MOPAN Assessment Report

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

2020 Assessment Cycle

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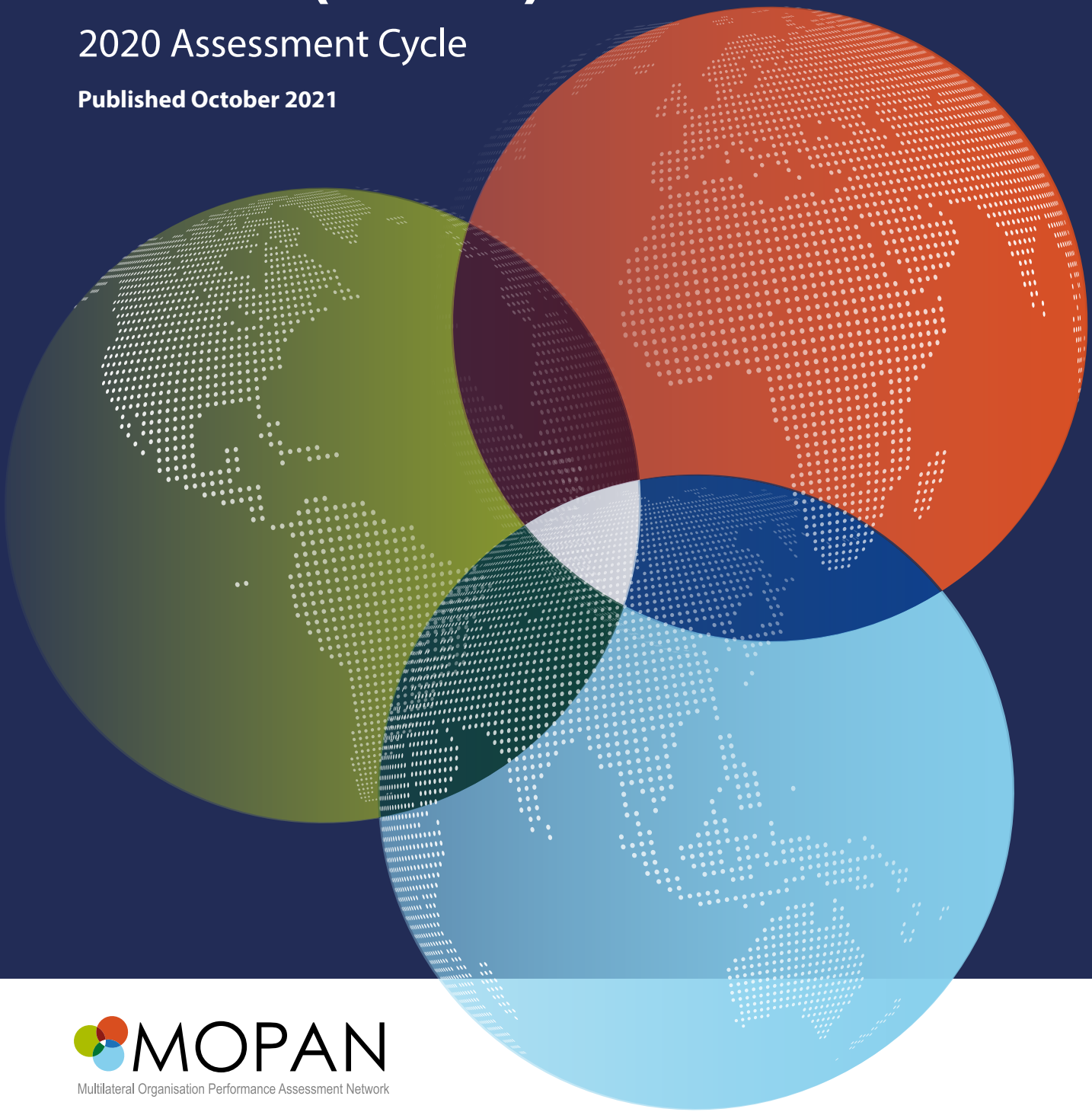

