early September and the arrival of the new SRSG and UNTAET represents a loss of momentum for the UN political leadership in East Timor. The extended mandate for UNAMET from September to November 30 bridged the UN's

political presence until UNTAET was approved and deployed. But this was mostly symbolic, and UN HQ did not provide any guidance as to how it should act, nor any resources. It would certainly have been beneficial for all organisations involved if some progress on planning and consultations in country could have been made during the two months until UNTAET arrived.

The planning for UNTAET started very late. It had weak linkages to East Timor and little time to use the knowledge and experience that then already existed. It also suffered from a lack of deployable senior staff that could turn an essentially general plan into a strategic tool to assist all players.

Perhaps most importantly of all, the question of including, consulting with and engaging the East Timorese people both in the UN humanitarian organisations' work and in the UNTAET structure was still unresolved. And it would take some time to improve in this area and engage the owners of East Timor's future.

The humanitarians were involved in two planning processes. Firstly with OCHA for the CAP and then with the World Bank Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) from late October. Where CAP was weak, and where the new structures in East Timor were vague, was on the need for a focal point to ensure a strategic and planned phasing from humanitarian assistance to rehabilitation and development. During the extension of UNAMET there was no clear leadership. The World Bank had assumed a role in coordinating funding for the first rehabilitation phase but that process was still a largely technical planning exercise at that time. UNDP would normally assume such a role, but it was taking an observer position in Dili during this period, due to a lack of guidance from New York on the expectations of the relationship between UNAMET SRSR and the UNDP.

One positive point of the process was the cooperation between OCHA and the World Bank in Dili in the field of budgeting. The CAP and the JAM produced overlapping projects to a value of 57 million USD (out of the CAP's 199 million USD total). However, at the World Bank meeting in Tokyo on December 17, 1999, OCHA and the World Bank in Dili presented to the donors a concise and well-explained overview and clarification of how the budgeting overlaps would be identified and managed.¹⁵

4c) UNTAET: from Humanitarian Aid to Rehabilitation Planning

The newly designed Humanitarian Assistance & Emergency Rehabilitation Pillar (HAER) had a leadership with little or no humanitarian experience. The OCHA team worked hard on the handover plan. UNTAET lacked the required competency to incorporate the success and the good relations that OCHA had created during the emergency phase. Instead the situation was remembered by interviewees for its confusion over a period of several months, with a clear explanation of the transition of coordination roles being hampered by contradictory messages and a lack of communication and information strategies.

This did not greatly affect the humanitarian aid funded programmes, since they were well stabilized by then. But it did matter for the general information flow, for the

¹⁵ Nevertheless, problems did in any event occur in 2000 with disbursement process and differing criteria for support to NGO operating costs between the World Bank and the humanitarian funding.

continued need for regular security briefings, and the sense of unity that had been created within the humanitarian community. It also mattered greatly regarding wider perceptions of UNTAET which was to struggle for a long time to fill crucial senior functions. Whilst the humanitarian coordination mechanism was absorbed into the new structure at an early stage, general information and coordination meetings have still not been fully established almost two years later.¹⁶

Some agencies say today that it would certainly have been better if OCHA had stayed longer. OCHA would have had a natural lead function to play – especially when mid-year frustration over the World Bank’s very slow disbursement processes started and when the implications of the differing budgeting practices between World Bank and the humanitarians became evident. Earlier in 2000, there had been a short-lived proposal for an extended CAP. In hindsight the East Timor operation could have benefited from a longer transition period and thus would have been better positioned to bridge the “gap” in funding the early rehabilitation and recovery needs. CAP could be a most useful tool for this provided it is agreed and used with caution. The “gap” is generally caused by an artificial separation of “needs” into differing timeframes - and these are given very different processing in donor countries.

4d) Operating Cultures.

In the early phase of UNTAET work there was a clear overlap between the humanitarian programmes and the public sector programmes planned and initiated by UNTAET. The two communities represented very different operating cultures and there was little to no experience, or pressure, to force a mutual adjustment. UNTAET was short on senior and experienced staff in the early phase who could have seen the need to facilitate and bridge the gap between both cultures. Where this did happen (such as in the health sector), success required hard discussions and the reconciliation of varying mindsets and working practices.

In addition, the initial obscurity regarding UNTAET budgets and financing channels added to a confusion within the transition arrangements. This may partially have been a result of the very short planning and preparation process that was given to this operation, but was also a result of the need for a recognition of the need for an open information culture, an information-sharing mechanism and a joint approach to such issues.

4e) The Administrative Handover

An agreement was concluded in New York between OCHA and DPKO which defined the administrative handover from OCHA to DPKO as of 1 January 2000 and which allowed for reimbursement by DPKO to OCHA for staff and operating costs for a three months period, until DPKO had their budgets and staffing in order. OCHA entered into this agreement without foreseeing the consequences. Being paid and managed by OCHA while formally representing another body which has a different purpose for its work, created gaps in understanding within the staff. Staff contract extensions and transfers and financial follow-up were made very difficult – both for the staff concerned and for OCHA. The administrative support by OCHA during this period was weak and the subsequent handover to a new mission set up with equally

¹⁶ Although there is a proposal that UNDP should now assume this role.

overstretched administrative support did not improve the situation. The pending financial reports and assets verification have been made available to OCHA in October 2001 and as a result the records of about 1 mio USD can finally be closed and fully accounted for in late 2001.

Recommendations

- R4.1 A joint exercise to learn more about how the transitional periods should be handled would be important for future operations, to ensure that service delivery is protected, experienced staff retained and recruited, and the gaps in operating cultures are turned into a demonstration of the obvious linkages. However, OCHA should facilitate the collation of experiences by UN agencies and NGOs from previous operations, and propose this to DPKO as an open agenda on which to start working together on a practical guide for how transitions can be less costly and ensure better continuity of knowledge and resources.
- R4.2 OCHA should encourage and motivate the creation of a global handover strategy in any given context, which attempts to bridge the differences in approach, priorities and cultures of humanitarian and civil administration bodies and which includes a communications strategy.
- R4.3 Within OCHA there needs to be better support to field operatives from managers and policy departments on the design and management of the handover process.
- R4.4 The financial and administrative handover arrangements in East Timor were not sufficiently clarified. This needs better management in the event of another such operation.

5. Relationship Building and Maintenance

5a) OCHA's Successes

OCHA's success as a coordinating organisation largely depends on the relationships it develops with the stakeholders of the operation. In the Timor operation the ability to develop and maintain relationships was one of the key factors under-pinning OCHA's overall success. Practically all interviewees commented on the excellent relationships that were developed within the group of humanitarians, and how these reinforced the willingness to collaborate closely and effectively. A central role in creating this atmosphere was played by the HC and his small but well-selected team. At the root of this success appears to be a vision of coordination implemented in the Timor operation which includes the following elements:

- A service-driven approach
- Commitment to a simple objective: the harmonisation of planning and action in order to achieve an agreed goal in an effective and efficient way.
- 'Proactive coordination': the coordinating agent is not operational in the sense of providing assistance directly to beneficiaries, but is extremely active in the field in providing resources and competencies to operational actors.

As relations among partners and with OCHA were generally excellent and appreciated, this section will discuss only those relations that were either complex and impacted the results or the image of the organisations, or otherwise require special comment.

5b) UNAMET

At the time of the appointment and the deployment of the HC and the humanitarian operation, UNAMET was the representative of the UN in East Timor. But it was a weakened presence in many ways. Its mandate had been completed and lot of staff departed. Those that remained and returned were not clear on the role they should play in the interim. What UNAMET could offer the humanitarian operation was vehicles and helicopter transport. But it is clear that the relationship between the newcomers and the UNAMET staff was rather distant - sometimes unnecessarily so. The SRSG and the HC kept each other informed and had formal daily meetings. However both also travelled extensively during the period and working relations remained formal. There was an absence of a shared objective as UNAMET was not really expected by New York to do anything but keep the chair warm. As already commented on in Chapter 4, there was possibly an opportunity lost regarding handover planning. The fact that the HC reported to HQ and not to the SRSG certainly influenced this sense of separate agendas but that would not have impeded a guidance to the SRSG and the HC on issues they could handle in regard to the future agenda.

5c) West Timor and OCHA/UNHCR Relations.

The humanitarian crisis that developed in West Timor was different in nature and setting from the crisis in East Timor. Just over 250,000 refugees had fled to West

Timor and there was lack of clarity as to what extent this was enforced or voluntary. Compared to the attention paid to East Timor, there were few international humanitarian agencies present. The image of squalid camp conditions and a population being largely under the control of the militia was soon well known. UNHCR's objective of offering these people quick repatriation as conditions improved in East Timor was largely viewed with hostility among leaders and authorities in West Timor. UNHCR, IOM and other agencies that engaged in repatriation worked in a threatening environment, with frequent displays of violence against them. Relations with the official authorities were superficially functional but little support was given to safeguard the international workers and the refugees.

