

**OCHA's  
Annual Evaluation Report  
for 2005**



**Prepared by the  
Evaluation and Studies Unit (ESU)**

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## **1. Introduction**

The Evaluation and Studies Unit became operational in February 2002 with the appointment of a chief to manage the unit. The unit is at present time staffed with five professionals and one support staff and is situated within OCHA's Policy Development and Studies Branch. The ESU's work programme is based on a three-year evaluation framework and policy and has an estimated annual budget of \$400,000. The framework centers on five main thrusts for this function, which include system-wide, inter-agency and joint evaluations; OCHA-specific evaluations; internal lesson learning reviews; desk reviews and case studies; and strengthening of OCHA's monitoring and evaluation capacity. This framework was also presented to the OCHA Donor Support Group in May 2002 and was fully endorsed at that meeting. A new framework for 2006-09 which will be based on a critical review of the 2002-05 framework will be developed in May/June 2006.

As in previous years, the initial workplan for the year 2005 was modified to accommodate specific requests by management and to address new emergencies (e.g. tsunami). The unit managed nine studies, reviews and evaluations as well as participated in a number of inter-agency evaluation activities. Four evaluation activities were added to the plan at the request of management and one donor evaluation was supported at the request of the donor. Three evaluations were removed from the work programme to accommodate the additional activities while one study was cancelled due to security concerns. A status report on the implementation of the 2005 workplan is presented in Annex II, the work programme for 2005 can be found in Annex III.

The report is structured along the lines of the three-year evaluation framework and provides a synthesis of activities and results obtained. More detailed information on each completed exercise is included in Annex IV. All reports with the exception of the internal lesson learning review were posted on ReliefWeb. In addition, all reports are available on ESU's webpage on OCHA-online (<http://ochaonline.un.org/ESU>).

## **2. The Year in a Nutshell**

- In 2005, the ESU was involved in a total of fifteen evaluation activities. Seven of these were directly managed or conducted by the unit. These included two inter-agency real-time evaluation missions to Darfur, an evaluation of the ISDR Secretariat, a lesson learning review (LRR) of OCHA's initial response to the tsunami, a system-wide evaluation of the coordination of the tsunami response, and a review of the impact of select OCHA training courses. While this figure is lower than that of previous years, it hides the complexities of the Darfur and tsunami evaluations. The unit also participated in an inter-agency evaluation of the UNJLC which was led by WFP. The humanitarian response review (HRR) while not managed by the unit, was supported and facilitated by the Geneva-based ESU staff throughout the duration of the review.

- Seventy-five percent of the above evaluation activities were undertaken on an inter-agency or joint basis. This is the same percentage as last year.
- The ESU successfully managed an ambitious work programme in 2005. Over half (8) or fifty-three percent of the 15 evaluation activities were fully implemented in 2005; another twenty-seven percent (4) are ongoing activities that should be finalized in 2006. Twenty percent (3) of the planned evaluation activities were cancelled, mainly due to shifting workplan priorities, unforeseen additional workplan items and lack of capacity. A full account of work plan achievements is contained in Annex II.
- ESU's work on strengthening OCHA's Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity showed more mixed results. Out of six planned initiatives, only two (33%) were completed, three partially implemented (66%) and one (11%) was not pursued. The implementation of this part of the work programme was cut back to prioritize time-intensive evaluation activities such as providing support to the Humanitarian Response Review and the TEC. Staff provided internal advice on OCHA's results-oriented monitoring and reporting issues but could have made more substantial progress on this objective if the unit had greater capacity to meet both planned and unplanned emergency-driven activities. On inter-agency M&E issues, progress was made by the development of a strategic monitoring and evaluation framework. This framework will be piloted in several CAP countries in 2006 and should lead to improved performance monitoring and evaluation of the CAP.
- ESU provided technical assistance and quality-control for the preparation of the "*OCHA in 2006*" document. The percentage of measurable and observable indicators increased by five percent from 92% to 97%, indicating improvement over previous years. Few indicators, however, reflected a higher results level nor were they systematically monitored and reported on by OCHA offices. This is in part due to the fact that OCHA's work planning process shifted in 2005 which led to a reduced linking of performance indicators to stated objectives. In recognition of this, the ESU prepared a strategy for improving M&E within OCHA and intends to implement this in 2006. Feedback on the current planning guidelines has been mixed, with many staff finding them very useful but also with some staff indicating that they find the guidelines confusing. This indicates the need to revise the current guidelines – which is being envisaged as part of the M&E implementation strategy for 2006.
- The performance record on the implementation of evaluation recommendations remains uneven. The unit tracks the implementation of recommendations dating back to 2002. To date an average of 83% percent of evaluation and review recommendations have resulted in concrete action: of these, 58% have been implemented and 25% have been partially implemented. The degree of compliance varies from evaluation to evaluation and management needs to ensure that those recommendations reported as being implemented do, in fact, get addressed completely.

## Key Lessons in 2005

### ***Better mechanisms are needed to translate lessons into action and policies.***

- More attention needs to be paid to translating lessons and recommendations into policy at both the individual and inter-agency level. As this lesson pertains to OCHA, ESU should take advantage of the current efforts to create SOPs to ensure key lessons are reflected in OCHA's policies, guidelines, SOPs, tools and, most importantly, training initiatives. ESU should also ensure that the dissemination and/or use of ESU products is reflected in any organizational communication strategy that OCHA and/or PDSB might develop.

### ***There must be strong and decisive inter-agency ownership for RTEs if these are to be effective real-time tools.***

- If their potential is to be fully realized, real-time evaluation must be owned and accepted by all actors, and in particular by the field actors upon whom implementation depends. Thus, UN agencies, NGOs and donors must jointly understand and embrace this approach; and be desirous of applying it in future crisis. This would necessitate their commitment at the institutional level to actively support and participate in inter-agency real-time evaluation, at both headquarters and in the field; as well as to own and ensure implementation of the recommendations as if they had been commissioned from within.

### ***Ensuring learning takes place and is reflected in policy and guidance.***

- Although Core Learning Groups are more commonly being used to ensure learning is institutionalized, this remains a challenge for OCHA and the wider system at large. Agency engagement within such groups often varies, as does the level of meaningful and substantive feedback to the agencies through their representatives. OCHA's current initiative to review and systematize the promulgation of policy and guidance to its staff should help ensure that key lessons and best practices are reflected within its policies and guidance. Greater use of learning workshops with key stakeholders (including in the field) should also be further explored.

### ***Dissemination of evaluative results is an important part of the evaluation process and should not be underestimated.***

- In addition to facilitating learning, evaluative results can play an important role in informing the public and the wider humanitarian community, including political actors, member states and donors, about performance and progress in key areas of humanitarian action. Although all evaluations are posted on the Internet, there remains a need for a more targeted and coherent communication and dissemination strategy for key evaluative results, lessons learned and recommendations.

### ***Greater outreach is needed in order to improve the regional diversity of consultants.***

- Attracting more qualified applicants from the global South requires a greater commitment to networking with regional evaluation associations and academic institutions.

### **3. Inter-agency & Joint Evaluations and Initiatives**

#### **(a) The Darfur real-time evaluation(s)**

The *Inter-agency Real-time Evaluation of the Humanitarian Response to the Darfur Crisis* concluded in 2005, although IASC discussion on the use of its recommendations as well as the lessons identified from this first attempt at inter-agency real-time evaluation continued into 2006. Concerns that the humanitarian response to the Darfur crisis was woefully inadequate prompted the UN ERC to launch the evaluation in August 2004 under the auspices of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). The aim was to allow the UN and other responders to the crisis to benefit from external guidance to help improve the operational response in real-time. The evaluation was also to identify broader lessons learned in Darfur for future humanitarian action there and elsewhere. The approach was groundbreaking in that it was the first attempt to comprehensively evaluate an ongoing crisis across all sectors and functions using a participatory approach involving all key stakeholders while the response was still underway.

The evaluation was led by two external consultants with participation from CARE, OCHA and, for a very brief period, a Fellow from the Rift Valley Institute. The exercise which had a budget of \$ 234,232 was financially supported by several agencies and donors<sup>1</sup>. The evaluation took place in real-time over the course of three visits to Sudan in September 2004, January/February 2005 and June/July 2005, each of which resulted in a set of real-time recommendations for the consideration of humanitarian actors. The fourth and final report, which was to have focused on the lessons learned from the Darfur experience, was never completed as the team leader was forced to resign for personal reasons, and it was felt that the final report could not be satisfactorily completed without his participation.