MOPAN

Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network

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2020 Assessment Cycle

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

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Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network

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Preface

ABOUT MOPAN

The Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) comprises 21 countries* that share a common interest in assessing the performance of the major multilateral organisations they fund. A MOPAN assessment report seeks to provide a diagnostic assessment, or snapshot, of an organisation and tell the story of an organisation's current performance, within its mandate. It is conducted through a rigorous process and takes a collaborative approach to ensure that the findings resonate with the organisation and its stakeholders. It draws on multiple lines of evidence (documentary, survey, and interviews) from sources within and outside an organisation to validate and triangulate findings set against a standard indicator framework that was developed based on international best practice.

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* The European Union and Qatar are observers.

The following operating principles guide the implementation of MOPAN assessments, and MOPAN's Methodology Manual describes how these principles are realised.

Operating principles

MOPAN will generate credible, fair and accurate assessments through:

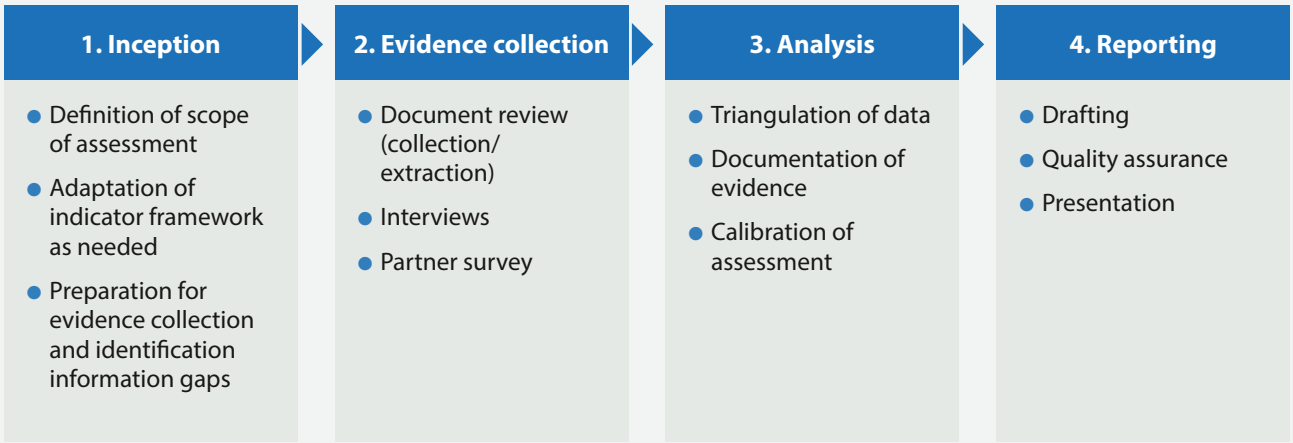
- **implementing** an impartial, systematic and rigorous approach
- **balancing breadth with depth**, adopting an appropriate balance between coverage and depth of information
- **prioritising quality** of information over quantity
- **adopting a systematic approach**, including the use of structured tools for enquiry/analysis
- **providing transparency**, generating an "audit trail" of findings
- **being efficient**, building layers of data, seeking to reduce burdens on organisations
- **ensuring utility**, building organisational learning through an iterative process and accessible reporting
- **being incisive**, through a focused methodology, which provides concise reporting to tell the story of an organisation's current performance

Applying these principles, MOPAN generates, collects, analyses and presents relevant and credible information on organisational and development effectiveness. This knowledge base is intended to contribute to organisational learning within and among the organisations, their direct clients and partners, and other stakeholders. Network members use the reports for their own accountability needs and as a source of input for strategic decision making.

Note that the assessment report is structured to present a high-level overview of findings across the body of the text (in Chapters 2 and 3), and that more detailed analysis underlying each score, as well as full referencing, is available in Annex A.