The HC's Terms of Reference included coordination responsibilities in both East and West Timor. It was logical and justified to link the crisis in East Timor and West Timor in one overall coordination mandate. In reality the obstacles to managing both whilst making the strategic linkages were significant. It can be argued that there was initially a lack of understanding among many of the new actors in Dili of the evolving situation in West Timor. Jakarta-based agencies were largely responsible for overseeing their West Timor programmes, whilst the link to the East Timor operations by the same agencies became increasingly difficult to uphold as activities, funding, politics and profile led to distinct 'country' offices in Dili that reported direct to headquarters. These factors made linkages more tenuous and required a larger, more complex coordinating mechanism than the one the HC and OCHA had available, or wished to create.

Given UNHCR's tight focus on the difficult mission in West Timor, and given that other agencies and NGOs present were closely associated with the refugee issue, UNHCR saw it as a situation in which a 'lead agency'-type model should apply. In addition, UNHCR felt the need to have a wider role, in order not to be identified politically within West Timor solely as the "repatriation agency". It was therefore reluctant to accept OCHA's coordination role, arguing overall that it brought little added value to the overall operation in West Timor.

The HC may well have seen the stretched resources as a limitation of OCHA and in recognition of this, and no doubt with a mind to avoid any inter-agency friction at this crucial time, the HC agreed that a UNHCR staff person become his representative in Kupang – a pragmatic move that attempted to reconcile UNHCR's operational centrality, OCHA's focus on East Timor, the need for a formal link to the OCHA-led coordination structure in Dili, and organisational politics.

Whilst OCHA collated information and facilitated coordination meetings, it was not engaged in the leadership and coordination of the programmes in West Timor – and UNHCR, maintained the leadership of these tasks. Overall coordination under this arrangement is reported to have worked satisfactorily in the areas of UNHCR expertise though NGOs felt the information flow from UNHCR could have been improved.

There are others who valued OCHA's presence – and several time-honoured arguments for a dedicated coordination function were used to argue the case, particularly that OCHA could bring a more objective perspective on the overall shape of the operation due to its distance from programme implementation. Although

UNHCR chaired contingency planning meetings to prepare for a mass return to East Timor, certain actors such as Oxfam felt omitted from the thinking process – and this was held as an example where a stronger third party might have been useful. The pressures of responding to the HC’s needs for CAP input, at a time when UNHCR was fully absorbed with the first of the repatriation events, was also used as an argument for the need for a non-‘operational’ body to organise the time-consuming tasks of formalised planning, if nothing else. However, a lack of engagement in programming was the very reason UNHCR felt OCHA should not take a coordinating role in West Timor.

Overall, the compromise avoided a public argument, but did not really satisfy anyone, and made it difficult for OCHA to provide support and resources. A visiting donor in October 1999 describes the *overall* coordination arrangements as very poor and the situation lacking in leadership. Relationships on the ground, however, depended ultimately upon personalities and the levels of experience individuals brought with them. For example, when OCHA suggested closing down its presence in January 2000, the then-head of UNHCR’s mission in Kupang argued for its retention, on the grounds that it did relieve some of the burden of coordination from an over-worked UNHCR team, as well as forming a useful information-based channel with the main coordination point in Dili.

The overall impression of OCHA’s performance is one of less authority and self-belief than in East Timor. It was a successful negotiation in a pressurised environment around a possible conflict of organisational (UNHCR / OCHA) interests and roles, mandates and field realities. The result was some negative effects on overall coordination in West Timor and poses a question as to whether OCHA can stretch its capacity to respond at the same level in multiple places and how OCHA can manage its stakeholders interest in the face of strongly differing views in the midst of a complex emergency.

5d) INGOs

The INGOs were crucial to the ability of the international humanitarian operation to carry out activities of providing relief. The INGOs were in the early phase better equipped than the UN agencies with transport and supplies and had more flexible systems for ensuring quick action. The HC was well aware of this and adopted an appropriately inclusive approach which provides an interesting model for the future. It would seem crucial that OCHA can ensure basic services and cooperate with the smaller UN agencies and the INGOs, while harnessing the resources of the large operational UN agencies in the service of the overall operation. The INGOs in East Timor were satisfied with the role, attitude and personal leadership of the HC/OCHA team, although most were dissatisfied by aspects of the CAP process.

5e) Local Participation

One recurring issue within both the documentation and amongst interviewees was the limited, and many people would say, lack of participation of East Timorese people in the early overall humanitarian aid response – either as individuals, or within NGOs, communities, churches, the CNRT and other groupings.

Local partnership was an important part of the programming of many agencies before the crisis – particularly that of UNICEF, Oxfam, CARE and others. This is reflected in the SRSG’s internal report of the 9th August which not only recognises their importance in future delivery mechanisms¹⁷ but also links them directly to future coordination arrangements.¹⁸ However, the events surrounding the popular consultation served to seriously disrupt the entire fabric of society in East Timor, including the local structures that might have participated in the humanitarian response. The then-Executive Director of the indigenous group Timor Aid found that in the first few weeks, even the INGOs with the deepest histories of partnerships with East Timorese groups had difficulty in re-establishing contact: in late September Oxfam reported that all its partners “remain in hiding”.¹⁹ In addition, many of the popular leaders of the East Timorese had not yet returned. There were also considerable problems regarding translation to and from English – the majority of international staff did not speak either Portuguese, Bahasa or Tetun.

Despite the significant practical obstacles in engaging local capacities at an early stage, there remain persistent doubts (and overt criticisms from East Timorese leaders) as to the extent and speed with which the international humanitarian community re-engaged with local structures.²⁰

The degree to which consultation was sought on a formal level seems to have been conservative and guarded, particularly regarding cooperation with the two most influential organisations in East Timor – the CNRT and the Church. There seems to have been a lack of awareness that the CNRT was not only a political body, but also a genuinely broad-based and grassroots coalition with additional non-political concerns and the only secular outreach in the territory. It was not until late October that it was used for formal beneficiary identification and information. The Catholic Church’s structure in the territory would seem to have been largely under-utilised as a source of information except through their natural partner CARITAS.

Aside from the development of the NGO Information Centre, there is little to suggest that specific strategies or mechanisms were considered by OCHA to ensure this consultation process either at a general or district level. As one interviewee commented: “It was a big enough task in that specific situation to mobilise and coordinate the international assistance – all our attention was on this.”

Secondly, there is no evidence of a communications strategy to inform the population as to the objectives and actions of the international aid community (as expressed in

¹⁷ : “Local NGOs and church groups have been delivering the vast majority of humanitarian assistance to date...they have built up an impressive body of local knowledge and means of operation. It is important that with the inevitable flow of relatively large amounts of outside assistance, the significant resources of this local knowledge are not ignored.”: SRSG Internal Report, August 9th 1999.

¹⁸ “In order to be efficient and sensitive to local needs, any coordinative structure should therefore include local humanitarian organisations.” Ibid.

¹⁹ Oxfam International Timor Advocacy Strategy, (September 1999) , p.3

²⁰ As evidenced in all three phases of the CAP Review. Also of several individual agencies. For example: “There was virtually no participation by East Timorese in the planning and monitoring of EMOP 06177.0” WFP (2001), p. 13. Even as late as March 2000, an internal document by the Chief of Field Operations HAER notes that “Most agencies have devoted little or no resources to assisting local groups”, and that “least progress has been made” in capacity-building.

the CAP)²¹, or to establish mechanisms for regular dissemination and information flow both ways. Whilst radio, telephone, TV and other means of mass dissemination were non-existent, more innovative approaches used in other operations were not explored, such as verbal dissemination by field assessment missions, or through local spokespeople.

Thirdly, the representation of East Timorese at the OCHA-led coordination meetings in Dili was worryingly low for several weeks: one source suggests that there was only one East Timorese person present for the first month (an employee of UNICEF). It has been argued both that there were simply not the representatives available, but also that the agencies did too little to encourage their participation. With the lack of a strategic approach to participation and communications, both statements are likely to be true.

It is clear that the international humanitarian action lacked a strategy for a positive effort to ensure contacts with local expertise and local resources. There were indeed many real obstacles that made this difficult but not impossible. The effort would have been noted.

5f) **Civil– Military Relations**

Given the importance of INTERFET to the humanitarian operation in East Timor, particularly with regard to access and security but also for logistics and transport of people and supplies, OCHA's ability to establish effective civilian-military liaison systems was crucial. There were four main characteristics of the CIMIC relationship in East Timor.