A number of the evaluation recommendations have been taken on board by individual actors and/or groups. For example, the World Food Programme (WFP) indicated in February 2005 that it would review the ongoing internally displaced person (IDP) registration after the team raised questions about its appropriateness; the World Health Organization (WHO) indicated that it would begin addressing the issue of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) as one of access to health care after the team raised this issue in its January/February 2005 report; the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR), while it was already aware of the problem, welcomed many of the team's observations in its third report regarding human rights, in particular the need for more highly trained human rights officers and for a deeper field presence; and some NGOs in 2005 sought to strengthen their own public information efforts as recommended. The evaluation also helped focus attention on and accelerate efforts to solve ongoing yet unresolved issues. These included in particular issues related to camp management, protection and human rights reporting responsibilities. Lastly, the evaluation contributed to efforts to strengthen strategic and forward looking planning, as well as monitoring and evaluation. In particular, several actors, such as the UN's

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<sup>1</sup> WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, WHO, FAO, and DANIDA.

Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Internal Displacement Division (IDD), welcomed recommendations designed to strengthen sectoral planning at the field level.

Lastly, the evaluation team's early observations -- in particular about the lack of clear agency leads in some sectors -- also helped spark the launch of a wider review of the humanitarian system's capacity, which ultimately led to significant reform in coordination structures that are now being applied elsewhere through the cluster approach. Further, the IASC will in early 2006 review some of the remaining recommendations addressing system-wide issues -- such as the need for common advocacy and public information strategies as well as in country monitoring and evaluation capacities -- for possible application to other major emergencies.

While the evaluation acted as a catalyst for action on some issues, its real-time recommendations were for the most part not acted upon in real-time. There are many reasons for this, ranging from the competing priorities and lack of capacity at the field level to institutional insularity. The latter led to a lack of accountability for the exercise at the individual agency, as well as the collective IASC, level. This reflects larger questions about the degree of buy-in at the headquarters level for inter-agency evaluation, which OCHA aims to address in 2006.

#### **(b) The Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC)**

The ESU was instrumental in setting up the tsunami evaluation coalition (TEC) during the first half of 2005. The coalition now includes over forty UN agencies, NGOs, donors and non-profit organizations that have agreed to jointly evaluate sector-wide performance. ALNA/ODI provides the institutional platform for the TEC. The overall funding for the TEC was well over 1.5 million US\$. The TEC contains five cross-cutting evaluations on (1) needs assessment, (2) coordination, (3) local and regional capacities, (4) link between relief, recovery and development and (5) donor response. At this point it is widely recognized that the TEC is an innovative modality and test case for inter-agency evaluation work. The TEC experienced some teething problems but in the end should be able to demonstrate the value-added of a sector-wide initiative that looks jointly at overall performance. Its main challenge will be to ensure that the findings and recommendations result in concrete action and improvements. This initiative has been embraced by ALNAP and has raised expectations that similar coalitions will be created to review future emergency responses.

#### **(c) Inter-agency evaluation of the system-wide coordination of the Tsunami response**

OCHA has led the coordination evaluation with the support of an inter-agency steering committee composed of UNICEF, UNFPA, IFRC, UNDP, Save the Children, UK and USAID/OFDA. Funding for this evaluation was obtained from 10 donors<sup>2</sup> for a total amount of US\$ 407,033. In addition, OCHA engaged a dedicated evaluation manager for the period of six months to ensure full-time management as well as

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<sup>2</sup> Netherlands, Norway, US, Germany, France, UK, UNICEF, IFRC, UNFPA and DARA (Spanish non-profit)

independence of the exercise (the full-time manager came on loan from the UN's Oversight Services). A broader working group was also set up to provide contributors with the opportunity to review and comment on draft reports submitted by the team.

The TEC coordination evaluation was launched in July with a tendering process but only started in late August with a briefing session in New York and then continued with visits to Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Somalia. The team of four consultants (one team leader, one specialist on civil military liaison, two natural disaster specialists) was affected by hurricane Katrina as one of the consultants who was based in New Orleans had to withdraw at the last minute and was replaced by another consultant. This to some extent affected the mix of skills on the team as well as the preparation and the desk review for the mission. The team was supported by a research assistant and by the evaluation manager who traveled with the team to two of the countries.

By the end of 2005, the team had submitted four country case study reports and a draft synthesis report. These early drafts were reviewed by the Steering Committee and resulted in revised drafts that are expected to be finalized by April 2006. The evaluation was able to provide a cross-cutting assessment on key coordination issues as they affected the international response to the tsunami. The evaluation team was critical of overall coordination performance but found that the coordination during the relief phase worked better and more effectively than coordination during later stages, in particular during the transition period. This was attributed to the large number of actors on the ground (over 300 NGOs alone in Aceh), the absence of strong coordination structures among NGOs and the lack of incentives for coordination and a sense of competition for beneficiaries among some of the actors. Not surprisingly this led to duplication and gaps and a rather uncoordinated early recovery scene. Some of this was due to the unprecedented donor response, but other causes are more deeply rooted in systemic factors. The report points to a number of areas where UN, NGOs and donors could improve performance.

Some early lessons for ESU include the need to provide more time for pre-mission research and desk review, a stronger emphasis on the inception report that should clearly indicate the division of labor among team members, a conceptual framework for the evaluation and an agreed-to outline for the report. The fact that the coordination evaluation was one out of five TEC evaluations and that there were numerous other reviews taking place simultaneously (agency lessons learned, evaluations and audits) did result in "evaluation" overload to the field. The intention of the TEC to reduce the number of evaluations did not work as well as intended. Some of this is due to the fact that from an accountability perspective, donors and agencies felt they needed to implement agency-specific evaluations as well rather than folding their entire evaluation efforts under the TEC. In hindsight the composition of the team resulted in some gaps, although some of these may not have existed had one of the original team members not withdrawn. One gap in particular was gender expertise and the team missed the opportunity to analyze to what extent gender was addressed throughout the planning, coordination and response. Another gap is donor coordination and the involvement of the media. It needs to be recognized, however, that the scope of the evaluation was very

broad and that the level of ambition for this exercise was high. Ideally, more in-depth studies on select issues could develop some of the evaluation results further. An opportunity for this might exist when one of the teams (LRRD) returns to the region in late 2006.

#### **(d) Evaluation of the Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)**

This evaluation was commissioned by the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. OCHA's Evaluation and Studies Unit (ESU) was tasked to manage the evaluation which took place between February and June 2005. A team of three independent consultants was selected on the basis of a competitive bidding process. Funding for this evaluation was provided by several donors for an amount of \$100,000<sup>3</sup>.

The evaluation aimed to assess the effectiveness of the ISDR Secretariat in carrying out its mandated functions and responsibilities, how these have evolved based on new requirements and presenting recommendations for the future role of the ISDR in light of the study's findings, other pertinent proposals, and the Hyogo Framework for Action.

The evaluation methodology drew on in-depth interviews with key actors regarding their perceptions of the quality and relevance of the work of the Secretariat. Focus group interviews were held in Nairobi and with UNDP-BCPR in Geneva. The evaluation team took advantage of opportunities of important meetings, consultations and workshops to meet and interact with the technical and administrative staff from the member states in the regional offices of the Secretariat in Africa and Latin America. In order to solicit as broad a spectrum of feedback as possible, an email survey of selected ISDR stakeholders has been conducted to complement the in-depth interviews.

A donor advisory group followed on the evaluation through three meetings, and received an opportunity to comment on the ToR, the inception report and the draft report.

The evaluation team developed a set of 5 key recommendations, including numerous (25) sub-recommendations, addressing structure and focus of the Secretariat, strategic tasks and priorities, strategic plan, focusing on key functions and governance reform. The recommendations were broadly accepted, although the ISDR Secretariat was not as strongly involved in the evaluation process as it could have been. Out of the 25 sub-recommendations, only one was rejected and all of the accepted have been acted upon, fully implemented for the vast majority (18) or partially implemented (6).

