

**OCHA's  
Annual Evaluation Report  
for 2006**



**Prepared by the  
Evaluation and Studies Section (ESS)**

April 2007

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## **1. Introduction**

The Evaluation and Studies Section (ESS) has been in existence since February 2002. This is now the fourth annual report prepared by the Section to more widely share evaluation findings and lessons on an annual basis and to provide accountability on the section's work to management and donors.

ESS's work programme for 2006 was developed in consultation with senior management and the evaluation services of partner humanitarian agencies. As reflected in the 2002-05 evaluation framework, the work of ESS is divided into inter-agency evaluations, OCHA-specific evaluations, lesson learning reviews (LLRs), and desk reviews. While a new evaluation framework was not established, the work of ESS is guided by an evaluation policy that was developed and approved in 2005.

As in previous years, the initial workplan for the year 2006 was modified to accommodate specific requests by management and to address new emergencies (e.g. Lebanon, Pakistan). ESS managed eleven studies, reviews and evaluations, as well as participated in a number of inter-agency evaluation activities. Annex I presents the implementation rates for ESS external evaluations for 2006, and for all evaluations dating back to 2002. A cost breakdown of 2006 evaluations - including consultant and partner information - is presented in Annex II, and status report on the implementation of the 2006 workplan is presented in Annex III. Annex IV contains executive summaries of all 2006 evaluations. The work programme for 2007 can be found in Annex IV.

More detailed information on each completed exercise is included in Annex V. All reports with the exception of the internal lesson learning reviews were posted on ReliefWeb. In addition, all reports and policies are available on ESS's webpage on OCHA-online (<http://ochaonline.un.org/esu>).

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

In 2006, ESS was involved in a total of eleven evaluation activities, two more than in the previous year. Nine of these were directly managed or conducted by the section. These included, on an inter-agency basis, the finalization of the evaluation of Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC), the wrapping-up and dissemination of a system-wide evaluation of the coordination of the international response to the tsunami, an evaluation of the Human Security Trust Fund, an inter-agency real-time review of the application of the cluster approach in Pakistan, and active participation in an inter-agency evaluation of the UN's response to the 2006 drought in the Horn of Africa. Sixty-six percent of all evaluation activities were undertaken on an inter-agency or joint basis, a slightly lower percentage than last year.

OCHA-specific evaluation activities involved a review of ReliefWeb, a review of the effectiveness of select OCHA training and capacity-building programmes (EFCT, CMCoord), and a review of Humanitarian Response Funds in several countries. An in-

depth internal lesson learning review was also undertaken to learn from OCHA's response to the Pakistan earthquake and the Lebanon crisis. Support was provided to the office of the Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan in the form of four-month Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) capacity to help with addressing the recommendations of the Darfur Real Time Evaluation (RTE).

A large portion of inter-agency evaluation activities evolved around the TEC, which was chaired by OCHA, culminating in an official launch of the report during the July ECOSOC meeting in Geneva. The TEC in itself was a major achievement, as this initiative brought together over 40 UN agencies, NGOs, donors and academics with the shared objective of providing accountability and joint learning on one of the largest humanitarian response efforts ever. The TEC findings were critical and exposed a system that did not build on local capacities or effectively coordinate, but instead competed for resources and was unable to provide a smooth transition from relief to recovery. However, there was general agreement that these findings were not unique to the tsunami response, and indeed were a confirmation of systemic weaknesses. Like the *Humanitarian Response Review* undertaken in 2005, the outcome of the TEC is expected to influence humanitarian reform for years to come.

In recognition of the need for more timely evaluative feedback into humanitarian operations, ESS worked with key partners on developing a common approach to inter-agency real-time evaluations (IA-RTEs). The resulting approach note was endorsed by ALNAP's membership in December and is expected to be piloted as of mid-2007 for a period of one year.

Regarding the envisaged strengthening of OCHA's M&E capacity, ESS provided a help desk for field offices and undertook a mission to oPt to pilot the IASC strategic monitoring and evaluation tool for the CAP. This resulted in the recognition that the strategic monitoring and evaluation framework must be aligned with the Needs Analysis Framework (NAF). For most of the year, ESS was heavily involved in revitalizing OCHA's strategic planning process. ESS led an inter-branch task force to develop the strategic plan for 2007-09, developed a performance indicator menu and drafted a planning guide to streamline planning, monitoring and reporting as well as provide better guidance to OCHA offices for setting up M&E systems. A planning clinic was conducted in June, and in October the Section organized a strategic planning workshop in New York that was well attended by a cross-section of OCHA staff from headquarters in both Geneva and New York and the field.

The performance record on the implementation of evaluation recommendations remains uneven. ESS tracks the implementation of recommendations dating back to 2002 but only updates matrices for a period of three years at which point the tracking stops. To date, about 83% percent of evaluation and review recommendations have resulted in concrete implementation: of these, 48% have been implemented and 34% are in the process of being implemented. The degree of compliance varies from evaluation to evaluation and management needs to ensure that those recommendations reported as being implemented are, in fact, addressed completely. Lower than average response rates

on the inter-agency evaluations illustrate the difficulty to achieve systematic follow-up and buy-in.

An additional P4 position with a focus on natural disasters was created in 2006, bringing the full staffing capacity to three regular professional posts and three project-funded/donor-sponsored posts. The two junior positions were vacated in August, and one of the NY staff was reassigned in January 2007 resulting in three vacancies at the beginning of 2007.

### **Lessons Identified in 2006**

- As OCHA internal Lessons Learning Reviews (LLRs) tend to point out recurrent weaknesses, there is no point in repeating general reviews until standard operation procedures (SOPs) and other measures are in place to fix the identified weaknesses. It is more appropriate to undertake more focused LLRs on specific themes or issues and also to include external feed-back as a reality-check.
- One of the systemic weaknesses in the management of evaluations is still the tracking of and follow-up on the implementation of recommendations. This is especially critical when looking at interagency evaluations where multiple stakeholders from various organizations are supposed to react to the recommendations made. ESS should interact more with OCHA management on recommendations addressed to OCHA and act as catalyst or advocate for those addressed to external stakeholders.
- Impact monitoring and evaluation is something that everybody is asking for but which remains challenging to obtain, due to systemic difficulties: the need to measure negative impact (i.e. avoided negative outcomes, because of an efficient response), and, directly linked to this, the lack of (baseline) data. ESS should more strongly advocate for systematic and structured monitoring at the field level.
- ESS staff can make a critical contribution to the success of inter – agency evaluations (e.g. Tsunami Evaluation Coalition, Pakistan RTE) by taking up the role of coordinators and managers of the evaluation process. Enough time needs to be planned for this, as these are usually very time-consuming tasks for those involved.
- ESS workplanning should be coordinated with key agencies as early as possible to ensure that partner agencies have sufficient capacities and resources to fully participate.

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

#### **a) Inter-agency RTE on the Application of the Cluster Approach during the 2005/6 Pakistan Earthquake Response**

An inter-agency team of eight persons conducted an in-country review in February 2006, through a key stakeholder analysis that surveyed almost 90 active participants engaged in cluster activities. These included members of the Country Team, cluster leads and members, Pakistan Government representatives, non-governmental organizations, major donors, as well as agency headquarters staff that had served in Pakistan at varying stages of the humanitarian operation.

This evaluation was managed by ESS. The evaluation manager also participated as a team member with the specific brief to function as rapporteur to the IASC WG. The team was formally led by a WFP-appointed former senior official. The NGO representative and IOM were in charge of the drafting of the report. While the real-time nature of the evaluation was debatable, it did provide valuable insights into the processes that impact the effectiveness of the cluster approach. The main conclusions of the report were that the cluster approach successfully provided a single and recognizable framework for coordination but that there was inconsistent understanding of the cluster approach by the Pakistan Country Team.

The final report proposed eight key actions that were presented and endorsed by the IASC Working Group. The report also contains 24 recommendations, most of which are addressed to the IASC Working Group or its members (e.g., cluster lead agencies and partner organizations) at the global-level. The recommendations focused on promoting improved understanding and institutionalization of the Cluster Approach and strengthening global-level support to the IASC Country Teams, including in Pakistan.

#### **b) Follow up on the Darfur Real-Time Evaluation**

While the Darfur RTE acted as catalyst for action on some issues, its real-time recommendations were for the most part not acted upon in real-time. The reasons for this include competing priorities, the sheer number of recommendations, a lack of capacity at the field level and 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. ESS fielded an M&E advisor to Sudan in April 2006 for four months to support the Humanitarian Coordinator's (HC) office in pursuing the implementation of the RTE recommendations.