Interpretations of the Mandate

The INTERFET Commander saw his instructions as being “to restore peace and security...to protect and support UNAMET...and, within force capabilities, to facilitate humanitarian assistance operations” in that order.²² The HC's saw these as being interdependent: ie that a successful humanitarian operation would be integral to achieving the peace and security.

Inexperience of civilian-military relationships within the Australian military

The INTERFET Commander is frank about the fact that neither he nor his principle Australian officers had any major experience with the UN or with civilian-military liaison in a peace-keeping environment, and that it was one of the steepest learning curves of the military operation.

A very high level of dependence and expectation on INTERFET

This was particularly felt by the humanitarian community to provide the use of military resources for logistics, access and security. The early contacts were not effective in achieving a mutual understanding of how this dependence could be supported, as there had been little in terms of concrete assessments, and they had little to offer as a basis for very concrete operational planning.

²¹ Though there were plans for the establishment of a radio station in the CAP. This was hardly a strategy, and in any event did not take place in 1999.

²² UN Security Council Resolution 1264 (1999, para. 3)

Widely differing interpretations as to the security threat

The strong ‘force protection’ approach by the Australian military was perceived to lead to delays in the delivery of humanitarian assistance; and the speed of INTERFET’s (and therefore the agencies’) expansion out of Dili.

These represented significant threats to a satisfactory working relationship. There were also various specific incidents in which INTERFET became involved in the delivery of humanitarian assistance when agencies and NGOs were able to perform this function. Other issues include the utilisation of port warehouses as barrack blocks instead of vacating them for the storage of aid supplies, and the prioritisation of journalists of over humanitarian staff on the first flights into Dili.

On the other hand, it could be reasonably argued that the humanitarians over-estimated INTERFET’s capacity and resources (and even the extent of acute humanitarian need), but under-estimated the security threat - either for reasons of their own or through externally-generated pressures to act. The humanitarians formed a large and confusing group of stakeholders, with a huge range of agendas and demands but no formalised command structure. They also initiated certain planning exercises (such as the humanitarian roll-out plan for district-level coordination centres which had Suai as the third highest priority) without an awareness of military plans (which indicated Suai would probably be the last town declared safe). Their ability to forward plan, particularly when requesting escorts or logistical services, was poor, though this improved steadily.

These are the ingredients of a fairly dysfunctional CIMIC operation. However, the over-riding conclusion of interviewees and available documentation is that, in the words of one, the East Timor experience was “one of the most successful examples of the military and human working in unison to achieve common overall objectives in a complex emergency.” The eventual success of the CIMIC relationship can be attributed to a number of factors.

- The strength of the HC’s mandate and experience provided the humanitarian operation with an effective and credible interlocutor in the eyes of the INTERFET Commander. In General Cosgrove’s eyes, the HC was the most senior civilian counterpart, who was experienced enough to understand the military’s constraints and who could mediate between military and humanitarian agendas.
- The relationship between the HC, OCHA, the UN CIMIC officers and their INTERFET counterparts, though often strained, was always professional, and protected the rapid learning process regarding civil-military affairs within INTERFET.
- A constructive role was played by the head of the British force and his troops, who were more experienced in civilian-military cooperation than the Australians, but who could be utilised to maintain military-humanitarian relations whilst the main force progressed along its learning curve. This subtle relationship served to prevent serious crises in the CIMIC dialogue, and helped progress towards the overall success of the relationship.

- OCHA and the main implementing agencies gradually created systems with INTERFET that allowed for the adequate coordination of requests for military transport, logistics and other assets.

In conclusion, through strength of personality and seniority authority, the HC established a working relationship with the INTERFET Commander that allowed a respectful but at times difficult debate, whilst the CIMIC team dealt with the various problems with tact, perseverance and professionalism. However:

- There was no awareness of what OCHA or the HC was within INTERFET prior to deployment, and little understanding of the modus operandi and agendas of the UN and NGOs.
- Such was the concentration and effort involved in ensuring coherence between UN and NGO planning, that this was not sufficiently integrated with military planning earlier in the emergency phase.

5g) Donor Relations Management.

The HC, based in Dili, visited Jakarta frequently and mainly used these opportunities for liaison and meeting with donors. This was no doubt a contributing factor to the adequate flow of funds for the Preliminary Assessment and the CAP, as donor governments continued to use their Jakarta missions as main observer posts for the East Timor emergency.

A donor team consisting of the USA, United Kingdom, Japan, Sweden and Thailand visited Dili on September 22-24, 1999. This was an initiative by the core donor group of US, UK and Sweden, and was in line with an overall aim of improving donor coordination through gaining an early shared understanding of an emergency situation. In particular, such field visits aimed to provide crucial shared points of reference for deciding on the key elements and difficulties of an operation. The individual members of the group would be better prepared to present the funding requirements to their respective Governments and agencies, as well as having an opportunity to input into the design of the humanitarian response at an early stage. This model for donor coordination had been previously deployed in Sierra Leone and Afghanistan, amongst others.

The early engagement of key donors did contribute to the rapid funding of the operational needs, whilst enabling certain inputs, such as the linkages between the emergency to the next step of rehabilitation. This modus operandi should be welcomed and encouraged, and in particular by OCHA. OCHA has a role within the UN system which is, according to theory and best practice, important for donors to support. However, unless it can prove its centrality and effectiveness in the field during emergencies such as the Timor case beyond its usual services (CAP, UNDAC etc), its given position as the world's foremost humanitarian coordination body will rightly be questioned.

In conclusion, overall relationship management by the HC and OCHA appears to have been excellent, particularly with the NGOs and donors. For a variety of reasons,

relations with UNHCR and INTERFET encountered serious threats, but were largely overcome at field level through the judicious application of authority, experience and tolerance on all sides. More lasting doubts remain as to the extent to which OCHA (and most other international agencies) could have improved the integration of the local community into the humanitarian operation.

Recommendations

- R5.1 In similar future contexts OCHA should seek to adopt:
- A service-driven approach
 - A proactive role in field coordination
 - An inclusive approach – particularly regarding NGOs and donors
 - Elements of authority that reinforces its coordination role
 - A position that argues against the lead role concept, but which is open to seeking accommodation of an agency with operational predominance in a specific area.
- R5.2 In the context of a cross-border operation, OCHA and the senior UN coordinator (ie the HC) should establish clear strategies for creating coordination linkages, including considerations of capacity and staffing.
- R5.3 If timely and more predictable coordination is to take place with the military, OCHA should ensure prior dissemination and communications with all key military actors globally and on an ongoing basis.
- R5.4 OCHA as well as the military should consider setting up collaborative structures that do not contain an excessive number of layers. It adds credibility if the senior operations manager in the OCHA system is also the person who assumes responsibility for the daily planning and interface with a PKF. That may internally require support but should not be delegated to specialized units.
- R5.5 In the context of weakened local capacities which may become swamped by a heavy international presence, OCHA and the HC should adopt clear positions on the need to promote short-term capacity building measures and mechanisms to encourage participation in the overall effort (the early development of some kind of NGO Information Centre would be one such mechanism).
- R5.6 OCHA should seek to replicate the degree of field-level engagement with donor representations and support units evident in the Timor operation. In particular, through early donor team missions, the full incorporation of donor standby and support arrangements, and an engagement with donors at both strategic and operational levels in the field and at headquarters.

6. Organisational Considerations.

Whilst the East Timor crisis response was largely successful for OCHA, it appears that beneath the surface staff had to work hard to overcome some inherent weaknesses in OCHA's internal systems and procedures in order to deliver timely and quality services on the ground. This operation simultaneously demonstrated what OCHA could do as an effective coordinating body in the field, but also the lack of robust and efficient internal systems that would allow it to repeat success on a regular basis.

6a) Financial and Administrative Issues

It appears that there were several fundamental weaknesses in OCHA's finance and administrative procedures in the Timor operation. These include the lack of a finance officer, the lack of a administrative field procedures manual, an inexperienced volunteer administrator first deployed to East Timor, a lack of basic resources such as petty cash, a lack of field accounting software, and a situation in West Timor and Jakarta whereby both international and local staff were expected to utilise their personal bank accounts to hold OCHA funds for basic running costs.

The deeper problems illustrated by the Timor operation mirror many of the findings of the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services' Audit Report of OCHA in 2001, which points out that "OCHA Geneva's administrative systems did not fully support field operations and did not provide management with tools, reliable records and reports to act expeditiously." These issues have been recognised within OCHA, and attempts are being made to address them.