#### **(e) Evaluation of the UN Joint Logistics Centre (UNJLC)**

In June 2004 OCHA, WFP, UNHCR and UNICEF agreed to the scope, methodology and process for an inter-agency UNJLC Synthesis Review. The review followed a multi-step approach starting with a desk study which analyzed the reports of all of the earlier UNJLC reviews undertaken to date (primarily of UNJLC field activities

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<sup>3</sup> Canada, Sweden, and Switzerland

in Afghanistan, Iraq and Liberia and a review of the UNLC Core Unit) and developed a list of common and key issues arising from these reviews. This provided an analysis of the current status of the UNJLC and identified issues that required further inter-agency discussion and debate and suggestions for the future direction of the UNJLC. The report produced in this process was discussed and further refined during an inter-agency workshop in April 2005. The final version was presented to the 63<sup>rd</sup> IASC-WG meeting on 21-22 November 2005, where the working group endorsed a management response matrix to the recommendations made in the Synthesis Review.

The review was managed by WFP with inter-agency input throughout the process. In particular, OCHA input was provided on early drafts, OCHA participated in the inter-agency workshop held in April 2005, and the final report was endorsed by OCHA in June 2005. The exercise proved a good example of how an inter-agency initiative can be managed solely by one agency while maintaining strong involvement by interested partners.

#### **4. OCHA-specific Evaluations and Reviews**

Training and education are primary means for sharing lessons learned and encouraging adherence to fundamental principles. Whether funded by financial or in-kind contributions, training programmes can be costly investments for organizations. In 2005 OCHA Senior Management renewed the focus on capacity building initiatives within OCHA and did among other things request an impact assessment of selected training interventions. OCHA's Staff Development and Learning (under the Administrative Office), implements the OCHA Emergency Field Coordination Training (EFCT). These courses are part of the training impact assessment initiative. The assessment was conducted by the Evaluation and Studies Unit with support from and in full consultation with the Training Unit in GVA as well as the EFCT trainers.

The overall EFCT goal has been operationalized through two EFCT course objectives around which the impact assessment was designed. *The first course objective* was to 'build upon individual knowledge, skills and attitudes for effective inter-agency humanitarian coordination.' *The second course objective* was to make participants 'understand perspectives, identify and apply tools, techniques and approaches to coordination.' Survey results showed that course objectives had been met for a large part of the course participants. Almost all those who claimed to have applied aspects of the training sessions were backing their answers with concrete examples of application in this way adding credibility to the results.

The fulfillment of the course objectives provided a tangibly body of evidence that the EFCT program meets its overarching goal of 'improve the ability of participants to facilitate effective humanitarian assistance' and in turn contributes to OCHA's fulfillment of its mandate and mission statement.

The assessment led to five general recommendations for the Staff Development and Learning unit: i) EFCT organizers and facilitators should review the approaches and methods applied in the sessions addressing Interpersonal Skills & Relationship

Management and, where possible, try to export key methods to other aspects of the EFTC; ii) EFCT organizers and facilitators should work to improve the impact of the sessions on the Legal and Ethical Framework; iii) persons selected for EFCT participation should primarily be from the field or alternatively with likely future deployment to the field (signed to relevant roster); iv) EFTC training implementation action plans should be made mandatory; v) the Training Unit should institutionalize the use of an impact assessment survey as a tool for quality monitoring and control (and introducing self-evaluation as mentioned in OIOS report A/60/73 to the General Assembly prepared in response to the GA resolution 58/269 of 23 Dec 2003).

The results of the training impact assessment should be used as a baseline for the annual performance reporting. The evaluation recommendations were agreed with the Staff Development and Learning Unit in Geneva.

## **5. HA Lesson Learning Reviews (LLR)**

A lesson learning review for the tsunami response was launched end January 2005. This was an internally conducted exercise during which a three-member internal team (ESU and OCHA Geneva) interviewed 37 OCHA (and UNDAC) staff from the field and from HQ.

The main positive findings of this review were:

- The early deployment of UNDAC added value by ensuring a strategic lead: the effectiveness of UNDAC teams could be increased by deploying more appropriate staffing (UN experience, Public Information), better tools (standardized assessments) and appropriate, state-of-the art equipment (telecommunications.)
- The key advocacy role played by senior officials in all the relevant media
- The early alert, set-up of task forces and calendar for meetings and appeals that helped achieve a quick and efficient response

The main identified shortfalls were:

- A lack of follow-up on recommendations from previous reviews
- An absence of benchmarks against which to measure performance of the system
- A lack of standard operating procedures (SOPs)
- Missing clarification on command and reporting lines (to avoid duplication...)
- JLC and CIMCOORD would add more value if deployed earlier (in order to take action and lead right from the onset of response).

The findings and lessons were written-up in a report which has been disseminated among main stakeholders of the tsunami response.

## **6. Desk Studies**

Other than research on Darfur and tsunami-related issues, no desk studies were undertaken. The unit employed several researchers (interns) throughout the year.

## **7. Learning Networks**

OCHA/ESU participated on the steering committee (SC) of ALNAP and as an SC member played a stronger role in this learning network than in previous years. ALNAP was supported with US\$ 10,000. The chief of the ESU was elected chair of the TEC and the unit contributed \$ 25,000 towards the running costs of the TEC Secretariat.

## **8. Strengthening OCHA's Evaluation and Monitoring Capacity**

The intentions of the unit to strengthen OCHA's M&E capacity at OCHA-wide level were stymied by the changing nature of OCHA's corporate planning processes. A training strategy was prepared with a focus on strengthening performance measurement and reporting, but prior to its implementation a decision is needed by senior management regarding the nature and contents for future corporate planning framework. In the meantime the unit provided M&E advisory services for the preparation of the "OCHA in 2006" document and contributed to the development of performance indicators for the Institutional Strategy Paper document prepared by OCHA and DFID.

On the latter, there is a need to create momentum for building-up a systematic (bi-annual) monitoring and reporting mechanism not only to DFID, but more generally to donors on main achievements under institutional strategic frameworks. This would as well greatly facilitate and support a smoother and clearer annual reporting mechanism.

ESU participated in the elaboration of the CAP Strategic Monitoring and Evaluation Tool (SMET), which the IASC CAP SWG agreed to pilot in a few CAP countries in 2006. After testing and validation at field level, it is foreseen to use this tool systematically in all CAP countries (and possibly in other contexts as well) for the purpose of monitoring and as a commonly agreed performance evaluation framework for field coordination.

A list of main shortfalls in RBM-related monitoring and evaluation (and planning) and means to address those, as well as an action plan on how to improve OCHA specific RBM (including training) was prepared in late 2005, but was not translated into action due to lack of capacity related to conflicting assignments (Pakistan LLR) and lack of planning framework to build the basis for more systematic RBM in OCHA.

The ESU is working to continually expose OCHA staff (and evaluation colleagues from numerous agencies) to emerging methods of evaluation. To this end a one-day professional development workshop (8 July 2005) was conducted in order to introduce staff to the application of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) to evaluation. More than 90% of the participants found that through the workshop they had learned about and explored how AI can be used in evaluation work in general and at the UN in particular. Participants also learned how to develop, conduct and analyze interview data using an AI approach. While it remains a challenge to bridge the gap between theory and actual application, feedback showed that the initiative facilitated professional cross-fertilization among evaluation

staff and established AI (or study of success) as an additional tool in the evaluators' toolbox.

## 9. Follow-up on the Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations<sup>4</sup>

The following analysis was undertaken in April 2006 for 9 evaluations completed between mid-2002 and 2005. This sample only includes external evaluations and reviews but not lessons learned and studies such as the Humanitarian Financing Study and the Humanitarian Response Review. The figures below show a high rate of implementation of evaluation recommendations (58%) for evaluations tracked, ranging from full implementation of 100% of the recommendations made by the Gender IASC Policy Review to rates below 35% for the CAP Reviews and the Advocacy Review.