The M&E advisor provided a management response to the recommendations of the second report, but it is difficult to assess the degree to which the recommended actions led to change. UNHCR reported that they had used the management response matrix and

that they found it extremely useful. The newly established M&E unit - one of the key recommendations that has been implemented - is now tasked with promoting and monitoring implementation. However, much time has passed since the RTE itself was conducted, making some of the recommendations outdated; others have already been implemented independently by some actors and/or groups, and some areas, including protection, are work in progress. The evaluation did help identify and correct some neglected weaknesses in the response, focus attention on and accelerate efforts to solve unresolved issues and contribute to strengthening strategic and forward looking planning, monitoring and evaluation.

### c) Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC)

ESS remained heavily engaged with the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) throughout 2006. This Coalition includes some 45 UN agencies, NGOs, donors and non-profit organizations that agreed to jointly evaluate sector-wide performance. ALNAP/ODI provides the institutional platform for the TEC. The TEC was overseen by a Core Management Group which met frequently and was chaired by the chief of ESS. The TEC contained five cross-cutting evaluations on (1) needs assessment, (2) coordination, (3) local and regional capacities, (4) link between relief, rehabilitation and development and (5) donor response. The TEC's recommendations can be summarized as follows:

- 1) *Need for a fundamental reorientation of the humanitarian response system:* community ownership of the emergency response ensures that it is accountable, coordinated and appropriate to their needs. Future vulnerability is reduced by building community capacity. The same is true for national ownership in natural disasters.
- 2) *Need for better disaster response capacity:* supporting community capacities develops preparedness and the ability to hold agencies to account. Improving agency capacity and linkages between agencies improves the quality of response. Preparedness reduces the costs of the response.
- 3) *Need for accreditation and certification:* having a certification system for agencies will allow affected populations, their governments, and both private and public donors to identify which agencies are competent to intervene in any given emergency.
- 4) *Need for impartial and proportionate funding:* funding proportionate to need allows responses proportionate to need. More even funding flows ensure that agencies can develop surge capacity and allow investment in preparedness and in building and strengthening community capacity.

The draft TEC reports and key messages were launched at the margins of ECOSOC in July 2006, managed by ESS. Country-level debriefing workshops were held in Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Maldives in April/May. Much has been achieved by the TEC – yet the TEC will not have been a success unless key humanitarian actors embrace the findings and recommendations and act upon them. Many of the recommendations have a system-wide focus, yet there is no system-wide agreement on how to proceed. Some

follow-up action is already occurring, mainly through the Clinton NGO initiative and the Global Partnership Forum – in the area of accountability, local capacities and accreditation.

The work of the TEC is far from over, even though the affected countries are fully in the recovery phase. In 2007, TEC members must address the recommendations directed at them. A follow-up to the evaluation of the link between relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) will be also be undertaken by some of the TEC members and this should provide valuable insights into what worked and what did not during the transition to recovery period. The TEC Secretariat has been dissolved and mainstreamed within ALNAP. ALNAP's membership has agreed to make the TEC its main platform for future work.

#### **d) Inter-Agency RTE on the Drought Response in the Horn of Africa**

OCHA participated in this UNICEF-managed inter-agency RTE which took place August – December 2006. Although this was labeled real-time, early concerns that the evaluation came too late to be truly real-time were confirmed once the team was in the field. The TOR and the task were complex – the RTE covered Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia – and although there was considerable field buy-in, the willingness of agencies to follow up on the recommendations of this RTE was lacking. A management response matrix was never prepared by the involved agencies but this should still take place.

#### **e) Evaluation of the Internal Displacement Division (IDD)**

For lack of available qualified consultants and time, this was transformed into an internal after-action review of the IDD facilitated by ESS. This served as a basis for discussion with heads of contributing agencies at a stakeholder meeting chaired by the ERC.

#### **f) Inter-Agency Real Time Evaluation Concept**

The development of the approach went through a series of discussions and drafts in which a wide range of actors participated. The first version of the approach note was discussed during a workshop on RTE at the 19<sup>th</sup> Biannual ALNAP Meeting in Nairobi on 13-15 June 2006. This discussion was attended by representatives from the UN system (UNICEF, OCHA, FAO), NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement (CARE, Norwegian Refugee Council, MASAI, Africa Humanitarian Action, Danish refugee Council, CRS, URD, ICRC, IFRC, Save the Children UK) and donors (Netherlands, USAID). Following the Nairobi meeting the paper was revised to reflect the discussion but also to incorporate the experience of NGOs in the area of RTE. Additional agencies consulted on this approach include UNHCR, UNFPA, OXFAM, British Red Cross, American Red Cross, International Rescue Committee (IRC).

The final version of the approach note, “*Agency Experience with Real-Time Evaluation: Towards an Approach for Inter-Agency RTE*”, incorporates the experiences and views of UN agencies, NGOs and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and was presented and endorsed during the 20<sup>th</sup> Biannual ALNAP meeting in Rome in December 2007.

During the ALNAP meeting in Rome it was also agreed that this approach needed some further refinement and testing. In addition, it was agreed that specific guidance material should be developed during the pilot that will incorporate the growing experience with this type of evaluation.

A number of ALNAP members agreed during the Rome meeting to join forces in piloting an inter-agency approach to RTE. The Evaluation Capacity Building Project (ECB Group) and the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR) have subsequently expressed an interest in engaging with IA-RTEs, capacities and priorities permitting.

The consultative process confirmed a keen interest of agencies in RTEs and in developing an inclusive inter-agency approach to RTEs on a sector-wide basis. The consultative process resulted in the identification of nine key tenets for developing an approach to inter-agency RTEs (IA-RTE):

- 1) IA-RTE should be used to address broader, cross-cutting and sector-wide concerns.
- 2) The primary purpose of the IA-RTE is to support field management decision-making; a secondary purpose is to provide information to senior managers in agencies to help better understand and support the programmes they are in charge of directing.
- 3) The adopted approach should be light, flexible and responsive to the needs of field actors and the changing nature of the emergency response.
- 4) There needs to be a consistent and timely trigger for IA-RTEs – ideally IA-RTEs should already be indicated in a Flash Appeal/CAP.
- 5) IA-RTEs should not replace agency-specific RTEs - the target audience is therefore the broader humanitarian community and not a single agency.
- 6) There needs to be a strong focus on the affected population which must inform the method of the IA-RTE.
- 7) IA-RTE teams should be lean and reflect a mix of agency expertise, methodological skills and sectoral expertise as is appropriate for the emergency.
- 8) IA-RTEs are management-intensive and need a full-time lead management agency, supported by an inter-agency management group.

- 9) IA-RTEs need to result in immediate use and action. This also requires a strong commitment from all participating agencies from field upwards to headquarters to respond to and take seriously the recommendations made by the team.

#### **4. OCHA-specific Evaluations and Reviews completed in 2006**

##### **a) External Evaluation of ReliefWeb**

ReliefWeb is a ten-year old website project that consolidates information from many sources about humanitarian emergencies and disasters. The evaluation, which was conducted by a team of two external consultants, was initiated in consultation with ECHO, who is a key donor, to: (1) assess whether the ReliefWeb project meets the needs of its target audiences in an efficient and effective manner, in line with its mandate; (2) provide accountability to donors, OCHA management and users; and (3) provide clear recommendations and lessons learned for the future direction of the project and its products and services. The evaluation recommended that OCHA increase the value of information shared on ReliefWeb; focus on partnership growth; achieve greater audience growth; and improve several key products and services. Management was also seen as an area that requires improvement.

##### **b) External Review of OCHA Emergency Relief Funds (ERFs)**

The ERF evaluation set out to build a central body of knowledge on ERFs, examining the role they play in humanitarian response and in relation to other funding mechanisms and ultimately providing guidance on how an optimal ERF should function. ERFs in five countries – Angola, the DRC, Liberia, Somalia and Indonesia – were examined for the review, which due to security related delays was not completed until early 2007. Three national consultants were recruited to undertake project visiting/ERF mapping on the ground and an ESS staff member joined the evaluation team for the Somalia case.