6b) Personnel

Similar problems existed in the field of human resources, including: no professional human resource departments for field staff in either Geneva or New York, no clear procedures for emergency deployment, no systemised briefing arrangements, limited administrative and policy support to field operatives from headquarters regarding contracts and insurance, and a lack of comparable grading and benefits with field staff of other UN agencies. The deployment to the field of some of OCHA's most senior managers also demonstrates the lack of depth it has in terms of experienced field operatives that can deploy whilst allowing senior management to remain at headquarters. Although ultimately, there is an important strategic choice in this. Use the senior staff to provide leadership where it matters most and ensure that HQ support structures have sufficient management depth to provide continuity while senior leaders are in the field

In order to get around some of the problems related to speedy recruitment, the Director of OCHA Geneva (and HC for the Timor response) created a temporary Staffing Support Unit of three staff members. This unit appears to have lacked a clear mandate, the staff had no approved job descriptions, and its lines of communication and responsibilities regarding the Finance and Administrative Unit were not specified. It was also still in existence several months after its scheduled closure. Whilst perhaps providing OCHA with a means of ensuring rapid recruitment and deployment – and thereby contributing to the success of the operation – the SSU demonstrates the need to circumvent existing systems in order to achieve this.

Again, OCHA has addressed itself to some of these issues: a dedicated professional capacity for human resources is now in place in headquarters, and there are

procedures for emergency recruitment and deployment. Clearly OCHA needs to ensure that it maintains its focus in these areas and completes the actions necessary to ensure a robust and efficient administrative system to support its field services.

6c) Recent Progress

In early 2000 the then-acting ERC initiated a change process in OCHA intended to address these and other issues identified by staff and management. The implementation plan was decided on in the latter part of 2000 and it was to take effect in early 2001. OCHA is also currently developing more field-friendly financial systems, has strengthened the personnel unit with professional human resources staff, and has changed the procedures for emergency recruitment.

6d) Conclusions And Recommendations

- There were various serious weaknesses regarding finance and administrative systems, particularly regarding field support services. Various short cuts and non-regular procedures were followed in an attempt to maintain effectiveness. This shows a correct focus on the humanitarian imperative, but is unsustainable and organisationally risky.
- The urgent need for administrative and financial improvements is widely recognised within OCHA, and is the subject of several initiatives within its ongoing change management process.

R6.1 The determination to develop the understanding of the course of action that could make another “East Timor” response possible does exist within OCHA’s staff and management and should be harnessed through the Change programme. It is therefore imperative that the change process initiative is continued and strengthened further.

R6.2 It was in an attempt to avoid the delays of the inadequate recruitment systems that a Staffing Support Unit was created. This is potentially an interesting idea (with many precedents in other organisations), and should be explored – but with the accompanying administrative dovetailing with existing systems.

7. Summary: Strengths & Weaknesses of OCHA's Performance

7a) Strengths

Organisational Positioning

OCHA was well-positioned to take a strong lead:

- The ERC had ensured more “space” for humanitarian issues at the UN Secretariat as the chairman of the IASC, OCHA had a clearer, sharpened role and its senior management was collectively keen to be proactively and personally involved in a complex emergency operation.
- There was something of a vacuum within the UN system when it came to coordination in 1999: the lead agency model of the Balkans was felt both inside and outside the UN to need a rethink, and the new OCHA was seen to offer a specialised alternative.

Personnel and Mandate

OCHA had the necessary elements of command in its role as coordinator which it used responsibly.

- The AERC of OCHA was appointed as HC for the UN's overall humanitarian response, and was given an unequivocal mandate by the Secretary General.
- OCHA fielded several senior and middle level managers with extensive field experience, and with the personal qualities that enabled effective leadership and coordination through both force of will and good relationship building.

Early Decisions, and an Early Response

OCHA took swift and decisive decisions in the early stages of the response that enabled it to take advantage of the context specific issues and to seize the initiative.

- Calling upon its standby response systems early enough to allow OCHA to be relatively well-resourced and organised in Dili.
- This in turn gave it resources that other agencies badly needed in the start-up phase: and OCHA then used these resources and the credibility they gave it to offer leadership and coherence within the humanitarian community.

An Inclusive but Decisive Approach

- The HC and OCHA recognised the importance of the inclusion of the NGOs – whose capacity was significant.
- The open, un-bureaucratic nature of OCHA's leadership in the field helped it to bridge the UN-NGO divide.
- The HC's mandate and dynamism ensured UN agency participation.
- This combination allowed for smooth and effective task allocation and commitment to coordination within the humanitarian community overall.

Relevant and Necessary Services

OCHA offered a range of services that were vital to others in the start-up phase in Dili, were useful as the operation progressed, and which added value to the quality of the operation. These included:

- The UNHOC
- A shared pool of vehicles in early phase

- Basic radio communications in the early stage
- A complex but effective system of coordination meetings
- The NGO Information Centre
- Security and general briefings
- An experienced CIMIC team.

Maintenance of Good Relationships

- Civilian-military relations required some considerable effort and goodwill from both sides to develop and to stabilise as a professional relation of mutual respect.
- The lead was given at the highest level of the Commander of INTERFET and the Humanitarian Coordinator establishing and pursuing a regular set of meetings for briefings, and problem solving.

Mind the Gap

- OCHA was aware from an early stage of the importance of incorporating transitional thinking into its early planning assumptions.
- The in-country team tried hard to get the handover phase right, and actively sought to empower UNTAET through its inputs into the design of the UNTAET humanitarian pillar and UNTAET's coordination role.
- It helped make clear the overlap in programming (of 57 million USD) between the CAP and the World Bank Trust Fund, and helped manage the budgeting and programming implications.

7b) Weaknesses

OCHA's Depth in Deployable Personnel

- The hands-on approach by OCHA's senior management, plus a lack of organisational depth regarding deployable field operatives, mean that whilst people and attention was focused in the field, OCHA's strength in terms of senior management was depleted in Geneva and New York.
- Moreover, OCHA's success in Timor relied hugely on the qualities of a few key staff, and there was (and is) little recruitment and staff development strategies that would make this unsustainable over-reliance on individuals less intense.

Policy vs Practice; Preparedness

- There appears to have been a general disconnect between the policy advisors and the more operational functions within OCHA.
- Whilst OCHA's monitoring of, and preparedness for, the crisis was reasonably good, this relied heavily on the Desks and operational managers.
- The impact of several other departments responsible for preparedness and advocacy was not evidenced.

CAP: A Consolidated Appeal for an Un-Consolidated System

As a planning process CAP was a success. However:

- The fundamental misunderstandings as to whether it is a planning or fundraising tool led to heightened expectations within NGOs of funding they would receive from it.

- OCHA need to play a role in explaining CAP processes, obtaining consistency in agency approaches to administrative and reporting demands, advocating at higher levels for more rapid disbursements, and pushing for CERF to be used to help NGOs bridge delays in disbursements.

Monitoring and Reporting on CAP

- OCHA's disengagement regarding the monitoring, adjustment and reporting on the original objectives was noticed by participants, who felt a subsequent loss of inclusion, joint planning and transparency.
- This compromised the accountability of CAP's implementation to donors, as well as undermining it as an operational management tool.²³
- OCHA was also weak in the technology of emergency monitoring and guidance: there was an absence of baseline data, and no organisation of vulnerability analysis and mapping.

West Timor

- OCHA's presence and focus on the complex and difficult issues in West Timor displayed much less commitment and self-belief than in East Timor, although there were various reasons why it made more sense for OCHA to concentrate its resources and attention on its East Timor operation.
- Other agencies active in West Timor that had an interest in other co-ordination arrangements considered they were less well served by OCHA.

Communication Strategies

OCHA lacked a coherent and conscious approach to communicating several important processes in the field, including:

- Informing the population as to the objectives and actions of the international aid community (as expressed in the CAP)
- Establishing mechanisms for regular dissemination and information flow to and from the local population and groupings
- The hand-over process to UNTAET, which was confusing to other agencies and especially NGOs.

Media

- OCHA did only have a media officer for a short period in the early operation. It was later helped out by other agencies' officers.
- It would have been a useful service to those agencies that could not afford to have their own information officers, if OCHA could assume the role of ensuring media liaison for the overall operation and assist smaller agencies with their media needs through facilitation.
- There are also in most operations important overall advocacy issues that may require media and information expertise.

²³ This has since been recognised by OCHA, and various measures through the CAP Sub-Working Group have been undertaken, including regional workshops on CAP, the introduction of CAP reviews, and discussion on emergency planning in relation to longer term rehabilitation planning of the World Bank and others.

Local Participation

There were real constraints to a more rapid and full involvement of local people in the design and implementation of the humanitarian operation between September and mid-November 1999. Nevertheless, OCHA did not coordinate a strategic approach to this problem, particularly in terms of:

- Communications
- The coordination of joint planning exercises
- The overall representation of East Timorese at the coordination meetings.