### (a) Darfur RTE.

While the UNCT provided a management response to the recommendations of the second report, a fully consultative and endorsed management response and implementation plan to each of the three reports' recommendations was delayed due to the lack of a dedicated capacity for follow up on the ground, as well as resistance from some key actors. Nonetheless, some of the recommendations have already been implemented independently by some actors and/or groups. Chiefly, the evaluation did help to identify and correct some unnoticed weaknesses in the response; focus attention on and accelerate efforts to solve ongoing yet unresolved issues; and contribute to efforts to strengthen strategic and forward looking planning, as well as monitoring and evaluation. At the writing of this report, OCHA had agreed to fund a dedicated Monitoring & Evaluation Officer for four months to Khartoum to support the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in ensuring: 1) a management response to *all* recommendations; 2) identification of those recommendations to be endorsed for action; 3) development of a time-bound action plan for implementation of these recommendations; and 4) tracking and regular reporting on the implementation of the recommendations to key stakeholders.

### (b) The external review of the IASC

This review made 43 recommendations for strengthening IASC in three critical areas: performance against core objectives; improving the IASC mechanism; and clarifying relationships to other UN actors and coordination mechanisms. The IASC then identified 41 actions to be taken against these recommendations. Of these, **21 had been fully implemented** as of March 2006 while **10 had been partially implemented**. The latter indicates that significant and meaningful action had been taken, but implementation has not yet been fully realized. **10 had not been implemented**. Key accomplishments

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<sup>4</sup> A management response matrix (MRM) format was developed by ESU as a means of ensuring that evaluations provide value-added and that recommendations and lessons learned are reflected in future programming and decision making. The MRM is developed after an actual evaluation has taken place and its implementation is checked on an annual basis. The matrix contains recommendations from the evaluation, recommended action, accountability, and time frame and is shared with the respective stakeholders, who are requested to respond to the recommendations. The stakeholders are free to indicate either their agreement or disagreement with a recommendation. If in agreement, they must indicate action and timeline. The ESU's role is to monitor the implementation of the recommendations and to provide periodic feedback to stakeholders and donors.

included progress on better supporting Humanitarian Coordinators and strengthening their selection process; improving dialogue with and participation of non-IASC actors, especially NGOs and donors as well as political and security actors; and increased use of inter-agency missions and evaluations. Actions only partially implemented tended towards those for which clear action had been taken, but where implementation depended on compliance from a wide array of independent actors, and thus was taking place to varying degrees. This is seen to be a persistent, inherent and general challenge of the current humanitarian coordination system, rather than a lack of effort in implementation. Important actions not yet implemented included the establishment of accountability and monitoring mechanisms; the development of an inter-agency advocacy strategy; extended partnerships with local actors, research institutions and academia; and strengthened public-private partnerships. Many of these actions, however, have been incorporated as part of the IASC workplan in 2006.

**(c) LLR on OCHA's response to the Iraq crisis**

The recommendations of this LLR have been tracked separately, revealing low levels of implementation. The LLR resulted in seven recommendations for strategic level issues (humanitarian leadership), structural issues (for example UN/NGO liaison and coordination) and support issues (administrative, information management and training): The recommendations were broken into 24 sub-recommendations. Of these, **four had been fully implemented** as of March 2006 while **four had been partially implemented. Seventeen had not been implemented.** A key element for the lack of implementation was the lack of ownership throughout the organization. The findings of the LLR were discussed at a workshop early on; however, it failed to generate the need commitment for follow-up. Early attempts to assign responsibilities and recording suggested actions through a MRM were only partially successful, making monitoring of implementation difficult. Nevertheless, key accomplishments included i) at the strategic level a review of OCHA's position in integrated missions and a more pro-active approach to integrating a gender perspective in humanitarian assistance; ii) at the structural level training for HC/RCS. Important actions not yet implemented were mainly with the administrative support issues and the structural, like establishing a task team concept for future crisis situations.

**(d) The evaluation of IRIN**

This evaluation made 8 recommendations primarily in relation to IRIN media relations, capacity, management and sustainability. The recommendations were broken into 15 sub-recommendations. Of these, **10 had been fully implemented** as of March 2006 while **2 had been partially implemented. 2 had not been implemented.** The high number of implementation was caused primarily by the fact that several of the recommendations required the organization to take no new action, but rather to maintain previous commitments.

**(e) The Review of the IASC 1999 policy on integration of a gender perspective in humanitarian assistance**

This review made 15 recommendations aimed at promoting the implementation of the IASC Gender Policy. The IASC Working Group committed to implementing the

seven recommendations which related to the Working Group or IASC Member Agencies. Of these, **all seven had been fully implemented** as of March 2006. The eight recommendations given to donors and member states were not tracked. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that some of these have been partially implemented.

**(f) The review of OCHA's humanitarian advocacy work**

This review was published in June 2004, made 9 overall recommendations to OCHA. AIMB then identified 15 actions to be taken against these recommendations. Of these, **three had been fully implemented** as of March 2006 while **five had been partially implemented**. The latter indicates that significant and meaningful action had been taken, but implementation has not yet been fully realized. **Five had not been implemented and two were deemed not applicable**. A large number of recommendations have not yet been implemented as the management response was contingent on the development of the Advocacy Strategy. The strategy has taken longer to accomplish than anticipated, but is currently with Senior Management for clearance and distribution. The recommendations pending action remain in the workplan for 2006.

**(g) The evaluation of OCHA's and UNOCHA's response and coordination services during the emergency in Afghanistan July 2001 to July 2002**

This evaluation made 17 recommendations for implementation by OCHA. The organization subsequently identified 19 actions to be taken against these recommendations. Of these, **14 had been fully implemented** as of March 2006 while **1 had been partially implemented**. The latter indicates that significant and meaningful action had been taken, but implementation has not yet been fully realized. **Two had not been implemented and two were deemed not applicable**. Actions only partially implemented related to the achievement of administrative support for staff at par with major operational agencies in the system. While extra funding has been earmarked for this purpose in the workplan 2006 the improvements have not yet been accomplished. One of the two recommendations not implemented relates to making available stress counseling adapted to both national and international staff whenever justified by the nature of the operation. No unit within OCHA saw themselves as owners of this recommendation and responsible was not delegated from Senior Management. The other recommendation not implemented aims at develop a standard briefing/induction kit systematically provided to staff assigned to emergency situations. This point remains on the 2006 workplan for the Staff Development and Training Unit through the establishment of an OCHA induction course.

### Management Response and Action Taken (2002-2005)

Evaluation/ Review/ Total # of recommendations	Month / Year of Evaluation Report	MRM	Imple- mented	Partially impl.	Not impl	Not applicable <sup>5</sup>
CAP External Review / 18	2002-04	Final update 2005-03	33%	44%	17%	6%
Afghanistan Evaluation / 19	2002-11	Final update 2006-03	74%	5%	11%	11%
IRIN Evaluation / 15	2003-04	Final update 2006-03	67%	13%	13%	7%
CAP Launch Review / 6	2003-12	Final update 2005-03	33%	33%	17%	17%
IASC Extern Review / 41	2003-12	Final update 2006-02	51%	24%	24%	0%
IDP Unit Evaluation <sup>6</sup> / 32	2004-01	Final update 2004-12	75%	34%	0%	0%
Advocacy Review / 14	2004-06	Updated 2006-03	14%	43%	29%	14%
Gender IASC Policy Review <sup>7</sup> / 7	2004-07	Final update 2006-03	100%	0%	0%	0%
ISDR Evaluation / 25	2005-07	Updated 2006-03	72%	24%	0%	4%
<b>Average per eval. *</b>			<b>58%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>6%</b>

\* not weighted for number of recommendations; 2002-2003 all monitoring closed.

## 10. Resource Mobilization and Partnerships

As indicated in Annex I the unit disbursed a total of US\$ 580,000 for its 2005 programme. A sum of US\$ 10,000 was provided in annual membership fees to ALNAP and the TEC was supported with \$25,000 (although this will only be reflected in the 2006 budget).

<sup>5</sup> 'Not applicable' covers recommendations for which no actions were needed and recommendations which were not agreed upon by management.

<sup>6</sup> Recommendations transformed into an IASC action plan with 26 points. Count excludes recommendations to donors.

<sup>7</sup> This count excludes 50% of the recommendations which were made towards the donors and members states (they remain untracked)

This amount does not include the additional three posts (two associate experts and one M&E officer) for which donor funding was obtained from DANIDA, Germany and Switzerland. Partnerships with key agencies as well as donors were strengthened by increasing the number of inter-agency initiatives. A majority of activities undertaken by the ESU are undertaken in partnership with other agencies and/or donors. This reflects OCHA's role as an inter-agency coordination mechanism.