At the time of the review, the funds had financed 538 projects, disbursing over US\$64 million. In the absence of centralized knowledge and OCHA-wide guidance/policy instruction about the funds, they have developed in an ad hoc manner with some commonalities and differences. Key recommendations from the review included the provision of adequate staffing to provide ERF guidance and process disbursements quickly; enhancing advisory boards to include NGO representation; improving communication to ensure the transparent monitoring of funded projects; establishing minimum eligibility and reporting requirements for recipients; and focusing on and sharing the responsibility of monitoring and evaluation with a range of actors to assess project outcomes and encouraging links between ERFs and other-country level humanitarian funds. Another key recommendation is to involve the HC, donors and other stakeholders in determining an exit strategy for the fund and handover for funded

activities and overall improving guidance, clarifying expectations and increasing ERF knowledge throughout UN agencies.

A matrix of recommendations will be finalized in early 2007 so that action points can be easily followed through by senior managers in HQs and country offices. The report has been published on OCHA websites, Relief Web and the Good Humanitarian Donorship website. A regional workshop was held in Ethiopia in January 2007 to discuss findings and action.

### **c) Training Impact Assessment of the OCHA Emergency Field Coordination Training (EFCT)**

The OCHA Emergency Field Coordination Training (EFCT) courses were assessed by ESS with support from the Training Unit in Geneva and EFCT trainers in line with OCHA Senior Management's renewed focus on capacity building initiatives.

The assessment examined the operationalization of the two EFCT course objectives: 1) to 'build upon individual knowledge, skills and attitudes for effective inter-agency humanitarian coordination.'; and 2) 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. The fulfillment of the course objectives provided a tangible body of evidence that the EFCT program meets its overarching goal to '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 general recommendations for the Staff Development and Learning Unit to review approaches to Interpersonal Skills & Relationship Management, improve the impact of the sessions on the Legal and Ethical Framework, increase participation from the field, make mandatory EFCT training implementation action plans and institutionalize the use of an impact assessment survey as a tool for quality monitoring and control. The results of the training impact assessment should be used as a baseline for the annual performance reporting. The evaluation recommendations were agreed with by the Staff Development and Learning Unit in Geneva.

### **d) Training Impact Assessment of the UN Civil-Military Coordination (UN-CMCoord) Course**

ESS conducted a training impact assessment of the UN Civil Military Coordination (UN-CMCoord) Course, with support from and in consultation with the Civil Military Coordination Section (CMCS), with the objective of providing tangible information on the impact the OCHA-managed courses should render. The results corroborated that the three UN-CMCoord course objectives are being accomplished. These included increasing

participants' knowledge of the humanitarian environment; raising mutual awareness of differences between UN departments and agencies and military and civil defence organisations; reinforcing international cooperation by expanding OCHA's network of mutually supportive emergency managers.

To increase the value of the UN-CMCoord Course the impact assessment produced three main recommendations. UN-CMCoord course organisers should (1) adjust the course design to increase focus on how participants can apply the course curriculum in real-life situations; (2) increase the focus on ensuring that all selected participants are (or will be) working with emergency management in some form, and (3) institutionalise the use of an impact assessment survey as a tool for results-based management.

The results of the training impact assessment were used as a baseline for the annual performance reporting. The findings and recommendations of the assessment were communicated to the UN-CMCoord course organisers within CMCS and a management response was prepared.

## **5. Humanitarian Action Lesson Learning Reviews (LLRs)**

### **a) Internal LLR Pakistan Earthquake**

An internal Lesson Learning Review was conducted on the response to the Pakistan Earthquake. In order to draw preliminary conclusions and identify key lessons arising from OCHA's performance during the first two months, ESS collected the views of more than 50 OCHA staff involved in relief efforts at the field and HQ level through structured interviews.

What was most striking when analyzing the responses given by OCHA staff involved in the initial response to the Pakistan earthquake was that shortcomings identified were largely identical to those acknowledged in previous Lessons Learning Reviews (e.g. on Tsunami response, Iraq). The key lessons and recommendations were discussed at a workshop in early March with Senior Managers and OCHA Geneva and New York staff.

### **b) LLR on the UN Response to the Lebanon Crisis**

ESS supported both OCHA country teams in Syria and Lebanon in September to undertake an after-action review in Lebanon. Findings were used to formulate a broader study on the UN emergency response in Lebanon. Forty-five stakeholder interviews were undertaken within the UN, as well as with donors and implementing partners. This was the first time that actors external to OCHA were consulted during an LLR and the results confirmed that future LLRs must seek the views of partners. The aim of the LLR was twofold: 1) to look at the appropriateness and timeliness of the response so as to

understand what worked well and why; and 2) to provide a platform to discuss key issues relevant for OCHA, for action and follow up.

The review found that most humanitarian needs were met, though many key informants considered the response to be too supply-driven and materialistic. While OCHA did play a vital advocacy role during the crisis, there were gaps in protection. The findings highlighted the difficulties OCHA faces during crises in ensuring that data (on displacement, assistance, etc.) is accurately tracked and analyzed, and that information is shared across all agencies so that key players know who is doing what where. OCHA was fast to deploy but must look to improve recruitment procedures to ensure that the right people are deployed, address the issue of security (arrangements must be more flexible to permit staff to work) and resolve lingering confusion over the relationship with UNDP and the HC/RC and DO roles. Local expertise must be better capitalized upon and a clearer reporting chain between various HQs and field offices should be delineated. Civil/military issues could also be better addressed.

Lebanon also presented a new opportunity to examine the cluster approach in action, and gauge humanitarian reform in practice. While the cluster approach did aid coordination, cluster meetings could be used more strategically.

## **6. Desk Studies**

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

## **7. Learning Networks**

OCHA/ESS participated on a steering committee of ALNAP for the 2006 'Utilisation of Evaluations' study led by an external consultant. ALNAP was also supported with US\$ 10,000. The chief of ESS remained the chair of the TEC and was a member of the ALNAP Steering Committee. The Section contributed US\$25,000 towards the running costs of the TEC Secretariat.

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

A broad communication strategy was developed to ensure targeted dissemination of evaluation products within OCHA as well as to the greater humanitarian community. The section has sought to ensure that its work is widely shared through the strategic involvement of OCHA field offices, both through the dissemination of reports (a prime example is the TEC), and the organization of regional workshops (e.g the ERF workshop, TEC debriefings). The ESS website is regularly updated to reflect completed evaluations, changes in the workplan and upcoming consultancies and posts under recruitment. Reports are circulated through specialized list serves, and are posted on humanitarian

websites including ReliefWeb. The production of synthesis reports of all evaluations has also helped increase awareness of and interest in ESS activities. While the further development of a key insight series remains a priority, a shortage of staff has hindered its full realization.

The piloting of a strategic monitoring and evaluation tool was tested in the case of oPt: two missions were undertaken to that effect, in collaboration with the CAP section in an attempt to do this in line with the ongoing process of the NAF (Needs Analysis Framework). The outcome of these missions was the development of a monitoring framework for oPt on the needs, response, impact and general situation (context). It was agreed that the CAP strategic monitoring should not be a stand-alone separate process and framework but should be integrated in already existing monitoring and needs assessment processes. This approach was also endorsed by the IASC CAP Subworking Group.