MOPAN ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR OCHA

The assessment process began in 2020 and covers the period from approximately three years prior to that (from mid-2017) until the end of data collection (early 2021). The key assessment points are in the diagram below:



Stage 1: Inception. The inception phase seeks to ground the assessment in an understanding of OCHA's mandate, operating model and infrastructure; how it addresses cross-cutting issues; and how it interprets and tracks results and performance.

Stage 2: Evidence collection. This stage focuses on the collection of robust, relevant evidence against the assessment framework from three streams (document review, interviews and surveys) to minimise information gaps and ensure that assessment findings are credible.

Stage 3: Analysis. In this phase, the data collected are synthesised and analysed to derive findings that are supported by clear and triangulated evidence. Complementary data are collected as needed.

Stage 4: Reporting. As the assessment report is being drafted, OCHA verifies factual findings, and both OCHA and the Institutional Lead (IL) comment on the analysis. The MOPAN Secretariat and an external expert, where possible, carry out quality assurance. Key findings are presented to OCHA and MOPAN members. A written response from OCHA's management concludes this stage.

HISTORY OF MOPAN ASSESSMENTS FOR OCHA

MOPAN has assessed OCHA just once before, during 2015-16.* That assessment applied an earlier version of the MOPAN methodology (version 3.0).

Acknowledgements

The MOPAN assessment of OCHA was conducted under the overall strategic guidance of Suzanne Steensen, Head of the MOPAN Secretariat. It was prepared under the responsibility of Mitch Levine and Erika MacLaughlin, who also supported the assessment process.

MOPAN is very grateful to the Institutional Leads, Ashley McLaughlin, Hierete Desda and Elizabeth Bellardo from USAID; and Young-min Seo from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, for championing this assessment of OCHA on behalf of the MOPAN membership.

The external partner survey was administered by Cristina Serra-Vallejo from the MOPAN Secretariat, together with Emna Ben-Kheder. Mitch Levine and Erika MacLaughlin also supported the implementation and finalisation of the survey.

The report was edited by Sally Hinchcliffe. Andrew Esson provided the layout and graphic design with the support of Cara Yakush and Anastasiya Sindyukova. The report also benefited from an external peer review, conducted by Dr Julia Betts.

Agulhas Applied Knowledge, in partnership with Humanitarian Outcomes, conducted the assessment, under the leadership of Willem van Eekelen. Team members included Glyn Taylor, Trisha Chauhan, Mazvita Mutambirwa, Marcus Cox and Lauren Pett.

MOPAN is grateful to its Steering Committee representatives for supporting the assessment of OCHA. Finally, MOPAN would like to convey appreciation to OCHA management and staff for their input and comments at various stages, in particular Jean Verheyden, Adriana Carvalho Friedheim and Laura Calvio who internally co-ordinated the process and provided substantive feedback on the final draft report.

* https://www.mopanonline.org/assessments/unocha2015-16/Mopan%20UNOCHA%20report%20[interactive]%20[final].pdf

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
ASG	Assistant Secretary-General
CBPF	Country-Based Pooled Fund
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
COVID-19	2019 Novel Coronavirus
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCO	UN Development Coordination Office
DFID	UK Department for International Development (now FCDO)
EDG	Emergency Directors Group
EMC	Executive Management Committee
FCDO	UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (formerly DFID)
FTS	Financial Tracking Service
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GenCap	Gender Standby Capacity Project
HAT	Humanitarian Advisory Team
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HQ	Headquarters
HR	Human Resources
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IAHE	Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
INFORM	Index for Risk Management
INSARAG	International Search and Rescue Advisory Group
JIAF	Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MI	Micro-indicator
MO	Multilateral Organisation
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
NGO	Non-Government Organisations
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	United Nations for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODSG	OCHA Donor Support Group
ODU	Organisation Development Unit
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
ProCap	Protection Standby Capacity Project
PSEA	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
RBM	Results-Based Management
RC	Resident Coordinator
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEA/SH	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse / Sexual Harassment
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UN	United Nations
UNDS	UN Development System
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UK	United Kingdom
USD	United States Dollars
USG	Under-Secretary-General
WHO	World Health Organization