Defining and Disseminating OCHA's Role and Services

- The role, character, function or OCHA was not well known to either INTERFET, Australian NGOs and many others in the region.
- It was really the HC who defined and disseminated OCHA's role and services in this operation. Whilst this happened to have worked well, prior knowledge of a clear and formal declaration of OCHA's role and services are required.

Administrative and Other Systems

- The Timor response was not well supported by good financial systems, recruitment procedures, human resource development and administration.
- Attempts are being made to grapple with this problem which continues to cause friction and distrust between HQ and the field. Some progress is underway with professional human resources staff now recruited for HQ and a manual for field financial procedures being elaborated.

8. Conclusions

Coordination has become, like ‘accountability’, something of a mantra amongst some donors and academics. The *idea* of coordination is offered as being a definite and predictable state of grace, achievable if only some fundamental reforms and best practices are observed.

In reality, of course, coordination is a constantly shifting compromise between opportunity-grabbing and systemisation. On one hand, coordination is a manifestation of power.²⁴ It will not happen unless it is in the immediate or ultimate interests of a sufficient number of organisations, regardless of whether these interests include the best way to address vulnerability, or the best way to maximise funding or profile. As power shifts, opportunities for coordination grow and recede. Other the other hand, without attempts to define and systemise organisational response capacities, opportunities can not be maximised or sustained. This interpretation of the nature of coordination is useful when analysing OCHA during the Timor operation.

8a) Overall Conclusions of the Timor Operation

- This report confirms the commonly-held view that OCHA performed well during the Timor crisis. It achieved many of the duties and functions expected of a coordinating body in general, and a UN coordinating body in particular - in as much as these have been defined.
- OCHA succeeded with the help of generally favourable contextual factors, by ably taking the opportunities these presented, by concentrating less on certain parts of the operation that might detract from its overall success, and by overriding its own organisational weaknesses when they threatened its performance.
- The Timor response provides a glimpse of what OCHA can do, as well as what it must improve on organisationally to ensure consistent performance. The weaknesses of OCHA’s staffing, administrative and field support systems that were temporarily overcome during the Timor response still remain
- The strength of OCHA’s position at a senior level within the UN system and in the eyes of partners and donors relies on consistency of performance both there **and** in the field. The Timor operation offers convincing arguments for an increased commitment to field performance as a way of strengthening OCHA’s overall relevance and credibility.
- Field Expertise: There is insufficient depth of field experience within OCHA staff to earn it credibility on the ground, and as an organisation its remains over-balanced by policy-oriented staff whose link to effective operational coordination remains tenuous.

²⁴ Noted by several humanitarian and private sector commentators – see for example Moore (2000)

- This policy capacity has not been sufficiently utilised to help the organisation internally define and disseminate its thinking on coordination, what its role is, what services it will provide, and how it will measure its performance and learn from it.

8b) Lessons to be applied.

A summary of OCHA's specific strengths and weaknesses displayed during the operation is offered in Chapter 7. However, in terms of lessons relevant for OCHA today, the findings of this report would suggest that the following were important factors in OCHA's general success, and were not necessarily context-specific.

- A proactive approach to coordination in the field is required if OCHA is to be seen as relevant, credible and useful by others. This approach includes strong leadership, a sufficient staff presence, a clear range of services offered, and an engagement with the practicalities of operational start-up and maintenance. These should become replicable and predictable aspects of OCHA's activities.
- OCHA should not seek to become operational, including in sectoral areas such as logistics, telecommunications etc. Its credibility as a purely coordinating agency needs to remain uncompromised.
- Chances of successful coordination are improved by swift and decisive action very early in an emergency. Very rapid deployment of senior and experienced field staff helps establish OCHA's position as lead coordinator.
- Coordination is facilitated when there is authority. OCHA should aim to field candidates with appropriate skills, experience and seniority to future senior emergency coordinator positions.
- OCHA needs to recruit, train, develop, retain and deploy more experienced field operatives. They need to be sufficiently supported by efficient administrative and financial systems, as well as strategic and policy advice.
- OCHA's role in the field is better accepted if it adopts a consultative, inclusive, service-based approach, which incorporates NGOs as well as UN agencies.
- The success of a large-scale humanitarian operation is determined partly by the predictability and clarity of the roles taken by agencies and NGOs. OCHA's role would be better accepted if offered a clearly defined portfolio of practical operational support services, created in discussion with other agencies and NGOs.
- OCHA's role in the field and in the eyes of other agencies, NGOs, donors and others is better accepted if there has been dissemination and information given about OCHA's role and services prior to an emergency.

9. Recommendations

This chapter attempts to provide focus and prioritisation to courses of action for OCHA which have also been explored both internally through a Change Management process, and through other reports and studies. OCHA has, for at least the past year, been offered recommendations and suggestions as to ways to develop its organisational strengths. OCHA is now aware of what needs to improve. Despite the many initiatives OCHA could undertake, if only these eight points below are addressed, substantial changes may be possible. More specific recommendations have also been made at the end of each chapter.

It should be stressed, however, that studies, evaluations and lessons-learning exercises are useless without robust management decisions to determine how the priority recommendations are forwarded.

i) Develop More Integrated Field-Based Competencies for Certain Emergencies

It is recommended that OCHA incorporates a stronger service-based, field-oriented approach for time-limited emergency contexts as a valuable part of its corporate approach to coordination. OCHA must not be limited by internal factors from recognising and building on the credibility and support it receives from other agencies, NGOs and donors when it performs well in the field. This means more than maintaining the CAP, UNDAC, CIMIC and other somewhat disparate services. It means developing a working definition of OCHA's role in emergency field coordination, a limited but integrated menu of tools and services that OCHA can consistently minimally offer as required, and a field guide for practical coordination arrangements. It also requires the involvement of other agencies in order to steer the debate away from inter-agency suspicions of expansionism and more to one in which OCHA is more thoroughly client-oriented and service-based.

ii) Reinvigorate Aspects of the Internal Change Management Process

A determination to understand the reasons that made the Timor response a high point in OCHA's history does exist within the organisation. It was found that many of the broad areas requiring improvement in order to strengthen and systemise field performance – particularly those relating to field support systems and administration – are already reflected in OCHA's internal Change Management process. It is therefore recommended that the leadership reinvigorate these aspects of the change process through a tight focus on practical solutions to problems identified by staff experienced in field deployments.

iii) Strategies to Recruit, Develop and Retain Staff with Field Experience

A consistent recommendation to OCHA from field partners is to pay more attention to ensuring that OCHA has experienced and technically competent staff for coordinating positions. In particular, the Geneva OCHA office is in urgent need of a human resource strategy that will attract and retain quality candidates to fill existing senior posts (including people from outside of the UN system). The focus should be on the development of a larger capacity of field experienced staff. A field rotation system may be considered. Accelerated progress is essential to improve financial, administrative and personnel support to field staff.

iv) Improve Joint Strategic Operational Planning

At the onset of an emergency OCHA should facilitate a rapid and time-limited planning exercise with senior operational managers of other agencies and organisations. It should encourage commitment to give priority to this pre-operational, joint strategy-setting period – even if as short as half a day. In view of increasing decentralisation of agencies, this should aim to take place at regional or field level. This would create the overall strategy document that would underpin the more detailed and flexible CHAP.

v) Develop CHAP as a Tool for Strategic Planning and Coordination

It is recommended that OCHA and agencies develop the CHAP as the primary joint operational planning tool during the first phase of emergency responses where transition to civil administrations or development agencies is likely within six months. OCHA should take responsibility for coordinating a joint operational management team, made up of the senior representatives of the main participants at field level. This group would monitor implementation targets, and would adjust the CHAP according to changing priorities and events on the ground. Senior managers from the various agencies would take shared responsibility for the overall performance, and not only their own agency. The CAP would derive from the CHAP, but would be solely focused on translating operational plans into appeal documents as the basis of dialogue with donors and non-operational stakeholders.

vi) Conduct a Lesson-Learning Exercise regarding the Transition from Humanitarian to Nation-Building Processes

OCHA is well-placed to contribute to a practical process of gathering experiences and lessons learnt from situations in which agencies have moved from emergency humanitarian operations into working within the overall framework of a UN peace-keeping/transitional civilian administration operation. Experiences before and including the Kosovo and East Timor exercises need to be captured and fed into future planning exercises. An agreement with DPKO and DPA should be reached to jointly create a process to establish a practical guide for staff on areas to cover in such periods of transition.

vii) Increase Donor Engagement with Issues around Field Coordination

OCHA should develop and strengthen a more proactive relationship with its donor group in the area of field coordination. OCHA can capitalise on the fact that many have - on grounds of principle and good practice - a commitment to OCHA's role on this issue, but it should understand that this will wane if it is not seen to be consistently fulfilling its central coordination function in the field. The donors' collective goodwill and support in this area appears to be under-utilized. OCHA's relationship with them should be conducted on the basis of increasing dialogue on strategy and institutional strengthening, the setting of performance standards and improving consistency. Perhaps most importantly, the donors could be invaluable in the encouraging or insisting on the engagement of other UN agencies and NGOs in helping create a service-based culture within OCHA that benefits rather than seems to threaten others.

viii) Take a Stronger Lead in the Coordination Policy Debate

As the department with a specific coordination mandate within the humanitarian UN, OCHA should have: a well-disseminated, corporately-shared working definition of coordination, a clear vision as to its role relative to such a definition, clear objectives as to how to fulfil that role, or clear indicators that will tell it if it progressing in the right direction. It is not surprising that others are (or can chose to be) unclear as to OCHA's role in any given situation. It also explains why there is little clarity regarding the services it offers as standard, and why there is little consistency across operations.