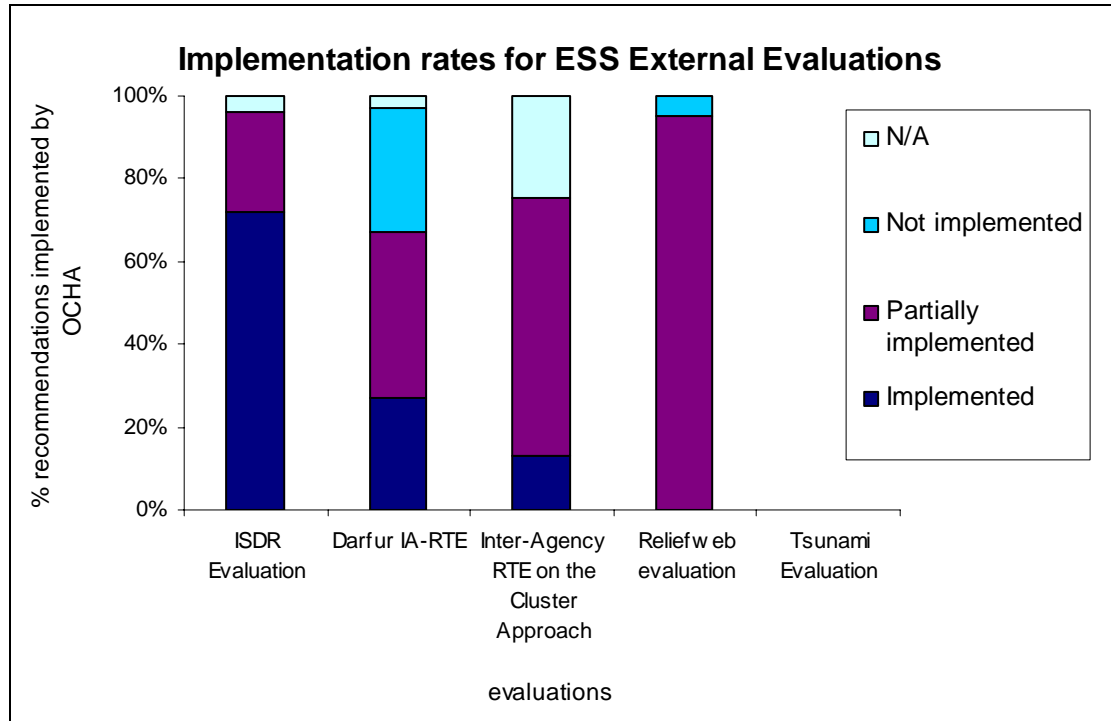
The work of ESS in the area of strategic planning, and particularly the revision of the OCHA planning guide was a crucial contribution to strengthening OCHA's monitoring and reporting capacity. Based on the 2003 planning guide and strategic framework, a set of three strategic goals and 21 objectives were developed by a task team in which ESS participated. The drafting of the planning guide was undertaken by ESS and offers a new and more rigorous planning and monitoring framework for OCHA's annual performance management cycle. A process for reviewing progress at mid-term and at the end of the planning cycle was also defined and agreed by SMT, supported by reporting templates and guidance on how to apply planning and monitoring. These procedures were presented and discussed with OCHA HQ and field staff at the Global Management Retreat in Montreux. A planning clinic for OCHA field staff and HQ staff was also offered during the retreat.

The application of the new planning guide should result in improved accountability and reporting, address the need for better internal planning (OCHA in 2007 document) and reporting and contribute to better external accountability to the donors (OCHA annual reports). It is clear, however, that more training is needed if this is to be fully achieved.

In the future, the task of strategic planning (and monitoring) will be managed by the newly created planning unit in the Office of the USG. The role of ESS will be to support the mid-year and end-of-year review process.

## 9. Follow-up on the Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations<sup>1</sup>

The following analysis was undertaken in March 2007 for the evaluations and reviews completed between 2004 and 2006. The graph below shows the rate of implementation of the recommendations for the five major evaluations conducted in 2006. It shows that the majority of the recommendations emanating from the ISDR evaluation have been implemented while the Darfur inter-agency RTE just over one quarter have been completely.



The figures in Annex I show a 48% rate of full implementation of evaluation recommendations for evaluations tracked, ranging from full implementation of 100% of the recommendations made in the Gender IASC Policy Review, to full implementation still needing to be achieved for all of the recommendations made in the ReliefWeb evaluation. This latter figure can be explained by the fact that the adoption of recommendations by management occurred late in 2006; 95% of the recommendations already having been partially implemented.

<sup>1</sup> A management response matrix (MRM) format was developed by ESS 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. It 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. ESS's role is to monitor the implementation of the recommendations and to provide periodic feedback to stakeholders and donors.

The lowest-scoring evaluation is the Darfur IA-RTE. Full implementation of the 168 recommendations (this figure counts the many sub-recommendations) is lagging, although a significant percentage of these recommendations are still being considered in the field. OCHA funded a dedicated Monitoring & Evaluation Officer for four months to Khartoum to support the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in ensuring a management response to *all* recommendations; the development of a time-bound action plan for implementation of these recommendations; and the tracking and regular reporting on the implementation of the recommendations to key stakeholders. The experience showed that it is difficult to maintain momentum over time. Implementation was also impeded by a lack of strong buy-in to the final evaluation report, fatigue with the evaluation process and the high number of recommendations.

The inter-agency RTE on the cluster approach also shows a fairly low implementation rate. Eight of the 24 recommendations were formally discussed by the IASC while the remainder were directed at the clusters. Feedback received indicated that recommendations were too broad and did not lend themselves to concrete action. Ensuring the implementation of inter-agency evaluations remains difficult (see under lessons identified) and better mechanisms must be found to ensure maximum utilization.

## **10. Resource Mobilization and Partnerships**

As indicated in Annex II, the Section disbursed a total of US\$545,379 for its 2006 programme. A sum of US\$10,000 was provided in annual membership fees to ALNAP and the TEC Secretariat was supported with US\$25,000.

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. However, both associate experts left in the middle of 2006 and have not been replaced. Negotiations are under way with Germany and Canada for replacements. Partnerships with key agencies as well as donors were strengthened by increasing the number of inter-agency initiatives. A majority of activities undertaken by ESS are undertaken in partnership with other agencies and/or donors. This reflects OCHA's role as an inter-agency coordination mechanism.

## **11. Consultants**

### **a) Measures Taken to Improve Regional Diversity**

Efforts to diversify the regional origins of consultants have resulted in better regional distribution of consultants recruited, with southern consultants now constituting almost 40% of consultants recruited. Gender balance has slipped below 50%, although still within the target of 40% female consultants.

<b>Year/</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Consultant Origin</b>					
<b>UK</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>US</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Canada</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Australia</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Europe (non-UK)</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Africa</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Asia</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Latin America</b>					<b>1</b>
<b>Mid East</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>% female</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>% Southern</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>% US, Canada, UK</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>

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.

## **b) Suggestions for Improving Regional Diversity of Short-term Consultants**

Realizing that posting positions on ReliefWeb and ALNAP appears to result in predominantly northern applications, ESS has expanded its posting of 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 have still been ‘Northern’ with the exception 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.

ESS 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 also involves a technical bidding element, the final selection is based on competence rather than on regional origin.

## **12. The Year Ahead**

The draft workplan for 2007 is attached in Annex IV.

*~ The End ~*

## Annex I

## Implementation Rates for ESS External Evaluations 2002-2006

Evaluation/ Review/ Total # of recommendations	Year - Month of Evaluation Report	MRM	Implemented	Partially impl.	Not impl.	Not applicable <sup>2</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 2007-03	67%	29%	4%	0%
Advocacy Review / 14	2004-06	Final Update 2006-03	14%	43%	29%	14%
Gender IASC Policy Review <sup>3</sup> / 7	2004-07	Final update 2006-03	100%	0%	0%	0%
IDP Unit Evaluation <sup>4</sup> / 38	2004-01	Final update 2007-04	74%	21%	0%	5%
ISDR Evaluation / 25	2005-07	Updated 2007-03	72%	24%	0%	4%
Darfur IA-RTE / 168	2004-05	Updated 2006-09	27%	40%	30%	3%
Inter-Agency RTE on the Cluster Approach/ 9	2006-3	Updated 2007-03	13%	63%	0%	25%
Reliefweb Evaluation/21	2006-07	Updated 2007-03 <sup>**</sup>	0%	95%	5%	0%
Tsunami Coordination Evaluation (OCHA- specific)	2006-05	To be prepared 2007-05				
<b>Average per evaluation *</b>			<b>48%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>8%</b>

\* not weighted for number of recommendations; 2002-2004 all monitoring closed, final rates.

\*\* management response only obtained in late 2006

<sup>2</sup> 'Not applicable' covers recommendations for which no actions were needed and recommendations which were not agreed upon by management.

<sup>3</sup> This count excludes 50% of the recommendations which were made towards the donors and members states (they remain untracked)

<sup>4</sup> Recommendations transformed into an IASC action plan with 26 points. Count excludes recommendations to donors.