While last year's programme was fully funded there is no approved budget for this year's programme. Raising funds for evaluations on an annual basis is difficult and jeopardizes good planning and timely execution. Since all funds for evaluations have to be fundraised this requires, in the very least, a good concept paper for each evaluation so a partner can be identified for the evaluation. Since the timing of the OCHA donor support group is only in May, the Unit has to juggle the funding for its annual work programme until it has a better notion of the funding that will be available. One way of maximizing evaluation funds is to join in with other partners/agencies in evaluation activities. This not only results in a lower cost for evaluation activities to OCHA but also in strengthened analysis and joint ownership between agencies.

## 11. Consultants

ESU recruits on the average 12 consultants per year. While it is one of the unit's basic principles to ensure gender balance and regional diversity, current efforts have only yielded modest results regarding regional diversity. The table below indicates gender and regional origin of ESU consultants over the last four years. Although ESU has done very well regarding gender balance, the predominance of consultants from North America and the UK clearly emerges, although this percentage has dropped in the past two years.

Year/	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>Consultant Origin</b>				
UK	1	3	4	5
US	1	4	2	3
Canada	3	1		1
Australia	2		1	1
Europe (non-UK)		3	2	3
Africa			2	1
Asia	1			2
Mid East			1	1
% female	25%	45%	50%	53%
% Southern	13%	0%	25%	24%
% US, Canada, UK	62%	73%	50%	53%
total	8	11	12	17

A key problem is that the general expertise required – a mix of humanitarian and evaluation experience, excellent English drafting skills and proven track record – tends to limit the pool of available consultants. For instance, when the TEC was recruiting

consultants for the coordination study last year, many of the same consultants were found to apply for each of the five studies and the consultants picked by four of the five organizations managing the evaluation were predominantly northern with the exception of the UNDP team.

**(a) Measures taken to improve regional diversity**

Realizing that posting positions on Reliefweb and ALNAP appears to result in predominantly northern applications, ESU expanded its advertisements to numerous list serves. All positions are now advertised on ten external sites (Reliefweb, ALNAP, Development Net, IDS Yellow Mondays, ELDIS, AFREA, IDEAS, M&E Net, DAC Network and the American Evaluation Association List Serve). However, the majority of the applicants were still “Northern” with the exceptions of a cluster around Indian candidates (but with no humanitarian or disaster reduction expertise). This indicates the need to broaden the list serves being used.

ESU makes a consistent effort to include “Southern” applicants in its short listing process and encourages the inclusion of “Southern” candidates in teams. However, as the short listing process involves also a technical bidding element, the final selection is based on competence rather than on regional origin.

**(b) Suggestions for improving regional diversity of short-term consultants**

ESU’s difficulties finding good southern consultants are mirrored elsewhere in OCHA. In order for OCHA to improve its diversity of consultants the following measures are proposed:

1. Build up a database that is accessible via the intranet to all OCHA staff. ESU has already started a DB for monitoring & evaluation consultants – this could be expanded.
2. Request RSO’s to canvass their regions for experienced experts and include those in the database.
3. Ensure vacancy posting of all consultant positions – and expand the publication to sites focusing on Asia, Africa and Latin America. RSO’s to investigate possible list serves in their regions.
4. Ensure North/South pairing of consultants where possible, also in view of building capacity at country level.

**12. The Year Ahead**

The draft workplan for 2006 is attached in Annex III.

*~ The End ~*

## 2005 Cost Breakdown by Evaluation, Partner and Consultant Information

<b>Real-time Evaluation of the Humanitarian Crisis in Darfur Phases II – III</b>				
	<b>Cost*</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Partners/Agencies</b>
Consultant's fees	\$77,300	male	Australian	FAO
Travel	\$42,585	female	British	WHO
UN Overhead	\$15,585	female	American	UNDP
	<b>\$135,470</b>	female	Canadian	UNICEF
		male	British	UNFPA
		male	British	DANIDA
		female	Sudanese	WFP
<b>Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) Coordination Evaluation</b>				
	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Partners/Agencies</b>
Consultant's fees	\$169,590	male	British	UNICEF
Travel	\$107,295	female	British	UNDP, UNFPA
UN Overhead	\$35,995	male	American	DARA
	<b>\$312,880</b>	male	Sri Lankan	BMZ, France Norway, UK, US,
		female	German	US,
		male	Sri Lankan	IFRC
<b>Evaluation of the Inter-agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)</b>				
	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Partners/Agencies</b>
Consultant's fees	\$69,200	male	Swedish	Canada
Travel	\$17,476	female	Turkish	Sweden
UN Overhead	\$11,267	female	German	Switzerland
	<b>\$97,944</b>			UK
<b>Other</b>				
	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	
Appreciative Inquiry Workshop	\$3,800	female	American	
ALNAP Secretariat	\$5,500			
ALNAP TEC	\$25,000			
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$580,594</b>			
		male 47%		
		female 53%		

\* These are estimated figures for the expenditures during the budget year and may therefore not reflect the full and final cost for each exercise.

**2005 WORKPROGRAMME STATUS REPORT**

<b>System-wide, Inter-agency and Joint Evaluations</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Status</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Darfur RTE	IASC Core Learning Group (WFP, UNIFEM, UNHCR, UNFPA, FAO, WHO, UNDP, CARE, OHCHR), DANIDA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> IDSR Evaluation	IDSR Support Group	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> HRR Implementation Support	Managed by Director, OCHA Geneva	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Tsunami Coordination Evaluation	TEC	✓ Being finalized in 2006
<input type="checkbox"/> UNJLC Inter-agency evaluation	WFP-led	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Interface of peace-keeping and humanitarian mandates	Managed by PDSB	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<b>OCHA-Specific Evaluations</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Status</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of OCHA's performance in Somalia	Internal	✗ cancelled
<input type="checkbox"/> OCHA's 2002-05 Strategic Plan: Achievements and Challenges	internal	✗ cancelled
<input type="checkbox"/> Review of HEB/RCB merger	Managed by OIOS	✓ Being finalized in 2006.
<input type="checkbox"/> Review of Reliefweb	ECHO, Core Learning Group	✓ Being finalized in 2006.
<input type="checkbox"/> Training Impact Assessment	internal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<sup>8</sup> legend

<sup>8</sup>  achieved    ✓ partially achieved    ✗ not achieved

**2005 WORKPROGRAMME STATUS REPORT**

<b>HA Lesson Learning Reviews (LLRs)</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Status</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> OCHA Exit Strategies	CRD	✗ cancelled
<input type="checkbox"/> Tsunami LLR	internal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Desk Reviews and Case Studies</b>	<b>Partners/comment</b>	<b>Status</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Comparative Global Needs Assessment	This was undertaken by an inter-agency working group led by the CAP Section.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Review of Humanitarian Response Funds		✓ (being finalized in 2006)
<b>Strengthening OCHA's Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity</b>	<b>Partners/comment</b>	<b>Status</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Support to field offices on M&E (advisory role on demand by branches, field offices, etc.)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Advise on M&E Systems for Burundi and Congo CAPs		✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Contribute to OCHA-wide strategic planning process		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting training strategy		✓ Implemt in 06
<input type="checkbox"/> HC accountability framework	This was prepared but not pursued by SMT.	✗
<input type="checkbox"/> Coordination Indicators	Work in progress	✓
<b>Other</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Status</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> ESU Annual Report		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> ALNAP Learning Initiative	ALNAP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> ALNAP Steering Committee	ALNAP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation Matrix Follow-up		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> ESU Webpage		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> ESU Publications (HF, IASC review)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## DRAFT 2006 WORK PROGRAMME