OCHA: PERFOMANCE AT-A-GLANCE

OCHA: Performance at-a-glance

ABOUT OCHA

The United Nations (UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is the part of the UN Secretariat responsible for promoting a co-ordinated international response to humanitarian emergencies. Its vision is of a world that comes together to help crisis-affected people rapidly receive the humanitarian assistance they need. It promotes this goal through five core functions: co-ordination, humanitarian financing, policy making, advocacy and information management. OCHA's head, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (USG), chairs the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the UN's highest-level humanitarian co-ordination forum. OCHA manages the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), which is the UN's rapid response fund for new emergencies, and Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs), which enable donors to pool their funding in response to particular emergencies. OCHA has around 2 200 staff and a global budget of just over USD 2 billion, of which the majority is contributions to CERF and CBPFs. In 2020, it played a central role in fundraising for and co-ordinating the global humanitarian response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

KEY FINDINGS

The period since the last MOPAN review of OCHA, published in 2017, has been a turbulent one in global humanitarian affairs. As a co-ordinating body, OCHA has faced both sharp rises in the scale and complexity of humanitarian needs and demands for complex reforms of the global humanitarian system. Despite the challenging context, OCHA has made considerable progress in articulating its strategic vision, based around its five core functions. Following a major organisational restructuring, its New Operating Model, introduced in 2018, has given it greater operational coherence, with clear alignment between its functions and structures. It has also improved its agility and responsiveness. This was well demonstrated in its early response to the COVID-19 pandemic, when OCHA moved quickly and effectively to co-ordinate the first COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan within a few weeks of the World Health Organization (WHO) announcing the pandemic. It also established an Organisational Development Unit to keep its systems and processes under review – a positive sign of an organisation on an improving trajectory.

However, not all of its reform objectives have been achieved. It has fallen short of its ambitions on decentralisation. While it has devolved some functions around procurement and budget execution, there is no clear overall trend towards decentralisation of either budgets or staffing. External partners remain concerned that understaffing in the field remains a constraint on OCHA's effectiveness. The assessment also encountered concerns, both from within OCHA and from external partners, that decision making has become more top-down and less consultative. Despite the volatile external context, OCHA has not updated its 2018 Strategic Plan. Some important changes in strategic direction have been made without any formal strategic review process, including a new corporate priority on anticipatory action and changes to the objectives and functions of CERF, creating uncertainty and a lack of buy-in. For an organisation that works by promoting voluntary co-ordination, any breakdown in consensus is potentially a serious matter.

OCHA has continued to build on its strengths in relationship management. Its work on resource mobilisation, information management and advocacy enables other humanitarian actors to response more quickly and flexibly to evolving humanitarian crises. Its support for reforms and joint initiatives across the sector have improved collaborative working. Its knowledge products are highly regarded, although there are concerns that they have become too numerous and complex. At country level, its promotion of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle enables humanitarian actors to work together around a coherent cycle of needs assessment, planning, implementation and monitoring. There have also been significant improvements in OCHA's management of its pooled funds. It has clear criteria for

allocating funds to urgent or underfunded needs, and its financial management processes are generally sound. On the whole, it succeeds in striking an appropriate balance between the competing demands of speed, flexibility, transparency and accountability, although there is still some work to do in streamlining processes.

There are some areas where OCHA's performance has not improved significantly since the 2015-16 MOPAN assessment. Performance management is an area of significant weakness. OCHA committed in its 2018-21 Strategic Plan to introducing a comprehensive results-based management (RBM) system, but did not proceed. While it reports against key performance indicators in its corporate results framework, generating some useful performance data, the lack of an integrated results management system leaves it poorly place to track progress towards its strategic objectives or identify areas of underperformance. OCHA's planning and budget processes are poorly aligned, making it difficult to link resources and results. Its criteria for allocating resources are nonetheless clear and appropriate, and its budget processes allow for a good level of flexibility in response to emerging humanitarian needs, aided by a relatively high proportion of unearmarked funding.