## ANNEX II

## 2006 Cost Breakdown by Evaluation, Partner and Consultant Information

<b>Evaluation of ReliefWeb</b>	<b>Cost*</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Partners/ Agencies</b>
Consultant's fees	\$20,000	male	US	ECHO
Consultant's fees	\$20,000	male	South Korea	
Travel**	\$20,817			
UN Overhead 13%	\$7,906			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$68,723</b>			
(**consultants to date have not submitted all travel claims for reimbursement)				
<b>Evaluation of the Human Security Trust Fund</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Partners/ Agencies</b>
Total Consultants' fees (*)	\$ 98,500	female	India	HSTF Board
Travel	\$30,857	female	Venezuela	
		female	Australia	
		male	Australia	
UN Overhead 13%	\$16,817	male	Canada	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$146,174</b>			
<b>Evaluation of OCHA's Emergency Response Funds (ERFs)</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Partners/ Agencies</b>
Consultant's fees	\$18,223	female	UK	
Consultant's fees	\$51,200	female	UK	
Consultant's fees	\$1,792	male	Liberia	
Consultant's fees	\$2,117	male	DRC	
Consultant's fees	\$1,500	male	Indonesia	
Travel	\$52,352			
UN Overhead 13%	\$16,534			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$143,718</b>			
<b>TEC</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Partners/ Agencies</b>
Workshops	\$56,078			
ALNAP TEC Secretariat	\$25,000			
TEC Synthesis Report	\$ 22,000	male	Ireland	
UN Overhead 13%	<b>\$13,400</b>			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$116,478</b>			

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

<b>Other</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Partners/ Agencies</b>
Horn of Africa Inter-Agency RTE	\$10,000	n/a		UNICEF
UNEG Evaluability Study	\$5,000			UNICEF
ALNAP Secretariat	\$10,000			
Short-term services	\$37,200	female	Canada	
UN Overhead 13%	\$8,086			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$70,286</b>			
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>				
<b>TOTAL OPERATING COSTS 2006</b>	<b>\$545,379</b>		male 57%	female 43%

**ANNEX III**  
**2006 Work Programme Status Report**

<b>System-wide, Inter-agency and Joint Evaluations</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Real-time evaluation (RTE) of the cluster approach: Pakistan	IASC agencies; South Asia Taskforce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> RTE – Horn of Africa	UNICEF, FAO, WHO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> CAP evaluation (testing of the SMET)	IASC CAP sub working group; UNEG country eval working group	x	Replaced by pilot visit to oPt
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of the Human Securities Trust Fund (HSTF)	HSTF Advisory Board	✓ Being finalized in 2007	
<input type="checkbox"/> Tsunami Evaluation Coalition	Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Expanded CERF One-Year Review	CERF agencies	✓ Being finalized in 2007	
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of the Inter-Agency Displacement Division (IDD)	IASC	x	Cancelled. Replaced by PROCAP evaluation
<b>OCHA-Specific Evaluations</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of OCHA's training and capacity building strategies and programs	internal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review of Reliefweb	internal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review of Regional Support Offices (RSO)	RSOs	x	
<b>HA Lesson Learning Reviews (LLRs)</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Lebanon Lesson Learning Review	internal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Desk Reviews and Case Studies</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Response Fund (ERF): Case studies on funds in Liberia, Angola, Somalia, DRC and Indonesia		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

<sup>5</sup> legend

<sup>5</sup>  achieved    ✓ partially achieved    x not achieved

## ANNEX IV

### Executive Summaries of Evaluations/Reviews

#### **Title of the review: IASC Real - Time Evaluation of the Cluster Approach - Pakistan Earthquake**

##### **Purpose**

In November 2005, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Working Group requested a real-time evaluation on the first application of the Cluster Approach to a humanitarian response operation, the South Asia Earthquake in Pakistan in October 2005. The focus of this evaluation was mainly on the way the cluster approach was put in place and functioned and the added-value it brought to humanitarian efforts of the IASC Country Team in Pakistan.

The main objective of this exercise was to provide early feedback on the effectiveness of the Cluster Approach in the Pakistan context; recommend any reorientation of the current implementation in Pakistan, and derive lessons in order to inform the global development and refinement of the Cluster Approach.

##### **Partners**

The evaluation was conducted by members of the participating agencies:

Evaluation Team: Soma De Silva-UNICEF, Kayoko Gotoh-UNDP, Andre Griekspoor-WHO, Iain Hall-UNHCR, Claude Hilfiker-OCHA, Jeff Labovitz-IOM, Gerald Martone-IRC (for ICVA), Mohamed Zejjari-WFP

##### **Team and method**

An inter-agency team of eight persons conducted an in-country review on 10-20 February 2006, through a key stakeholder analysis that surveyed nearly 90 active participants in the cluster work, including members of the Country Team, Cluster Leads and members, Pakistan Government representatives, non-governmental organizations, major donors, as well as agency headquarters staff that had served in Pakistan at varying stages of the humanitarian operation. The interviews with the key informants were supplemented by the observations by the team members at regular meetings of most cluster groups.

##### **Overall findings and conclusions**

Although the early performance of the Cluster Approach in Pakistan was uneven and sometimes problematic, the comments of the Country Team were generally positive and recognized its potential for an improved response. The Cluster Approach successfully provided a single and recognizable framework for coordination, collaboration, decision-making, and practical solutions in a chaotic operational environment.

Eight Key Actions, focusing on the overall issues applicable to the approach as a whole or to all the clusters, were put to the attention of the IASC Working-Group:

Key Action 1: The IASC Working Group must incorporate the Cluster Approach in all IASC member's operations manuals, training materials, and partnership frameworks and ensure briefing and training is provided to their staff.

Key Action 2: The IASC Working Group must disseminate the recently defined roles and responsibilities among Cluster Leaders and Members, Heads of Agencies and Organizations, Country Teams, and

Humanitarian Coordinators. The roles of the UN Common Services and their responsibilities for provision of services to cluster members should be specified. Furthermore, consideration should be given to reviewing country level coordination arrangements with a view to mitigate duplication and overlaps between existing coordination structures and coordination activities generated by the Cluster Approach.

Key Action 3: The IASC Working Group, along with Global Cluster Lead Agencies and OCHA, should develop Cluster Toolkits for policy guidance, joint assessment and planning formats, minimum standards and benchmarks, and other relevant tools and documentation to be made accessible through a common information system in support of the field-level application of the new approach. Practical guidelines on inter-cluster linkages and reporting mechanisms for government and national NGOs should be included.

Key Action 4: OCHA and the IASC Working Group should examine how to further develop OCHA's role to fully support the cluster system and refine a cross-cluster coordination framework that ensures representation by all IASC members.

Key Action 5: OCHA must re-define the role of the Humanitarian Information Center in relation to the cluster system and include strategies for standard-setting, information management, and data analysis to support strategic decision-making.

Key Action 6: The IASC Working Group must facilitate greater involvement by the international NGO representative organizations and enlist their participation in order to increase the predictability of the core cluster membership.

Key Action 7: The IASC Principals, along with the UN Development Group, must reinvigorate high-level efforts to coordinate and partner with international financial institutions, and galvanize their support to the Cluster Approach.

Key Action 8: OCHA, in consultation with relevant IASC agencies, should explore the potential for the new CERF to support early deployment of dedicated Cluster Coordinators, Information Officers, administrative support, and provide cluster specific seed funding to ensure a capacitated response.

Of the 24 recommendations, a majority are addressed to the IASC Working Group or its members (e.g., cluster lead agencies and partner organizations) at the global-level. These are focused on promoting improved understanding and institutionalization of the Cluster Approach and strengthening global-level support to the IASC Country Teams, including in Pakistan. Several of these relate to specific clusters and, therefore, should be taken up directly by the leads of these clusters.

### **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 ESS**

This Evaluation is the typical example on how OCHA can add value by coordinating evaluation efforts – in this case an eight-person interagency team – to achieve a commonly agreed evaluation objective, even though OCHA was not in the lead of the evaluation and the task of drafting was given to members of the team.

Most of the recommendations were addressed to either the IASC as a whole (Principals and WG), global cluster leads or the country team and only a minority to OCHA. This has meant that promoting and tracking their implementation has proved tricky.

## **Title of the review: Inter-Agency Real-Time Evaluation of the Drought Response in the Horn of Africa**

The RTE was initiated in May 2006 by UNICEF and members of the UN system interested in capturing a quick initial assessment of the response to the 2005-2006 drought in the Horn of Africa. Field work was conducted by the three international and three local consultants in Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya. It was however, delayed, ultimately undermining the ability for the evaluation to input its findings into decision-making processes in the emergency response. The emergency response evaluation focuses on six areas: disaster prevention and preparedness, early warning systems, resource mobilisation, coordination and the quality of the response.

### *Disaster Prevention and Preparedness*

The evaluation found that viable governments in the region were well-prepared to scale-up the food based response but that responses to health and nutrition, water and sanitation and livelihood-based needs were largely ad hoc. In addition, with the exception of the local Red Cross Societies, response to rapid onset emergencies was very patchy. The evaluation recommends that the UN and NGOs should work with work with the national governments on the establishment of contingency planning and related funding and greater support for the Red Cross Societies.