OCHA should take its natural place as a leader in coordination policy, practice and research, particularly in helping to define criteria and indicators for successful coordination in the field. OCHA should also help the UN move towards an accepted definition of coordination, and an accompanying set of best practice guidelines and indicators.

APPENDIX 1: Background and Key Events

a) The Humanitarian Context

In 1991 the UN had created a new mechanism for the coordination of humanitarian action: DHA. The experiences of coordination models in the operations in the early and mid 90s led to strong proposals to accord leadership and authority to the coordinator, and to move away from the consensual, negotiating style of loose coordination that had repeatedly demonstrated its lack of effectiveness. Lead agencies had been used in a few operational areas and at times performed reasonably, but were always questioned as to how they could represent both themselves and other specialized agencies in a credible and balanced way, when competition for financial resources was such a motivating element.

Whilst progress had been made in terms of field-level cooperation and coordination (such as the setting of standards and guidelines for technical sectors), less had been achieved regarding concepts that would yield coherence, better strategic planning, better use of resources, better service delivery to beneficiaries and better performance through shared accountability. The fundamental issue of the nature and tools of coordination remained unresolved.

As part of the UNSG's 1997 reform programme, OCHA was created. The new ERC/USG had a vision of OCHA as needing to be primarily credible where it matters most; in the field. The East Timor situation was an opportunity to put into practice the vision of a proactive, responsive, decisive and knowledgeable OCHA that in certain situations can prepare the way for the other agencies, operating with a small number of experienced people and with a light, time-limited infrastructure.

b) East Timor 1976-1998

East Timor was occupied and incorporated with Indonesia from 1976. Until 1989, the territory was effectively closed to outside observers. The UN Secretary General had in principle a role to bring Portugal (as the former colonial ruler of East Timor) and Indonesia together to ensure a solution to the future of East Timor. UN was not present in East Timor to provide either humanitarian or development aid during this period.

c) Timor 1999

January-August

The resignation of Indonesian President Suharto in 1998 led to a change in policy on East Timor. In early 1999 his successor, President Habibie, proposed a popular referendum in East Timor with the option of independence as well as autonomy. On May 5th 1999 a UN-brokered agreement between Portugal, Indonesia and the UN established that a popular consultation should be carried out to decide the future of the territory. The agreement also stipulated that the Indonesian Government retained responsibility for ensuring security and safety in the territory during the period of the preparation for and during the ballot.

UN Security Council Resolution 1236 mandated the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) to oversee this process. The UNAMET mission was deployed during June 1999. In East Timor the campaign of violence and intimidation towards the presumed pro-independence supporters led to increasing displacement of the population within East Timor and one postponement of the ballot. On 30th August 1999 despite ongoing intimidation and violence, the ballot was finally held. The voting was orderly and the turn-out very high.

September – November 1999

On 4th September the final results of the ballot overwhelmingly favouring independence were announced in Dili and in New York. The violence rapidly escalated to the level of systematic arson, looting and killings. Several hundred thousand people became displaced in the days and weeks to follow. On the 10th September, almost all international humanitarian and UNAMET staff were evacuated. (On the 14th a second evacuation took place including the local staff of the UNAMET – a unique event in UN history.) The agencies re-grouped in Darwin, North Australia. 12 UN staff, including one OCHA staff, one UNHCR staff and ten UNAMET staff and military observers decided to stay in Dili, the in the grounds of the Australian Embassy.

On 12th September the Indonesia President request the UN secretary General to assist in restoring peace and security in East Timor. The AERC and Director of OCHA Geneva was appointed Humanitarian Coordinator a.i. by the UN Secretary General. The following day he and colleagues from OCHA were in Jakarta.

On 15th September a UNSC decision mandated an Australian Defence Force-led multinational force (INTERFET) which, though affected by certain compromises, was arguably the most rapidly created and deployed peace-keeping force action in UN history.¹ Meanwhile the HC moved to Darwin. The international aid community was assembled in one place for almost a week before re-entry. Agencies were assembling resources in Darwin: some NGOs had been there since the 9th, whilst ICRC, UNHCR and some NGOs had since pre-positioned some relief supplies and built up a logistics capacity for a scenario of escalation in East Timor.

On 20th September INTERFET arrived in Dili. The subsequent deployment was decisive in ending the violence rampaging through East Timor, and created an environment in which the displaced could begin to return to their homes, and in which an international humanitarian effort could begin. A small group of the HC and UN and NGOs established an early presence in Dili. OCHA supported the HC in coordinating information and activities.

Early October saw the first major aid distributions, INTERFET's expansion across East Timor, and the gradual return to their homes of East Timorese who had fled to the hills. The aid operation expanded until by late October there was a total of 733 people, both international and local, engaged by UN and NGOs in the operation.

¹ Evacuation on the 9th September, an 'invitation' by the Indonesian President to help restore peace on the 12th, a Resolution on the 15th establishing INTERFET, and a full military landing in East Timor on the 20th. A total of 11 days.

Many had established a degree of field presence, and the major aid supply pipelines reached their intended capacities.

On 25th October the UN Transitional Authority in East Timor (UNTAET) was mandated by the UN Security Council with the task of creating an interim authority to govern the territory whilst permanent indigenous mechanisms were being created.

On 27th October The UN Consolidated Appeal (CAP) was launched, whilst a World Bank Joint Assessment Mission involving some 55 people was deployed two days later to ascertain East Timor's medium term rehabilitation and recovery needs.

November-December 1999

On 16th November the most senior OCHA official, Sergio Vieira de Mello, was appointed Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG), and arrived in Dili. Five days later the HC departed, whilst OCHA staff continued to help plan the hand-over of coordination functions to UNTAET, under its humanitarian pillar (HAER).

On 17th December the World Bank had hosted a donor conference in Tokyo to present plans and the funding needs for the rehabilitation and recovery phases.

On 1st January 2000 OCHA was integrated into UNTAET in financial terms, and by April 2000 OCHA's identity had been formally incorporated into the UNTAET system.

APPENDIX 2 : OCHA's Performance Against Formal Indicators

a) Problems in Measuring Performance in Coordination

As mentioned in the Introduction, whilst various studies have iterated and reiterated what makes for good coordination, little practical work has so far been done to establish useable indicators or standards against which to measure performance in the field of coordination. Worryingly, there is no widely-disseminated OCHA definition of coordination, nor any statement of its role or portfolio of services that it offers (particularly to operational agencies and NGO in the field), nor are there any indicators by which its performance can be measured, particularly at field level. These are major gaps in the thinking of the UN agency specifically tasked with ensuring coordination within the system, and should be reviewed as a priority.

Nevertheless, a useful indication of OCHA's performance in certain areas of its Timor response can be gathered from the few tools available.

b) Contextual Factors, Positive and Negative

Contextual factors that influenced the operation have been summarized in Chapter 4.

c) Overall Ingredients of Successful Coordination

A collation of the factors that help and hinder coordination in general has been attempted in a recent study.² These can be used to measure some aspects of OCHA's performance in East Timor.