Contrary to UN guidance, OCHA's evaluation function is not independent, either managerially or financially, and OCHA has systematically underinvested in evaluation and learning over the review period. It also lacks an effective system for risk management: its corporate risk register was not updated at any point in the review period. The lack of investment in basic corporate systems is a cause for concern, suggesting a lack of demand from senior management for performance information.

Over the review period, OCHA has been required to respond to a growing number of cross-cutting agendas and humanitarian reform commitments, which have stretched its resources, leading to a mixed pattern of results. OCHA is a strong advocate for human rights and gender equality. Protection issues and the needs of women and girls are routinely considered in humanitarian needs assessments and response plans, and prioritised in grants from OCHA-managed pooled funds. OCHA has actively promoted accountability to affected populations across the humanitarian sector, principally through feedback mechanisms and complaints lines. OCHA has been a strong advocate for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) across the sector, and has progressively strengthened its standards and due diligence processes for pooled fund grantees. While its own policies on PSEA and sexual harassment meet international standards, their implementation is significantly under-resourced. Across a number of other reform areas, including promoting a diversity of humanitarian actors (particularly through localisation), the nexus approach (strengthening the alignment of humanitarian action and development assistance) and tailoring humanitarian assistance to the needs of the most vulnerable groups ("leaving no one behind"), OCHA's efforts have been unsystematic. A pattern has emerged of OCHA making ambitious commitments that it is unable to follow through, particularly in the field, suggesting a lack of clear implementation plans, prioritisation and resource allocation.

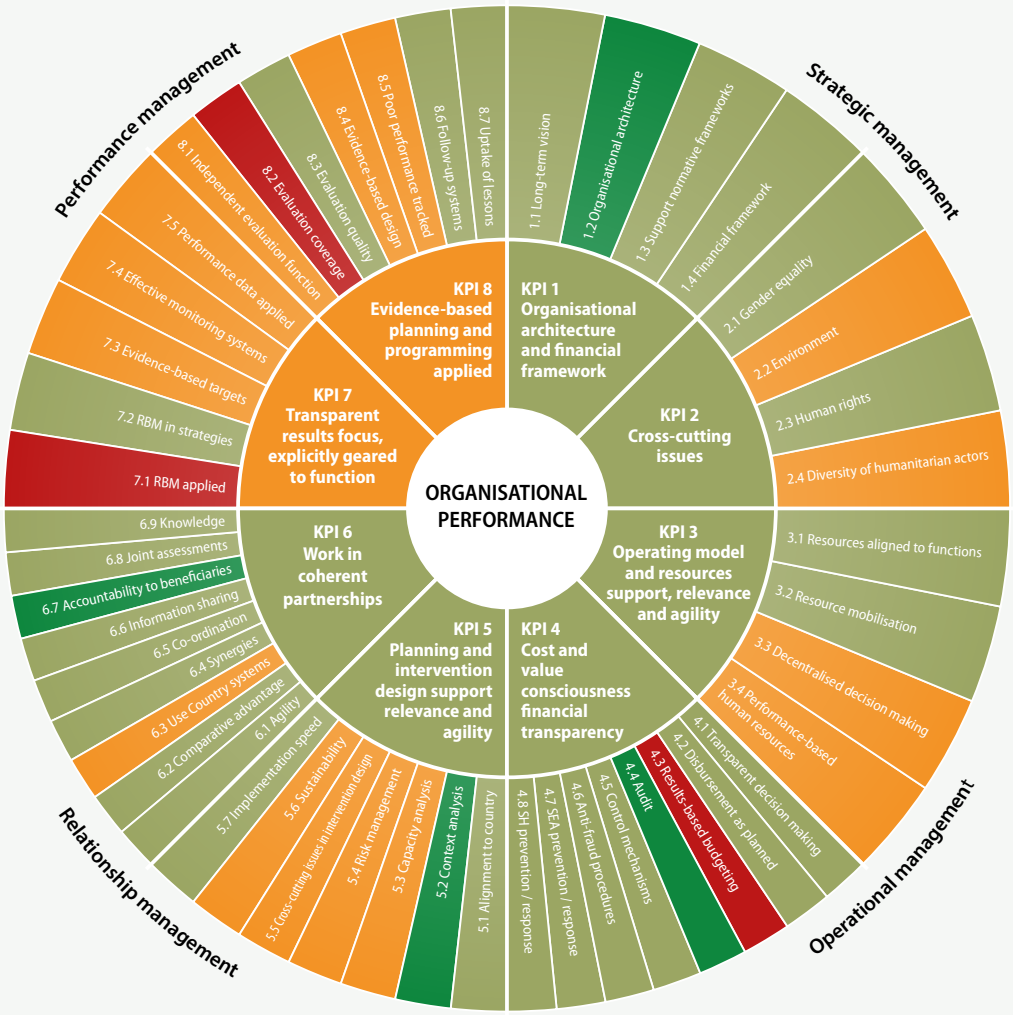
OCHA's key strengths identified in the assessment include:

- a coherent mandate and organisational vision
- a reformed organisational structure that is more coherent and better aligned to OCHA's functions and strategic objectives
- flexible resource mobilisation and allocation in response to new and evolving crises
- strong management of pooled funds
- effective partnerships with other humanitarian actors
- a significant contribution to improving the relevance, timeliness and flexibility of humanitarian operations
- effective advocacy for key humanitarian reforms, including accountability to affected populations and PSEA.

Areas for improvement include:

- changes to OCHA's strategic direction without sufficient consultation, leading to some uncertainty and lack of buy-in among staff and external partners
- lack of follow through on a commitment to introducing results-based management
- weak systems for corporate risk management
- mixed performance in integrating cross-cutting issues, linked to a lack of resourcing
- lack of an independent evaluation function and underinvestment in evaluations.

FIGURE 1: OCHA'S PERFORMANCE RATING SUMMARY



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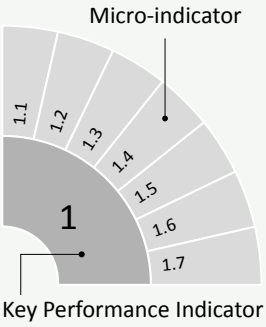
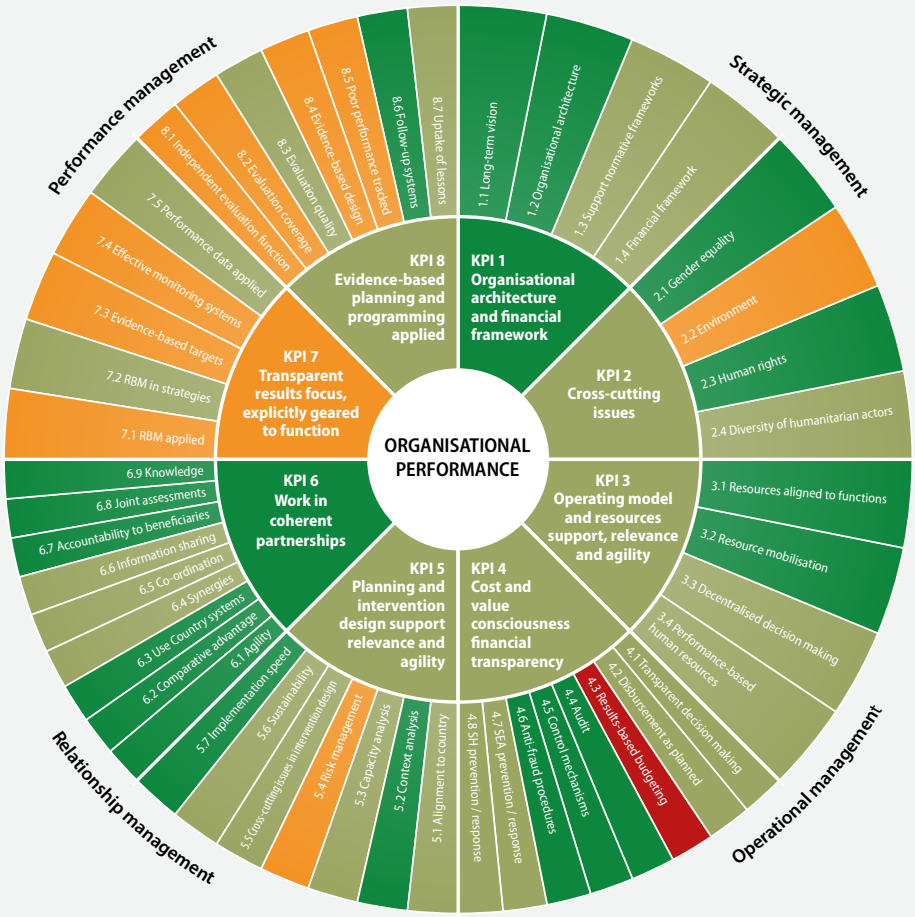