### *Early Warning Systems*

Early warning systems are effectively collecting and disseminating a large range of data. Nevertheless information exchange can be improved across systems and across regions. In addition, more effort should be made to collect non-agricultural and gender disaggregated data including on destitute settled and urban communities and livestock and population movements.

### *Resource Mobilisation*

The evaluation identified important observations regarding resource mobilisation. Resources have disproportionately focused on food aid to the neglect of non-food responses. In addition, the UN needs to expand their fundraising strategies to include civil society and private sector in affected countries and the diaspora as they play a crucial role in mobilising resources during emergency responses. The evaluation warns that the Humanitarian Appeal process risks becoming institutionalised as a funding mechanism for a broad range of needs, limiting its usefulness in emergency response. The report concluded that the CERF provided funds too late to be useful immediately following the crisis. The Humanitarian Response Fund was however, a useful funding mechanism for local and international NGOs.

### *Coordination*

National and community coordination mechanisms functioned well as all levels in the region and UN should define a role for them in its own coordination. Coordination needs to involve information flows from the centre to the periphery and not just to the centre. Humanitarian access was hampered by logistical and security obstacles as well as cumbersome procedures imposed by DSS.

## **Title of the review: Evaluation of ReliefWeb**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the evaluation was: i) to assess whether the ReliefWeb project meets the needs of its target audiences in an efficient and effective manner, in line with its mandate; ii) to provide accountability to donors, OCHA management and users; and iii) to provide clear recommendations for the future direction of the project.

### **Partners**

The evaluation was commissioned by ReliefWeb in light of its ten year anniversary in 2006 and a recent redesign of the site. Three major donors (ECHO, Gov of Japan and DFID) were represented in the Core Learning Group established to engage key ReliefWeb stakeholders in the conduct of the evaluation.

### **Team and method**

The evaluation was conducted by external consultants (from the consultancy firm ForumOne) and managed by the OCHA Evaluation and Studies Unit. The evaluation team based their findings on a combination of audience surveys, interviews, and its own expert review. The team surveyed more than 1,300 ReliefWeb users working in some 139 countries and about 80 “content partners” residing in 31 countries. It conducted discussions with a total of more than 150 individuals across Nairobi, Geneva, London, Washington, Brussels, New York, Dakar, Panama, Bangkok and Kobe.

### **Overall findings and conclusions**

ReliefWeb is generally fulfilling its mandate and mission, doing well at disseminating timely information on humanitarian issues, serving decision-makers at headquarters, and strengthening the humanitarian community response capacity. Over the past six years of ReliefWeb’s operations (2000-2005) the output of the site has expanded and its operations have become more efficient: While budgets have risen about 1/3, the output has more than doubled and usage has grown more than four fold, to more than 200,000 page views per average weekday. The ongoing performance and growth of ReliefWeb is hindered by three related management factors – staffing, the content collection process, and the site technology.

ReliefWeb is viewed very highly by users in terms of the credibility and reliability of its information. ReliefWeb is also viewed highly for its neutrality and independence. Most respondents stated that ReliefWeb was timely in providing the humanitarian dimension of issues. ReliefWeb is not viewed as favorably for the representativeness of the information it provides, especially with regard to content from smaller NGOs at the national and local level and those working in languages other than English. In terms of products and services “Job Vacancies” is the most popular service on ReliefWeb and widely seen as very valuable operational support for the humanitarian sector. Other services on ReliefWeb that are highly valued include those which provide timely information – Latest Updates, Email Alerts, Headlines, and also Country Pages and maps.

ReliefWeb content comes from a range of news and humanitarian organizations, but disproportionately from a few large news services. The “content partner” relationship with ReliefWeb is largely passive, as ReliefWeb itself identifies and posts the majority of the content on the site with little involvement of the partner. There is some sharing of content between ReliefWeb and other OCHA projects, but the evaluation team sees scope for more. ReliefWeb and other information providers could benefit from more aggressive integration of content to complement each others’ strengths.

### **Main recommendations**

To increase the value of ReliefWeb the evaluation produced five overall recommendations each supplemented by a number of concrete sub-recommendations. ReliefWeb i) must build on top of its core content foundation to provide a layer of insights and analyses. This “framing of the issues” should be done

by highlighting information from across the body of content on ReliefWeb to provide key insights for decision-makers; ii) needs to expand the scope and the quality of its content partnerships; iii) needs better to reach non-users within its target audiences as well as those using only a very limited portion of the site; iv) should extend the value of its products and services; v) management systems and capacity need to be expanded in some critical ways.

### **Follow-up Mechanisms**

The evaluation was distributed to donors and promoted among ReliefWeb users. A detailed management response to the recommendations was approved by the OCHA Senior Management Team on 9 November 2006. Of the 21 sub-recommendations, 95% had been partially implemented by the end of the first quarter 2007.

### **Lessons for ESS**

Three main lessons for the ESS were identified. Firstly, the evaluation process benefited from the inclusion of key donors in the Core Learning Group. While the donor representatives were less active compared to OCHA participants, they provided important comments to the evaluation team as well as valuable logistical support for on the ground consultations in both Brussels and London.

Secondly, it was reaffirmed that keeping the main stakeholder (ReliefWeb) fully engaged throughout the process was key to ensuring that the recommendations were taken onboard and acted upon. In this regard it was important the evaluation team conducted a workshop where the findings and conclusions were presented, while the recommendations were being tested. Thirdly, it was reaffirmed that engaging consultants with no or limited knowledge of the UN system in general and the Humanitarian system in particular does mean that a considerably amount of additional time is needed both from the Evaluation Manager and the relevant staff of the subject being evaluation.

## **Title of the review: Review of Emergency Response Funds**

The ERF report presents overall findings from a review of OCHA-managed Emergency Response Funds (ERFs) in five countries (Angola, the DRC, Indonesia, Liberia and Somalia) with additional input from a separate review in Ethiopia. The purpose of the review was to:

- Build a central body of knowledge on ERFs within OCHA;
- Examine the role of ERFs in humanitarian response and in relation to other funding mechanisms;
- Provide guidance on how an optimal ERF can function.

The aim of the ERFs is to provide rapid and flexible funding to in-country actors (mainly NGOs) to address *unforeseen* humanitarian needs. They have been used since 1997. At the time of the review, the funds had financed 538 projects, disbursing US\$64.49 million. In the absence of centralised knowledge about the funds, they have developed in an ad hoc manner so there are commonalities but also many differences between the funds.

- Most ERFs set a limit on project size and these have ranged from \$100,000-\$250,000. The DRC and Ethiopia funds have no limit but the Ethiopia advisory board was considering setting a limit of \$600-700,000 to focus funding on urgent needs and avoid funding large on-going humanitarian programmes.
- The majority of funding has been for NGOs (mainly international) but three ERFs have also financed UN agencies. The Liberia fund provided the largest proportion of funding for local NGOs while the Ethiopia, DRC and Somalia funds have provided the least funding for them.
- Some ERFs have been quick to approve proposals but the average time from proposal submission to the signing of the grant agreement is 30-40 days (usually involving a lot of clarifications with applicants).
- ERF grant agreements commit to disbursing in 7 days but OCHA Geneva has taken over 21 days on average (though Indonesia had an average disbursement time of 9.5 days).
- While ERF advisory boards usually comprise UN agencies, in Somalia and Ethiopia they include NGO representatives. This has promoted collaboration between UN agencies and NGOs.
- The number of OCHA staff managing ERFs has varied across countries. The required number depends on the size of the fund, the number of projects managed and the types of organisations financed, but it is important to have at least one dedicated fund manager for good management and to maintain strategic direction.

### **Key Recommendations**

#### *Fund structure and management:*

- OCHA should appoint a focal point to advise OCHA offices establishing ERFs on the substantive issues they need to consider. OCHA should also appoint at least one finance officer to process ERF disbursements. This will ensure that ERF payments are given priority and speeded up.
- At country level, an ERF should have sufficiently broad objectives to avoid setting up separate ERFs for different purposes. This will avoid confusion amongst recipients and an additional management burden for OCHA.
- OCHA and advisory boards should set limits on project size that are appropriate for the country and review these periodically to ensure that they remain appropriate.
- In disaster-prone countries, OCHA should consider whether it is appropriate to finance the pre-positioning of non-food items and to finance NGOs in advance.
- OCHA field offices should work with OCHA Finance to ensure swift response in urgent cases to be able to finance immediate response more consistently.
- OCHA should explore further its minimum requirements for fund management and whether management costs can be met from the 3% Programme Support Costs or not.