Factors for Successful Coordination	Presence in Context of Timor Crisis
Advance planning	Adequate - though little detailed rapid deployment arrangements for Timor
Fast response time	Yes.
MoUs to formalise relationships and responsibilities	None - either at HQ or field level. However, attempts made by OCHA to establish formal coordination at HQ level, and effected clear task allocation in field.
Small number of agencies	Early in the operation, yes.
Relationships built over time	Yes. A week in Darwin pre-entry assisted greatly in relationship-building. Centrality of the UNHOC helped this continue.
Technical expertise and agencies objectives shared	Yes – process of consultation and participation in the Preliminary Assessment and CAP processes good.
Incentives to coordinate	Yes: local resources, logistics, security, broadly supportive donor agendas.
Elements of coordination by command rather than solely by consensus	Yes – strong mandate given by UN Secretary General to the HC.
Effective leadership	Yes.
Skilled and experienced support staff	Yes – though inconsistent at district level

² See Reindorp & Wiles (2001), Section 3: "Obstacles and Incentives to Coordination" pp. 8-18

Appendix 2: Performance Against Indicators

Staff turnover low - consistency	Yes – but emergency period was short.
Clear structures and reporting lines	Yes in East Timor. Questionable in West Timor and Jakarta.
Oversight, monitoring and adjustment of overall operation	No formal mechanisms.
Coordination performed by full-time experts with no vested institutional interests	Yes.
Collective commitment to a focus of the vulnerable rather than agency interests	Yes. Led to compromises with UNHCR on its role in West Timor.
Coordinated approach to resource mobilisation, avoidance of agency competition	Yes, through the CAP process and bilateral approaches that integrated with CAP. But varying expectations/ understanding of CAP as fundraiser, and unsuccessful mechanisms for disbursement of funds from UN agencies to NGOs
Donors coordination and support rather than competing/interfering with humanitarian agency response	Yes. Eg: Joint Donor Assessment Mission two days after re-entry.
Effective coordination with military	Overall yes, after serious threats to this process.

d) Standard Basic Field Coordination Services

There has also been an initial attempt to identify some core services that constitute effective coordination at field level.³

Basic Services of Coordination	OCHA's Actions, Timor Operation
Analysis	Poor analysis of social/cultural factors (eg lack of local participation). Good analysis underpinning operational planning (in CAP and Prel. Assessment)
Strategy/Plan	The Preliminary Assessment and CAP offered a viable and coherent strategy and operational plan. But not revised.
Agreed Division of Labour	Rapid and generally effective task allocation
Logistics coordination	Limited but successful initial coordination of travel and basic logistics by OCHA – then tasked to WFP.
Agreed Allocation of Resources	Yes – shared transport, office etc.
Resource mobilisation	CAP attracted good levels of funding
Information sharing	Numerous effective mechanisms.
Definition and Dissemination of Standards of Coordination	OCHA is weak in this generally, and there was no formal agreement of what is good coordination in the Timor case.
Advocacy	Ongoing and useful discussion with

³ See van Brabant (1999), p.18

	INTERFET re access and CIMIC. Pre-crisis attempts to stimulate coordination arrangements in New York and Jakarta. Localised activity re advocating best practice and standards (eg SPHERE), through NGO Information Centre. But poor on local participation and protection issues. Little formal attention to gender issues
Security	Proactive during initial re-entry phase. Ongoing regarding access advocacy.
Monitoring strategies of coop in field	No formal processes to do this (eg through CAP) – though ad hoc ‘fire fighting’ activities.
Meetings	Very effective.
Local and International NGO services	NGO Information Centre offered resource centre, capacity-building advice, issues re taxation, legislation etc.
Learning/Evaluation	The innovative CAP Review, and the HAER’s Final Report, but limited usage outside of East Timor. The present report.

e) CAP Objectives vs Implementation

With regard specifically to East Timor, the CAP does state various objectives which the CAP Review thoroughly examines in relation to OCHA’s actual performance. In summary, the CAP Review findings are:

Strengths

- Excellent overall coordination
- Speed of response
- Provision of basic infrastructure to allow early coordination and services to others
- Sectoral coordination ‘good’ or ‘excellent’
- Staff: strong leadership, senior and skilled staff,
- Central level coordination services highly efficient, especially meetings and planning.
- Sectoral and geographic tasking was effective
- OCHA brought coherence.
- CAP: successfully marshalled funding, promoted good overall coordination and planning, facilitated participation of NGOs and agencies.
- NGO Information Office “drew significant attention to development of national NGO capacity”
- CIMIC eventually improved the overall response.

Weaknesses

- “Local participants mostly marginalized by the international community”
- Insufficient information and dissemination re humanitarian objectives and activities to local communities and beneficiaries.
- Exit strategies not coordinated or encouraged.
- “No strategic plan to define transition from relief into development” (relating more to UNTAET than OCHA, though OCHA had a role in the origins of this process)
- CIMIC relations were “frustrating”.
- Misunderstandings regarding purpose of CAP
- CAP: a lack of common understanding of purpose of CAP; overall goals not always consistent with sector strategies; did not obtain full donor participation in planning stage; and the proceeds not disbursed effectively from UN agencies to NGOs.
- OCHA’s role stopped at production of CAP document – no ongoing engagement in monitoring and adjustment.
- District level coordination variable.
- OCHA’s telecommunication service “both costly and unwieldy”.

APPENDIX 3: PEOPLE CONSULTED

GENEVA:

OCHA

Ernie Chipman, Chief, Response Coordination Branch, Dept. Director OCHA Geneva
Wendy Cue, CAP and Donor Relations Section, Response Coordination Branch
Joel Boutroue, Senior Desk OCHA Geneva
David Harland, Senior Policy Advisor, OCHA Geneva
Lise Grande, Chief of Unit, OCHA office Angola
Sally Griffiths, Personal Assistant to the Director, OCHA Geneva
Jesper Lund, Officer Field Coordination Support Unit, Emergency Services Branch
Jamie McGoldrick, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, Response Coordination Branch
Ross Mountain, Assistant Emergency Relief Coordinator and Director OCHA Geneva
Ingrid Nordström, Humanitarian Affairs officer, MCDU, Emergency Services Branch
Piero Calvi Parisetti, Emergency Services Branch
Eldon Pearce, Finance Officer, Administrative Office
Gerhard Putman Kramer, Chief, Emergency Services Branch

UNHCR

Francois Fouinat, formerly Regional Director for Asia and Pacific Bureau UNHCR Geneva) Executive Director, Commission on Human Security.(New York)
Craig Saunders, Senior Officer, Emergency and Security Services, UNHCR Geneva

WFP

Werner Schleiffer, Director, WFP Geneva Office

ICRC

Symeon Antoulas, Deputy Head of Operations for South East Asia and the Pacific
David Horobin, Deputy Head of Logistics

WHO

Dr Johanna Larusdottir, Director ai, Dept Emergency & Humanitarian Action

IOM

Mr Hans Petter W. Boe, Chief, Emergency and Post-Conflict Division.

Others

Martin Griffiths, Director HDC Geneva
Ian Martin, SRSG UNAMEE, formerly SRSG UNAMET
Nance Kyloh, Representative USAID, US Mission Geneva
Fabrizio Hochschild, formerly Special Assistant to the SRSG East Timor. Now UNHCR Belgrade.

ROME

Jean Jacques Graisse, Deputy Executive Director, WFP
David Kartuud, Head of Logistics, WFP
Peter Scott- Bowden, Head ALITE, WFP
Julian Lefevre, Chief evaluation officer, WFP. Formerly Senior Emergency Co-ordinator East Timor.

NEW YORK

OCHA

Mark Bowden, Chief , Policy Development and Studies Branch
Sally Gregory, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA New York
Kevin Kennedy, Chief, Humanitarian Emergencies Branch
Carolyn McAskie, Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator
Hansjoerg Strohmeyer, Senior Policy Advisor, Policy Development & Studies Branch
Ed Tsui, Director OCHA New York
Djoeke van Beest, formerly Desk Officer for East Timor.

DPKO

Hedi Annabi, ASG Peace Keeping Operations

UNDP

Rajev Rajan, Senior Advisor and Director of Strategic initiatives. Resident Coordinator Indonesia 1995-2001.

UNICEF

Nils Arne Kastberg, Director, Office of Emergency Programmes
Shamsul Farooq, Senior Programme Officer, Office of Emergency Programmes.

DONORS

Julia Taft, Vice President UNDP, formerly ASS US State Department and Head of PRM, as participant in the donor mission to East Timor Sept 22-24, 1999.