- **Highly satisfactory** (3.51-4.00)
- **Satisfactory** (2.51-3.50)
- **Unsatisfactory** (1.51-2.50)
- **Highly unsatisfactory** (0-1.50)
- **No evidence / Not applicable**

FIGURE 2: OCHA'S PERFORMANCE RATING SUMMARY (previous rating scale)

Changes to MOPAN's rating system

MOPAN's methodology is continuously evolving, and a recent notable change is how ratings (and their corresponding colours) are applied based on the scores at micro-indicator (MI) and key performance indicator (KPI) levels. Compared to the pre-2019 rating scale, applied in Figure 2, the threshold for each rating has been raised to reflect the increasing demands for organisational performance in the multilateral system. The underlying scores and approach to scoring are unaffected.



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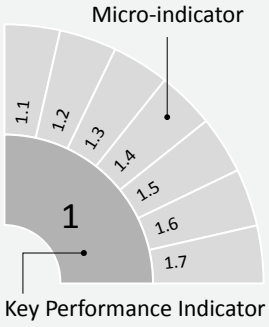
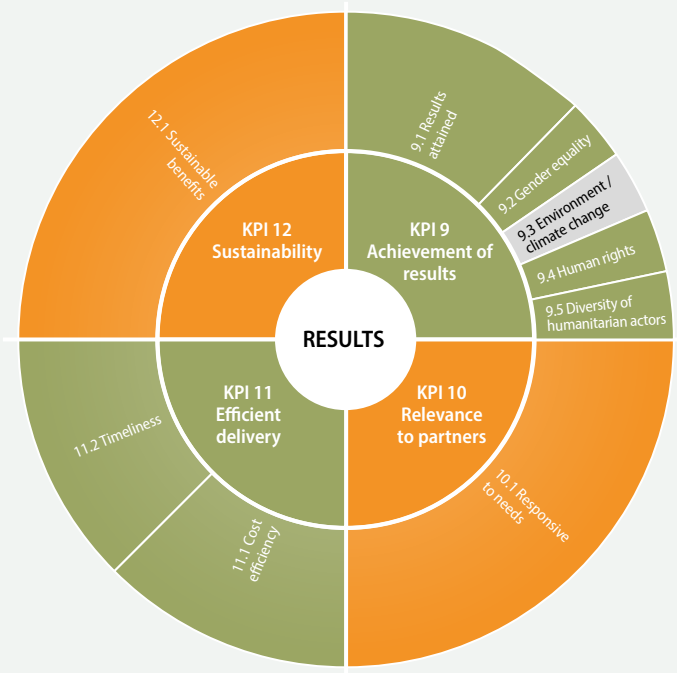


- **Highly satisfactory** (3.01-4.00)
- **Satisfactory** (2.01-3.00)
- **Unsatisfactory** (1.01-2.00)
- **Highly unsatisfactory** (0-1.00)
- **No evidence / Not applicable**



INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

1.1. INTRODUCING OCHA

Mission and mandate

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is the part of the United Nations Secretariat responsible for bringing together humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent response to emergencies. OCHA's vision is of a world that comes together to help crisis-affected people rapidly receive the humanitarian assistance they need.