#### *Advisory Board:*

- ERF advisory boards should represent NGOs as well as UN agencies.
- If advisory boards review proposals electronically, a minimum number of responses should be required.
- Advisory boards should meet at least quarterly to discuss ERF-related issues.
- OCHA should keep boards informed about the progress of funded projects as this will help with transparency and monitoring.

#### *Accountability*

- OCHA should identify the minimum eligibility and reporting requirements for recipients and ensure that they are not burdened with additional requirements.
- OCHA should reduce the emphasis on financial audits and focus more on monitoring and evaluation in order to assess project outcomes.
- Ideally, OCHA should monitor projects throughout their life cycle. OCHA offices should be creative about involving a range of actors in monitoring, such as local government structures and beneficiaries.

#### *Linkages and exit strategies*

- There is an assumption that ERFs cover short-term or one-off activities though, in many cases, the populations covered have on-going needs. Therefore, it is helpful if OCHA offices encourage links between ERFs and other country-level humanitarian funds.
- In countries with a plethora of funding mechanisms, it may be useful for the HC to establish a committee of those managing the key funds, supporting or taking over from humanitarian activities to ensure complementarity between them.
- OCHA offices should discuss the role of the ERF with the HC, donors and other stakeholders in a country to establish an exit strategy for the fund and to determine how best to ensure a handover of the activities covered.

#### *Institutional Relationships*

- When establishing an ERF, OCHA offices should clarify donors' expectations and agree upon the frequency and content of any reporting and/or meetings at field level.
- OCHA senior management should have discussions with other UN agencies at headquarters level to explain how ERFs function [their limits and their comparative advantages for humanitarian programming].

## **Title of the review: Training Impact Assessment of the UN Civil-Military Coordination (UN-CMCoord) Course**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the training impact assessment was to provide tangible information on what kind of impact the OCHA managed UN-CMCoord courses render.

### **Partners**

The training impact assessment was commissioned by OCHA Senior Management as part of the renewed focus on capacity building initiatives within OCHA. The online survey tool had been developed by WHO previously and kindly made available to OCHA.

### **Team and method**

The assessment was conducted by the Evaluation and Studies Unit with extensive support from, and in full consultation with, staff at OCHA's Civil-Military Coordination Section. The impact assessment looked at the total body of participants (111) from four similarly designed UN-CMCoord Courses conducted in 2005. The assessment of training impact focused primarily at the levels of 'learning' and 'behavioural change'. The main tool of the assessment was an online self-evaluation survey of the participants with a response rate of 82%.

### **Overall findings and conclusions**

The training impact assessment corroborated that the three UN-CMCoord course objectives are being accomplished and, hence, that the UN-CMCoord courses do contribute to the process of improved coordination between international civilian humanitarian actors and international military forces in humanitarian emergencies.

In summary, *the first course objective* is being met as the UN-CMCoord courses increase the participants' knowledge of the humanitarian environment, in terms of the actors involved and the possible situations that may be encountered. In line with the *second course objective* the UN-CMCoord courses contribute to a raised mutual awareness of the differences in regard to background, culture, structures and requirements between, on the one hand, UN departments and agencies, and on the other hand, military and civil defence organisations.

Finally, the UN-CMCoord Courses do reinforce international cooperation by expanding OCHA's network of mutually supportive emergency managers *as outlined in the third course objective*. The following are examples of findings supporting the third course objective:

Some 74% of the respondents provided concrete examples as to how their readiness to act as a liaison officer for their organisation in humanitarian emergency relief operations had increased as a result of the UN-CMCoord Course. Also, 72% of the respondents provided concrete examples demonstrating that their preparedness to contribute to emergency response coordination had improved.

However, respondents who claimed that since attending the course they had as some point contributed to emergency response coordination by using the key concepts of coordination (information sharing, task division and planning) were more modest in number - only 50%. The data reveals that those who performed liaison functions for their organisations after having taken the course were more likely to have applied aspects of the course in emergency responses.

The courses also help participants develop a common understanding of the issues surrounding civil-military coordination, increasing participants' knowledge of UN methodology for mission planning, execution, and coordination with other humanitarian actors in the field, as laid out in five specific guidelines (with awareness rates going from 26% prior to a course to 79% after a course). Moreover, 79% of the participants have established or maintained contact with other UN-CMCoord graduates and 68% are networking and sharing information on humanitarian issues as a result of the UN-CMCoord courses.

### **Main recommendations**

UN-CMCoord course organisers should i) adjust the course design to increase focus on how participants can apply the course curriculum in real-life situations; ii) increase the focus on ensuring that all selected participants are (or will be) working with emergency management in some form, and iii) institutionalise the use of an impact assessment survey as a tool for results-based management.

### **Follow-up Mechanisms**

The results of the training impact assessment should be used as a baseline for the annual performance reporting. The findings and recommendations of the assessment were communicated to the UN-CMCoord course organisers within CMCS.

### **Lessons for ESS**

Both the UN-CMCoord and the EFCT course assessments were quite comprehensive exercises, but with the methodology successfully tested, the approach can be implemented in a much lighter and less time consuming version (focusing on fewer indicators). The web based self-assessment survey was useful as a tool to document behavioral changes and easy to administrate. Still units organizing training events would require some introductory assistance to guide them if they are to implement an assessment themselves. If OCHA was to institutionalize the use of impact assessment surveys it would be a key tool for results-based management and reporting (feeding into OCHA Annual Performance Management and Reporting System).

## **Title of the review: 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.

## **Title of the review: OCHA's Response to the Pakistan Earthquake - a Lesson Learning Review**

### **Purpose**

The Pakistan earthquake, which occurred on the 8<sup>th</sup> of October 2005 caused the immediate death of some 80,000 people and prompted the most challenging humanitarian response to a natural disaster since December 2004 when the Tsunami devastated large parts of South-East Asia. Less than 24 hours after the earthquake, the first United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team had been deployed, comprised of senior officials from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

This review was undertaken in order to identify key lessons arising from OCHA's performance during the first two months of the response and to further improve OCHA's response mechanisms in the case of sudden-onset disasters.

### **Team and method**

This internal Lessons Learned Review on the response to the Pakistan Earthquake was conducted under the leadership of ESS Geneva with one evaluation officer and one associate expert involved, plus one staff from the office of the director Geneva. The team collected the views of more than 50 OCHA staff involved in relief efforts either at the field or Headquarters (HQ) level through structured interviews.

The key lessons and recommendations were discussed at a workshop in early March with Senior Managers and OCHA Geneva and New York staff and actions were decided and discussed with Senior Management (e.g. SOP)

### **Main Findings**

What was most striking when analyzing the responses given by OCHA staff involved in the initial response to the Pakistan earthquake was that shortcomings identified were largely identical to those acknowledged in previous Lessons Learning Reviews (e.g. on Tsunami response). Hence, of the 19 distinct findings and insights, 7 related to things that had improved over the past with still potential for further strengthening, 7 were recurrent issues, i.e. lessons from the past that had not sufficiently been applied, and 5 were new insights mainly related to the humanitarian reform process and its application.

### **Lessons for ESS**

As OCHA internal Lessons Learned Reviews (LLR) tend to point on recurrent weaknesses, there is no point in repeating general reviews until standard operation procedures (SOPs) and other measures are in place to fix the identified weaknesses. It is more appropriate to undertake more focused LLRs on specific themes or issues and also to do this more as inter – agency exercises rather than just for OCHA.

## **Title of the review: The United Nations Response to the Lebanon Crisis: An OCHA Lesson Learning Paper**

A study and lesson learning exercise on the international response to the Lebanon crisis took place from August – December 2006. The Evaluation Studies Section of PDSB – in New York led the review process. Direct input was provided by OCHA CRD; OCHA and the UN in Lebanon, Syria and in capitals as well as representatives from International/National NGO's and selected donors. The aim of the lesson learning review was two-fold:

- 1) To look at the appropriateness and timeliness of the response and to understand what worked well and why.
- 2) To provide a platform to discuss key issues relevant for OCHA, for action and follow up.