<b>System-wide, Inter-agency and Joint Evaluations</b>	<b>Task Manager/ Focal Point</b>	<b>Possible Partners</b>	<b>Estim. Funding Requirements</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Real-time evaluation (RTE) of the cluster approach: Pakistan	CH	IASC agencies; South Asia Taskforce	Staff travel only	February – March 2006
<input type="checkbox"/> RTE – Horn of Africa	Lead: UNICEF SF (TM)	IASC agencies	\$20,000	June – Aug 2006
<input type="checkbox"/> CAP evaluation (testing of the SMET)	CH	IASC CAP sub working group; UNEG country eval working group	\$ 100,000	Late 2006
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of the Human Securities Trust Fund (HSTF)	SK		\$ 145,000 (funded from HSTF)	Late 2005/early 2006
<input type="checkbox"/> Tsunami Evaluation Coalition	SF	Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC)	Carry-over 2005 for workshops, dissemination \$20,000 TEC Secretariat	January – July 2006
<input type="checkbox"/> Expanded CERF One-Year Review	SF	CERF agencies	\$ 120,000	Late 2006- early 2007 (actual review in 2007)
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of the Inter-Agency Displacement Division (IDD)	KDT	IASC	\$100,000	Late 2006

<b>OCHA-Specific Evaluations</b>		<b>Partners</b>		<b>Timeline</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of OCHA's training and capacity building strategies and programs	SK	internal	n/a	on-going
<input type="checkbox"/> Review of Reliefweb	SK	internal	\$ 80,000 (provided by Reliefweb)	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2006
<input type="checkbox"/> Review of Regional Support Offices (RSO)	KDT	RSOs	\$40,000	4 <sup>th</sup> quarter 2006

<b>HA Lesson Learning Reviews (LLRs)</b>		<b>Partners</b>		<b>Timeline</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Pakistan LLR	CH		staff travel	January 06

<b>Desk Reviews and Case Studies</b>		<b>Partners</b>		<b>Timeline</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Response Fund (ERF): Case studies on funds in Liberia, Angola, Somalia, DRC and Indonesia	TK		\$ 100,000	Late 2005 - mid 2006

## 2006 WORK PROGRAMME

<b>Strengthening OCHA's Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity</b>		<b>Partners</b>	<b>Estim. Funding Requirements</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Support to field offices on M&E (advisory role on demand by branches, travel on branch budgets, possibly to be covered by external consultants?)	All			On going
<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot strategic monitoring system for the CAP (SMET) in up to three countries	CH/UR	UN CT, NGOs	tbd	All year
<input type="checkbox"/> Contribute to OCHA-wide strategic planning process	SF/CH			3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2006
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare & implement MER training strategy (including incorporation into existing training)	CH		Tbd. Cannot be provided within existing budget	1st Quarter 2006
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop Good Practice/Insight Series	TK/SK		Internal production costs	ongoing
<input type="checkbox"/> Coordination Indicators for use in OCHA's work planning process	SF/CH			2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter 2006
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop evaluation policy	SF			1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2006
<b>Other</b>		<b>Partners</b>		<b>Timeline</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> ESU Annual Report	SF			2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2006
<input type="checkbox"/> Inputs for ECOSOC report	SF/TK			2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2006
<input type="checkbox"/> ALNAP Steering Committee	SF	ALNAP	\$ 10,000	4 meetings/year
<input type="checkbox"/> Focal point for OIOS-led self-evaluation of OCHA; ERM focal point	SF	OIOS, internal OCHA project team		January – May 2006
<input type="checkbox"/> United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Board	SF	UN agencies		4 meetings/year
<input type="checkbox"/> Inter-agency Real-Time Evaluation concept	SF	IASC, UN evaluation departments		1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2006
<input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation Matrix Follow-up	SK			February, August 06
<input type="checkbox"/> ESU Webpage	tbd			on-going
<input type="checkbox"/> ESU Publications	tbd			on-going

**Estimated budget:** \$ 725,000  
**Approved (cost plan):** \$ 402,000  
**Already "funded":** \$ 225,000 (RW, HSTF), plus tsunami-related activities for 2006

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**Title of the review: Inter-agency real-time evaluation of the humanitarian response to the Darfur crisis.****Purpose**

The purpose of the evaluation was two-fold. First, it aimed to allow the UN and other responders to the crisis to benefit from external, independent guidance to help improve the operational response in real-time. Secondly, it aimed to identify broader lessons learned in Darfur for future humanitarian action there and elsewhere.

**Partners**

The evaluation was commissioned by the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs/Emergency Relief coordinator (USG/ERC), under the auspices of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). It was been funded by OCHA, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, WHO, FAO and Danida.

**Team and method**

The evaluation was undertaken by two independent consultants with support from OCHA staff, an NGO representative of the Steering Committee on Humanitarian Response and for a very brief period a Fellow from the Rift Valley Institute. The evaluation took place in real-time over the course of three visits to Sudan in September 2004, January/February 2005 and June/July 2005, each of which resulted in a set of real-time recommendations for the consideration of humanitarian actors. The purpose of this iterative approach was to allow the consultants to observe the response to the crisis as it unfolded and feed suggestions for immediate course corrections into existing mechanisms and fora, as well as to determine in consultation with responders reasonable expectations for improvements in the response, against which progress could subsequently be measured. Given this focus, the main informants were frontline responders themselves from the UN agencies, non-governmental organizations and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, as well as beneficiaries, primarily internally displaced persons within North, South and West Darfur. Some donor governments and key headquarters stakeholders were also interviewed in New York, Geneva, London and Rome.

The fourth and final report, which was to have focused on the lessons learned from the Darfur experience, was never completed as the team leader was forced to resign from all work in August 2005 due to the illness of his son, and it was felt that the final report could not be satisfactorily completed without his participation.

## **Overall findings and conclusions**

Although humanitarian needs and protection issues in Darfur increased sharply in early 2003, following fighting between the Government of Sudan (GOS) and insurgents groups, the UN humanitarian and diplomatic community did not seriously begin addressing the crisis for nearly a year, despite calls to do so from a number of high-level UN officials. Aid organizations were also slow to begin scaling up programmes. Significant operations were not underway until the GOS eased restrictions on access between March and June 2004 and then finally lifted them in July 2004.

Although by the time the evaluation concluded in July 2005, nearly 90 percent of the population was accessible to the UN and/or its partners, continuing increases in the affected population and the massive initial under-delivery of assistance meant that humanitarian community experienced ongoing difficulties getting “on top of” the crisis. A year after the scaling up of assistance, there were still, in any given sector, a range of 850,000 to 1.24 million people without assistance. Generally declining morbidity and mortality rates over time suggest that the response, however belatedly, did help prevent even more deaths, which could have resulted from the displacement and loss of access to livelihoods after the initial crisis. But, the evaluation concluded that the still significant gaps in assistance; the continuing human rights abuses; the lack of access to war affected in rebel-controlled areas; and concerns about the quality and consistency of aid delivery and services were troubling.

## **Main recommendations**

The team focused on critical areas they believed would have the greatest impact on the overall response, resulting in 12 recommendation sets addressing issues ranging from advocacy to capacity and staffing. Key recommendations included the need to: 1) improve accountability of headquarters support to the field, in particular towards ensuring the response is staffed with sufficiently experienced and trained staff; 2) extend the UN presence beyond state capitals into the deep field to, among to things, allow the full realization of its plans to respond to the crisis; 3) develop a joint human rights protection framework that delineates roles and responsibilities between all human rights and humanitarian agencies/actors; 4) develop a common advocacy platform that makes better use of system wide advocacy resources; 5) install a Strategic Planning and Analysis Unit to better inform programming; 6) strengthen sectoral planning *at the field level* as the primary means of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action in the short to medium term; 7) develop a common assessment framework in order to minimize the inattention to cross sectoral issues, in particular protection and gender; 8) improve existing agency-specific and common accountability mechanisms as a means to improving the overall response through benchmarking and testing reasonable expectations; 9) ensure adequate public information about humanitarian activities to increase confidence and minimize security risks; 10) better manage the perceived tension between meeting short-term needs quickly and ensuring qualitative programming needs in order to most efficiently meet needs, most notably of women, as well as to most

effectively target assistance; and 10) invest more in staff training and induction to build the future humanitarian work force.

### **Follow-up Mechanisms**

With the support from a dedicated Monitoring & Evaluation Officer, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator is ensuring: 1) a management response to *all* recommendations; 2) identification of those recommendations to be endorsed for action; 3) development of a time-bound action plan for implementation of these recommendations. This will then be discussed and/or endorsed by the IASC.