LONDON

Bob Churcher, CHAD, DFID
Gilbert Greenall, CHAD, DFID (East Timor UNDAC team member, OCHA)
Dr Mukesh Kapila , Head of the Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Dept, DFID

Nicola Reindorp, Overseas Development Institute, London
Peter Wiles, Consultant, UK

STOCKHOLM

Marika Fahlen, Ambassador, Humanitarian Affairs Coordinator, MOFA Stockholm
Mr Kjell Larsson, Head International Dept, Swedish Rescue Services Agency
Eva M. Mellgren, Desk Officer, Div for Humanitarian Assistance, SIDA, Stockholm
Mr Johan Schaar, Deputy Head , Division for Humanitarian Assistance, SIDA
Mr Anders Wiik, Project leader, Swedish Rescue Services Agency

AUSTRALIA

AusAID, a nine-person round table meeting facilitate by Steve Darvill
Joe Barr, Director PEMA, member of UNDAC team Sept 1999, Canberra
Alfred Boll, Representative and Legal Advisor, ICRC, Sydney
Bernard Broughton, Director PDM Consultancy, Canberra
Peter Chamberlain, East Timor Program Manager, Oxfam Community Aid Abroad, Melbourne
Lt General Peter Cosgrove, Chief ADF , Commander INTERFET in 1999/2000, Canberra

Appendix 3: People Consulted

Steve Darvill, Program Manager, AusAID, Canberra
Isabel Gomes, Program Officer, World Vision Australia, Melbourne
Jose Alvin C. Gonzaga, Legal Officer, UNHCR, Canberra
Ellen Hansen, External Affairs Officer, UNHCR, Canberra
Janet Hunt, Advisor NGO Forum East Timor (former Executive Director ACFOA), Canberra
Barbara Watson, International Operations Department, Australian Red Cross, Melbourne

EAST TIMOR

Dr Alex Andjaparidze, Head of Office, WHO
Shoko Arakaki, Assistant to the Special Adviser to the SRSG for Development and Humanitarian Affairs, UNTAET
Lise Boudreault, Head of Delegation, ICRC
Patrick Burgess, UNTAET
Patric Charpentier, CARE
Sarah Cliffe, Chief of Mission East Timor, the World Bank
Antonio da Conceicao, CARE (formerly Executive Director, Timor Aid)
Deborah Cook, Second Secretary Australian Mission in East Timor
Dr Jose Dome, Officer FAO
Col. Tan Keng Cheong, Deputy Chief of Staff, HQ PKF UNTAET
Gregorius Fernandez, Project Officer, UNICEF
Reza Hussein, IOM
Bernard Kerblatt, Chief of Operations UNHCR
Xu Lingfeng, Agricultural Advisor in East Timor
Douglas Manson, Senior Administrative Officer, UNTAET
Alex Marianelli, Logistics Officer WFP
Sieneke Martin, Country Director, Caritas
Sergio Vieira de Mello, Special Representative of the Secretary General in East Timor
Jorge Pereiro Pinon, Humanitarian Aid Office, ECHO
Emilia Pires, Head of NPDA
Antonia Potter, Country Director, Concern
Finn Reske-Nielsen, UNDP Resident Coordinator
Oscar Sandoval, IOM
Dr Jim Tulloch, Adviser to the Head of Department of Health Services
Yoshiteru Uramoto, Special Representative, UNICEF

JAKARTA

William Barclay, Emergency Officer, WFP
Bud Crandall, Director Care Indonesia
Michael Elmquist, Head of OCHA Office
Harlan V. Hale, Emergency Disaster Relief Coordinator, OFDA, Jakarta
Inayi Madani, Humanitarian Affairs Officer OCHA Jakarta
Anastasia Makarova, donor and NGO Relations Officer, OCHA Jakarta
Herbie Smith, Officer, USAID, Jakarta
Marie Spaak, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA Jakarta
General Kyki Syahnakri, Vice Commander of Indonesian Armed Forces
G.Wondimu, Programme Officer UNHCR (re West Timor)

Ana Gomes, Ambassador of Portugal to Indonesia, Jakarta
Mattias Lenz, Counsellor, Embassy of Sweden, Jakarta.
Harald Sandberg, Ambassador, Embassy of Sweden, Jakarta.
Hamish St Clair Daniel, First Secretary, British Embassy, Jakarta
Dr Joseph Vargas, Technical Assistant, ECHO, Jakarta
Stephen Weaver, First Secretary, Embassy of Canada, Jakarta.

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Appendix 5: Terms of Reference

THE ROLE OF HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION AND RESPONSE in East Timor during 1999

A lessons learned study

Terms of Reference

1. Background

Following the 5 May 1999 agreements between Portugal and Indonesia, the United Nations Administrative Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) was established on 11 June 1999 to organize a popular consultation on the future status of East Timor. Alongside the deployment of UNAMET, OCHA deployed a staff person to East Timor to monitor the needs for a potential humanitarian response. Immediately following the ballot on 30 August 1999, in which an overwhelming majority of East Timorese voted for independence of the territory, widespread and systematic violence by forces sympathetic to the integration of East Timor into Indonesia erupted and resulted in the displacement of an estimated third of the population of East Timor. The violence also led to the evacuation of the UN on 9 September 1999 only to return on 20 September 1999. Only a core of 11 international staff stayed behind.

In response to the violence, the Security Council by resolution 1264 (1999), on 12 September 1999, mandated the Australian-led multinational force for East Timor (INTERFET) with restoring peace and security in the territory and facilitating humanitarian assistance operations in the by then vastly destroyed half-island. On 25 October 1999, the Security Council by resolution 1272 (1999) established the United Nations Transitional Administration for East Timor (UNTAET). UNTAET was comprised of three pillars: peacekeeping force; governance and public administration; and humanitarian assistance and emergency rehabilitation. Consequently, the previous arrangements put in place by both UNAMET and the humanitarian presence were transferred into the responsibility of UNTAET. In mid November 1999, the Humanitarian Coordinator departed East Timor. By year-end, the transition of the humanitarian assistance and coordination within the UNTAET humanitarian pillar were complete.

2. Scope and objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are to evaluate how OCHA coordinates humanitarian assistance in the following three areas: 1) in the context of UNAMET, including its involvement in UNAMET's contingency planning; 2) in its cooperation with INTERFET in reestablishing the humanitarian coordination arrangements in East Timor; and 3) in cooperation with UNTAET, particularly on the transition from OCHA to UNTAET. The scope of the study will cover the period between June 1999 and December 1999.

The study will strive to draw out concise and action oriented lessons so that OCHA may improve humanitarian preparedness, intervention, and coordination in future complex emergency environments. The findings of the study will also feed into OCHA's development of a manual of practical guidelines for planning and setting up humanitarian coordination arrangements in different field contexts.

In carrying out the study, the consultants should be guided by the specific terms of the study, as outlined below.

3. Specific terms of the study

The study should be guided by the following thematic groups of challenges that have occurred in establishing a humanitarian coordination arrangement on the ground:

1. Establishment of the OCHA office and field level inter-agency coordination arrangements (i.e. initial *ad hoc* coordination arrangements; early warning and preparedness; staffing and organization of humanitarian structures; model of "active" coordination; inter-agency task teams; strategic relationship between Dili, Jakarta, West Timor and Darwin);
2. Determination of the humanitarian strategy, in concert with implementing partners, local stakeholders and donors (the nature of the crisis; strategic thinking and planning; the Consolidated Appeal Process; integration of local coping mechanisms; consolidation of secure environment for humanitarian operations).
3. "In-house" cooperation with other parts of the UN missions or other UN agencies (i.e. delineation of responsibilities; political linkages; transition from providing relief aid to developing administrative governmental structures; transition of institutional knowledge and coordination structures to the UNTAET humanitarian pillar);
4. Cooperation with relevant international NGOs (i.e. sharing of logistics information, infrastructure; NGO autonomy);
5. Cooperation with local stakeholders (i.e. cooperation with local non governmental organizations and other groups; identifying local capacities and capacity building efforts; *modus operandi* with local actors);
6. Civil-military cooperation with INTERFET and its impact on the discharge of humanitarian programs; (i.e. sharing of logistics and assets; coordination of strategies)
7. Coordination with the Indonesian armed forces (TNI) and other Indonesian authorities as well as with Indonesian local NGOs and Red Cross movement (PMI) in West Timor (particularly with regard to the returnee movements and camps in West Timor).
8. Donor coordination and cooperation (i.e. rapid disbursement of monies for emergency programming).

4. Support and methodology

The supervision and overall coordination of the study, including financial and logistical support of the consultant, is vested with the OCHA Policy Development and Studies Branch (PDSB), in close consultation with the Humanitarian Emergencies Branch (HEB) in New York and the Response Coordination Branch (RCB) in Geneva.

The consultant is expected to carry out, as appropriate, the evaluation by conducting in-depth interviews of the key actors involved in the operation at the time at issue, including the Humanitarian Coordinator and his team, key actors at OCHA Headquarters, UNAMET, INTERFET, UNTAET as well as from other humanitarian partner agencies, donors, and relevant East Timorese stakeholders. In doing so, the consultant should closely take into consideration already existing studies on humanitarian operations in East Timor during the period at issue, in particular where they directly address the issue of coordination.

The findings of the study should be compiled in a final report, containing an executive summary and a set of concrete action recommendations for future coordination efforts (i.e. checklist of basic coordination measures) in order to facilitate the best possible learning exercise. The report should not exceed 15,000 words.

The expected time required to complete the study, including the final report, is 1 September 2001- 30 November 2001.