### **Main Findings**

- Most humanitarian needs were met but many key informants considered the response to be too supply driven and materialistic.
- Many key informants felt that OCHA played a vital advocacy role during the crisis but that there were gaps in some areas of protection [i.e. many believe that the needs for vulnerable groups including the elderly, minorities, host families, and internally displaced populations in Southern Beirut were not met – partly because some agencies did not always share information and it wasn't always clear who was doing what where].
- Assistance was not always targeted because data was often inaccurate particularly on the location and numbers of primary and secondary displacement. Tracking of assistance was poor.
- UN agency performance appeared mixed. UNHCR and OHCHR appear to have faced problems scaling up and meeting demands; WFP, UNICEF and ICRC appear to have responded quickly with large teams. It's not clear whether having had a prior presence in country helped – but certainly having regional connections as OCHA had, assisted in getting assistance in quickly.
- There was agreement that OCHA could have been faster to deploy. Its recruitment procedures and insecurity also, impacted negatively on the program. However there is also an appreciation that the challenging relationship between OCHA and UNDP and the confusion around the HC/RC and DO roles, complicated coordination efforts from the outset.
- All agencies could have utilized the capacity of local experts and development agencies already existing on the ground and linkages between relief and recovery could have been stronger.
- While most key informants agreed the situation was dangerous, many did not understand the rationale behind declaring phase IV security. It appears there was no thorough threat assessment detailing the new risks in Lebanon. Rather, the updated plan revised in July 2006 was built on a hostage taking scenario.
- But many of the constraints of the operation were rooted with the UN organizations themselves. Lack of experienced staffing, security issues, agency bureaucracies, competition and the short term nature of the conflict impacted on how the humanitarian response was shaped and then followed through.
- Positively – the large amounts of funding provided for Lebanon meant that humanitarian and recovery needs were able to be mostly met in good time. This fact, coupled with the resilience of the affected population; and Lebanon's ranking as a middle income country – contributed to fast return and longer term recovery.

### **Key findings for OCHA**

- OCHA could have been faster to find experienced staff and deploy them in country. Finding experienced emergency staff quickly proved difficult throughout the response.
- Coordination of the humanitarian response was essential and OCHA's presence and ability to set up humanitarian hubs was pivotal.
- Both the flash appeal and revised appeal were timely and realistic.

- OCHA's decision to ask the OHCHR representative to leave, due to staff ceiling issues may have been a fundamental mistake.
- OCHA's advocacy and liaison function was appropriate and had a positive impact on the response. The HC and ERC sent key messages to the public; it seconded personnel into the IDF cell in Tel Aviv and into UNIFIL [CMCoord]. It was slow to deploy its own protection advisor into Beirut.
- Respondents praised the work of the HC – but questioned the transparency and selection process of the HC/RC/DO functions.
- The HIC should sit within OCHA [and not separate to it]. More work could be done on analysis of information [using the data coming out of clusters].
- The cluster approach – worked well in some areas and others not. Some agencies were accused of using cluster meetings as fundraising sessions. Some key informants felt that that a disproportionate amount of time was taken attending meetings rather than getting out into the field.
- OCHA's exit strategy was timely and well coordinated with development actors and government.
- There are mixed opinions on whether international staff working on the development issues in Lebanon could have been used more, from the outset of the crisis and most agree that local capacity was not utilized as well as it may have been.
- The Flash Appeal was fully funded within 6 weeks of being issued. OCHA insisted that the target be 100 percent funded, so OCHA worked hard to achieve that [by for example sending letters out to donors].

### **Lessons for OCHA**

Many lessons have been learnt but for the purpose of this exercise, the author has concentrated on five main areas:

- OCHA's internal recruitment standards need to be improved and SURGE capacity within HQ's must be explored. A corporate protocol on emergency response must be established.
- Civ/mil liaison functions worked well. However there appears to have been some disconnect between GVA, NY, Beirut, Naqura and Tel Aviv on civil military matters. A clear reporting chain – and mechanism for sharing information on civ/mil matters could be clarified.
- The quality, analysis and dissemination of information must be improved [HIC/OCHA relationship must be clarified; rapid needs assessment formats developed; templates for sitreps; situation room needed in New York].
- In order to improve the efficiency of task force meetings - senior managers should be given authority to make decisions on the spot. OCHA should decentralize its decision making to CRD managers for emergency crises.
- Unless UN security arrangements are made more flexible and can adjust to quick changes in the local context, the ability for OCHA to fulfill its mandate will be paralyzed.

**ANNEX V**  
**2007 Work Programme**

<b>OUTPUTS</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>TASK LEAD/ partner</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>	<b>Indicator TARGET</b>	<b>Output Cost Estimate</b>
1.1.1 External CERF Review	1 <sup>st</sup> Q	AG/inter-agency (WHO, FAO, WFP, HCR)	Percent of review implementations that are targeting improvements in the CERF that are implemented by 12/2007	over 50% of recommendat's implemented by 12/2007	\$ 120,000
1.1.2 External Evaluation of the Implementation of Cluster Approach in Pilot Countries	3 <sup>rd</sup> Q	CH/inter-agency	Percent of review implementations that are targeting improvements in the cluster approach that are implemented by 12/2007	At least 25% of recommendat's implemented by 12/2007; 75% by 12/08	\$80,000
1.4.1 Review of HC Training: 6 month assessment	2 <sup>nd</sup> Q	FP/JPO	Percent of recommendations targeted at strengthening training performance that are implemented	75% of recs implemented by 12/07; 90% by 12/08	Staff time
1.4.2 Inter-Agency RTE (s) (at least 2)	2-4Q	All	Percent of RTE recommendations that are implemented by 12/07	75% of recs endorsed by partner agencies within 4 months of the report	Mostly funded through flash appeal
1.4.3 Inter-Agency evaluation of UN's performance in Uganda over past 5 years	1-2 <sup>nd</sup> Q	FP/ UNEG	Number and percent of recommendations targeted at improving humanitarian assistance and coordination agreed to by agencies	75% of recs endorsed by partner agencies within 4 months of report	\$ 20,000 [\$ 7,000] travel
1.5.1 Review of OCHA's Emergency Services	2 <sup>nd</sup> Q	CH	Percent of recommendations targeted at strengthening training performance that are implemented	75% of recs implemented by 12/07; 90% by 12/08	Staff time
1.5.2 External Evaluation of PROCAP	1-2 Q	CH	Percent of recs implemented by 12/-7:	75% of recs implemented by 12/07; 90% by 12/08	\$ 80,000 (funded by PROCAP)

<b>OUTPUTS</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>TASK LEAD/ partner</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>	<b>Indicator TARGET</b>	<b>Output Cost Estimate</b>
1.6.1 A standardized FA, CA component for M&E elements (RTE) and/or field M&E capacity	1-2 Q	CH/ IASC	Percent of CAP documents with standard M&E elements as developed by ESS	10% by 12/07; 30% by 12/08	Staff time
1.6.2 CAP country evaluation	Q	CH/ IASC SWG	Percent of report recommendations that are implemented	50% of recs implemented by 12/07; 75% by 12/08	\$80,000
2.4.1 Organisation and hosting of ALNAP Biennium in Dakar	December 07	CH/ OCHA RO Dakar	Degree of satisfaction with meeting outcome in terms of policy debate by participants	At least 75% rate meeting as very useful	\$ 15,000 [\$ 5000] travel
2.4.2 TEC Report & recs promoted & discussed at various fora	On-going	SF	Number of agencies that have agreed to address TEC recommendations	At least 5 donors, 5 UN agencies, 5 NGOS	Staff time [\$25,000] travel

<b>OUTPUTS</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>TASK LEAD</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>	<b>Indicator TARGET</b>	<b>Output Cost Estimate</b>
3.1.1 Systematic and focused lesson learning reviews (i.e. focus on key concerns)	2-months after emergency erupts or as needed	various	Percent of LLR recommendations targeted at improving management practices that are implemented	Average implementation rate of 75% within 1 year of LLR	\$ 30,000 [\$20,000] travel
3.3.1 Mid-term review process supported	July 2007	CH	Percent of mid-term reviews that meet Planning Guide requirements	50% MTRs that meet requirements in 2007; 75% in 2008	Staff cost
3.4.1 M&E surge capacity established and functioning	By 2 <sup>nd</sup> Q 2007	CH	Degree of satisfaction with M&E support by supported offices	100% of offices rate support 4 or higher (1-5)	\$50,000
3.4.2 Consultant roster updated and expanded	By June 2007	AH	% increase of roster	25% by 06/07	Staff time
3.6.1 Website up-to-date and relevant	On-going	AH	Number and duration of staff intranet sessions	At least 20 hits per month of average duration of 15 minutes	Staff time