### **Lessons for ESU**

1. Real-time evaluation has significant potential to help in-county responders identify weakness and build on the strengths in the overall humanitarian response, and make the necessary amendments.
2. If this potential is to be fully realized, real-time evaluation must be owned and accepted by all actors and in particular, by the field actors upon whom implementation depends. Thus, UN agencies, NGOs and donors must jointly understand and embrace this approach; and be desirous of applying it in future crisis. This would necessitate their commitment at the institutional level to actively support and participate in inter-agency real-time evaluation, at both headquarters and in the field; as well as to own and ensure implementation of the recommendations as if they had been commissioned from within.
3. If the chief aim is to improve the operational response in the field, the participatory evaluative approach applied in Darfur must be applied even earlier in the future -- during the conceptualization stages so that the issues to be explored and methods to be used are jointly agreed and developed with the field.
4. However, there must also be firm and clear guidance from headquarters, both to mediate any differences that might arise and also to help safeguard the relevance, appropriateness and integrity of the evaluation. UN agencies and NGOs, both individually and collectively, must be willing to intervene if field actors do not fully support the conduct of a real-time evaluation.
5. The means of doing so, as well as engaging stakeholders and securing their feedback and guidance on both substantive and methodological aspects of the evaluation, must be clearly defined and understood from the outset of the evaluation. In this regard, a single evaluation manager is necessary but an inter-agency reference group comprised of sufficiently senior decision makers with clearly defined commitments is critical.

6. Likewise, real-time recommendations require a real-time and actionable response. The means of achieving this must also be clear from the outset. While the field should validate the recommendations and provide its views on their endorsement and implementation, a flexible, headquarters mechanism, preferably under the auspices of the IASC or within its existing structures, must be accountable for ensuring a swift and immediate response to and implementation of the recommendations. Ideally, this would be one and the same as the inter-agency reference group mentioned above.
7. For an exercise of this magnitude, a full-time capacity must exist at the field level to ensure: 1) a fully consultative process throughout the evaluation; 2) a management response to *all* recommendations; 3) identification of those recommendations to be endorsed for action; 4) development of a time-bound action plan for implementation of these recommendations; and 5) tracking and regular reporting on the implementation of the recommendations to key stakeholders.
8. An external evaluation team is essential to the independence of such an exercise. It should be sufficient in number and include the range of expertise needed to address critical issues. Attention should be paid to ensuring representation from the global South as well as expertise in cross cutting issues, particularly gender.
9. Benchmarking against jointly defined expectations of reasonable progress should be more fully explored as a flexible means of measuring progress in such fluid contexts.
10. The scope of a real-time evaluation of an ongoing humanitarian response should be focused, realistic and span a period of no longer than six months.
11. Inter-agency real-time evaluation of an overall humanitarian response should have one purpose only: to make recommendations to improve the immediate ongoing response through a participatory partnership with field actors. Lessons learned should be commissioned separately.

**Title of the evaluation: Training Impact Assessment of the OCHA  
Emergency Field Coordination Training (EFCT)**

**Purpose**

The objective of the training impact assessment is to provide tangible information on what kind of impact the OCHA EFCT program renders. In particular it should assess the level of success of the EFCT in achieving its goal to improve the ability of participants to facilitate effective humanitarian assistance. To the extent possible the information should be acquired in a way which facilitates increased impact.

**Team and Method**

The assessment was conducted by the Evaluation and Studies Unit with support from and in full consultation with the Training Unit in GVA as well as the EFCT trainers. The EFCT has been adjusted over time and the current version looks significantly different than from the outset. The assessment therefore only surveyed the three latest, similar courses (EFCT XI-XIII) with a total of 78 participants. The assessment of training impact was divided into different levels: i) reaction; ii) learning; iii) behavioral change; iv) training results. The main tool of the assessment was a self-evaluation survey of the participants with a response rate of 71%.

**Overall Findings and Conclusions**

The overall EFCT goal has been operationalized through two EFCT course objectives around which this impact assessment was designed. *The first course objective* was to 'build upon individual knowledge, skills and attitudes for effective inter-agency humanitarian coordination.' This study showed that over 85% of the respondents found that the EFCT course had been 'highly effective' or 'somewhat effective' in providing them with new knowledge or skills.

*The second course objective* was to make participants 'understand perspectives, identify and apply tools, techniques and approaches to coordination.' In total, 98% replied that the course had been 'somewhat effective' or 'highly effective' in developing a common understanding of emergency field coordination. On the application of aspects from the four overall themes of the EFCT course the following results were reached: i) 71% of the respondents said they had applied something in their professional life from the sessions addressing Basic Programmatic Skills; ii) 87% from the sessions addressing Interpersonal Skills & Relationship Management; iii) 52% from the sessions addressing the Legal and Ethical Framework; and iv) 71% from the sessions addressing Coordination Approaches and Emerging Practices. Almost all those who claimed to have applied aspects of the training sessions were backing their answers with concrete examples of application.

In combination, the fulfillment of the course objectives and additional benefits of the EFCT course mentioned by participants provides a tangibly body of evidence that the EFCT program meets its overarching goal of 'improve the ability of participants to facilitate effective humanitarian assistance' and in turn contributes to OCHA's fulfillment of its mandate and mission statement.

### **Main recommendations**

The assessment led to five general recommendations for the Staff Development and Learning unit: i) EFCT organizers and facilitators should review the approaches and methods applied in the sessions addressing Interpersonal Skills & Relationship Management and where possible try to export key methods to other aspects of the EFTC; ii) EFCT organizers and facilitators should work to improve the impact of the sessions on the Legal and Ethical Framework; iii) persons selected for EFCT participation should primarily be from the field or alternatively with likely future deployment to the field (signed to relevant roster); iv) EFTC training implementation action plans should be made mandatory; v) the Training Unit should institutionalize the use of an impact assessment survey as a tool for quality monitoring and control (and introducing self-evaluation as mentioned in OIOS report A/60/73 to the General Assembly prepared in response to the GA resolution 58/269 of 23 Dec 2003).

### **Follow-up Mechanisms**

The results of the training impact assessment should be used as a baseline for the annual performance reporting. The Evaluation recommendations were discussed and agreed with the Staff Development and Learning unit in Geneva.

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**Title of the review: External Evaluation of the Secretariat of ISDR.**

## **Purpose**

To assess the effectiveness of the ISDR Secretariat in meeting its functions and responsibilities in line with its initial mandates, how these have evolved based on new requirements and presenting recommendations for the future role of the ISDR in light of the study's findings, other pertinent proposals, and the Hyogo Framework for Action.

This entailed:

- i. To examine the **effectiveness** of the Secretariat in **carrying out its functions and responsibilities** and in **achieving its declared objectives**
- ii. To analyze **how effectively the secretariat relates to other parts of the ISDR system:** IATF, member states/national constituencies, regional bodies, technical networks, and how effectively it works with partners with whom it has institutional arrangements (i.e. OCHA, UNDP, WMO, PAHO, UNEP)
- iii. To review and assess the **value-added, relevance and appropriateness** of the ISDR Secretariat's work-programme, its strategic orientation and its functional approach in performing its tasks, including the value-added of innovative partnerships

## **Partners**

The evaluation was commissioned by the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs/Emergency Relief coordinator (USG/ERC). It has been funded by Canada, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK.

## **Team and method**

The evaluation was undertaken by three independent consultants. It took place between February and June 2005.

Primary data were collected through a variety of methods, including key informant interviews (151), focus group interviews (in Nairobi and with UNDP-BCPR in Geneva) and e-mail survey (return rate 43 out of 1,300 sent out). The team has also visited the regional offices in Nairobi and Latin America and one country in Asia where it has developed relevant activities in order to consult with key stakeholders at the regional/country level and assess ISDR relevance in a regional and local context.

A donor advisory group followed on the evaluation through three meetings, and got a chance to comment on the ToR, the inception report and the draft report.

## **Overall findings and conclusions**

The evaluation developed five key recommendations, including numerous (25) sub-recommendations, addressing structure and focus of the Secretariat, strategic tasks and priorities, strategic plan, focusing on key functions and governance reform.

The broad range of interviews conducted has demonstrated that, although there were areas of convergence, there was no overall consensus regarding the performance of the Secretariat or its future.

## **Main recommendations**

1. In order to move forward in implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action the UN needs a secretariat for DRR, and should therefore continue to maintain an ISDR Secretariat, but with major revisions to the current structure and focus.
2. The Secretariat (together with a strengthened governance structure) should choose a narrow, clearly defined and realistic range of strategic tasks and priorities.
3. The Secretariat's strategic plan should provide added value to member states for policy analyses and communication/information support, based primarily on enhanced intra- and inter-regional networking.
4. In order to obtain a clear profile and use available resources effectively a major structural reform of the Secretariat is required, focusing on two key functions at central and regional levels: policy analysis and communication/information
5. The Secretariat's internal structural reform process should be undertaken in conjunction with a reform of governance and a review of the role of higher level management in order to ensure that the Secretariat can be held accountable for its work and to enable the Secretariat to retain a more steadfast focus on its strategic plan and functions

## **Follow-up Mechanisms:**

The results of the evaluation and the response were extensively discussed with the ISDR Support Group, the IATF and with the USG and ASG in charge of the Secretariat.

The recommendations were broadly accepted, although the ISDR Secretariat was not as strongly involved in the evaluation process as it should have been. Out of the 25 sub-recommendations, only one was rejected and all of the accepted have been acted upon, fully implemented for the vast majority (18) or partially implemented (6).

## **Lessons for ESU**

The Secretariat's feedback on the usefulness of the evaluation was positive, in spite of the fact that they felt that they had been excluded from the consultation process with the advisory group. ESU should be more normative in requesting that the units being

evaluated are always included in a “learning group”, together with all main stakeholders. In this case it would have been the ISDR Secretariat (at HQ and maybe one representative from a regional office), the Support Group and the IATF as former governing body.

Also the management response has been rather slow to materialize, in part as this entailed a broader stakeholder consultation process. On the other hand this allowed for enough time for this response to take place and resulted in a good degree of implementation of the recommendations.

## **Title of the review: Humanitarian Response Review**

### **Purpose**

The main scope of the Review has been to identify factors which have hindered the speed and effectiveness of humanitarian response in the past and to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to improve the timeliness and impact of future humanitarian interventions.

### **Partners**

The review was commissioned by the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs/Emergency Relief coordinator (USG/ERC) and managed by ESU Geneva under the supervision of Yvette Stevens. It has been funded by UK (177'000\$), Sweden (100'000\$), Norway (75'000\$), Australia (50'000\$), and France (35'000\$).

### **Team and method**

The four very senior consultants of the HRR team, have managed to complete their assignment under a very tight timeline between February and July 2005. OCHA Geneva has dedicated a great deal of time and energy to the challenging task of managing this complex process. Donors, member States and IASC community have willingly responded to surveys and interviews throughout the consultation period and have actively participated in periodical briefings at the stages of the inception report, the draft and final report through ad hoc contact groups.

### **Overall findings and conclusions**

The Review has led amongst other things to the identification of major areas for improvement:

1. Increase the predictability of Humanitarian Funding, i.e. the need to upgrade the CERF,
2. Filling gaps in 9 areas of the humanitarian response system through adopting an approach to increase accountability, later referred to as the “cluster approach”, and
3. Strengthening the Humanitarian Coordinator system

In total, seventeen key recommendations were identified, one global and 16 in 4 main areas:

- a. Accountability and performance,
- b. Preparedness and response capacity,
- c. Coordination of humanitarian response
- d. Adequacy, timeliness and flexibility of emergency funding

The recommendations were segregated into two groups: one addressing progress to be made in existing fields of work, the other changes of approach or new actions to be taken.

### **Follow-up Mechanisms**

The implementation of the recommendations has been organized under the auspices of the IASC under the lead of AERC and IASC chairperson through numerous working groups and task forces.

### **Lessons for ESU**

Reviews requested outside of the approved work plan can be very demanding. Managing four very senior consultants under such a tight timeframe is a challenging task, which may be to the detriment of putting enough attention to the substance of such an important review. The processes of consultation proved again to be to the benefit of ownership / acceptance of the findings and recommendations.

**Title of the review: Coordination of International Humanitarian Assistance in Tsunami-Affected Countries**

**Purpose:** The purpose of the evaluation was to assess what worked and what did not work in coordination and why? The evaluation looked at how coordination systems contributed to the overall Tsunami response? The evaluation looked primarily at the efficiency, effectiveness, coherence and appropriateness of coordination arrangements within the international humanitarian system and how this related to national government and non government agents.

**Partners:** The evaluation has benefited from an extensive review process, with a dedicated steering committee composed of the International Federation of the Red Cross [IFRC], Save the Children [UK], the United Nations Fund for Population Activities [UNFPA], UNICEF, UNDP, USAID/OFDA and the wider working group composed of an additional nine representatives from UN agencies, NGO's donor countries and one private organization. The evaluation team was directly supported by the TEC Secretariat and the TEC Core Management Team.

**Team and method:** The evaluation covered four countries – Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Maldives – with some additional observations from Thailand. A four person team with one national consultant [Sri Lanka] visited each country from September-November 2005. More than 350 people were interviewed for the evaluation.

**Overall findings and conclusions:** In such a high profile event, the UN Special Coordinator [and shortly afterwards] the UN Special Envoy were essential as catalysts, advocates and focal points in brining affected governments and the wider aid community together. However the evaluation found a need for greater coherence over the responsibilities of reporting and decision making within the various levels of coordination. The tsunami response also highlighted the need for a more predictable and centralized coordination structure at the field level under the direction of the IASC.

In the early stage of the emergency there was no common service for common assessment. In the immediate aftermath of the tsunami, the setting up of an information clearing house [HIC] and a common platform for inter-sectoral coordination were perhaps more important than assessments as such. Insufficient efforts were made to disseminate information and explain the purpose of the available common services. Operational partners might, for instance, have benefited from common agreements on procurement, staff hire, rental charges etc, in addition to those services available.

There was some dissatisfaction with the quality of coordination meetings, particularly during the first 6 months of the response. The roles, responsibilities and decision making authority of participants were not always spelled out. OCHA's pivotal role in ensuring consistency and cohesion between all international partners and governments at district and sub-district levels was hampered by short term adhoc funding of posts and the quality of individuals varied, pointing to the need for better training.

The sheer number of NGO's present during the Tsunami response created a congestion of humanitarian space. Many NGOs extended their mandates beyond areas of traditional competency. The quality of needs assessments varied – and whilst immediate humanitarian relief needs were met – the evaluation found there were gaps across some sectors and duplication of assistance in others. In some cases, direct implementation of programs was preferred over the more time consuming approach that would have involved building partnerships with national and local NGOs. The Red Cross movement also faced problems with coordinating their responses. Donated goods and services from visiting national societies were often determined by their own domestic assumptions.

The relief effort benefited from strong national governments with well developed national institutions, including the military and functioning legal frameworks. However strong central governments could not compensate for poorly developed local government coordination mechanisms. The evaluation found in all countries that the governments' ability to effectively coordinate was constrained by their own limited capacity and access to information.

**Main recommendations:** An international review and consultation needs to be undertaken with INGOs and local NGOs to develop new approaches to ensure that there is adequate representation within coordination structures at all levels. A certification process should be introduced to assist governments and donors in choosing responsible NGO partners.

The RC/HC should take a lead in promoting joint advocacy on “difficult” issues including land tenure, conflict affected/non affected populations, access to war affected populations and improving governance and adequate resources for coordination need to be pledged and made, during relief and recovery phases of disasters. Induction training on coordination in emergencies should be developed.

Local capacity should not be overlooked. The International community needs to ensure that sufficient priority is given to enhancing coordination capacities at all levels. The creation and usage of a common beneficiary data case provided and endorsed by governments should be an early priority in the emergency phase.

Bench marks for gender and coordination in recovery need to be developed and senior humanitarian actors should be made more aware of the civil-military resources and guidelines available to them.

**Follow-up Mechanisms:**

- The final TEC Coordination report will be disseminated widely, with separate country reports in July 2006.
- The TEC synthesis report on Tsunami will be launched in ECOSOC, July 14 2006. This forum will provide the opportunity for the International community to discuss follow up of the recommendations.