OCHA's mandate stems from General Assembly Resolution 46/182 of December 1991, which states: "the leadership role of the Secretary-General is critical and must be strengthened to ensure better preparation for, as well as rapid and coherent responses to natural disasters and other emergencies". The resolution establishes the role of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, who is also the head of OCHA (hereafter, Under-Secretary-General or USG). The USG chairs the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which is the highest level policy-making and co-ordination forum for the humanitarian system. OCHA supports the USG and the UN Secretary-General to meet their leadership and co-ordination responsibilities.[1]

At the global level, OCHA's co-ordination roles includes advocacy for a more effective and responsive humanitarian system, including promoting shared policy commitments, common standards and harmonised processes. It facilitates timely humanitarian response through humanitarian needs assessments, response plans and the management of information flows, and supports the mobilisation of resources through humanitarian appeals. At the country level, OCHA supports leadership by UN Humanitarian Coordinators and Resident Coordinators and co-ordination through the cluster system. It deploys its field presence to crisis-affected areas to provide practical support to humanitarian operations, and supports national governments with disaster risk management.

Box 1: OCHA-managed pooled funds

The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) is the UN's global emergency response fund. It operates a Rapid Response window, which enables UN agencies to kick-start relief efforts quickly in response to new emergencies, and an Underfunded Emergencies window, which helps to fill gaps in other funding for protracted relief operations. The USG manages CERF on behalf of the UN Secretary-General, with support from the CERF Secretariat located within OCHA and an Advisory Group that provides policy guidance. In 2020, CERF allocated USD 848 million in 47 countries, as well as contributing to the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs), managed by OCHA under the leadership of the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in each country, are established in response to new or deteriorating crises. These direct funds towards the highest-priority projects of the best-placed responders, including UN agencies and international and national non-government organisations (NGOs), according to the priorities set out in Humanitarian Response Plans. In 2020, CPBFs were active in 18 countries, receiving USD 863 million in contributions from 36 donors. Each CBPF is supported by an Advisory Board drawn from across the humanitarian community, although Humanitarian Coordinators retain the final say on funds allocation. At the global level, a Pooled Fund Working Group brings together key stakeholders to provide policy guidance.

Source: OCHA website, https://www.unocha.org/our-work/humanitarian-financing/country-based-pooled-funds-cbpf; https://cerf.un.org/

1 OCHA (2018), *OCHA 2018-2021 Strategic Plan*, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, New York, NY, www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/OCHA%202018-21%20Strategic%20Plan.pdf, p. 7.

A key function for OCHA is the management of pooled funds at global and country levels, which enable donors to pool their contributions for greater flexibility and speed of response (see Box 1). CERF and CPBFs are subject to separate management arrangements and are considered separately in this assessment from OCHA's core operations, where appropriate.

OCHA's 2018-21 Strategic Plan was prepared in response to evolving global and humanitarian contexts, including a shift towards protracted emergencies, a breakdown in respect for humanitarian and human rights law, and the emergence of new global normative frameworks, including the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Secretary-General's reform agenda. It outlines how OCHA will contribute to more effective and principled humanitarian action for growing numbers of affected people. Its five strategic objectives are organised around the organisation's five core functions, as set out in Table 1.

Table 1: OCHA's core functions and strategic objectives

Core functions	Strategic objectives
Co-ordination: OCHA co-ordinates humanitarian responses, to expand reach, improve prioritisation, reduce duplication and ensure that assistance and protection reach the people who need it the most.	Transformed co-ordination for a more efficient and tailored humanitarian response.
Humanitarian financing: OCHA aims to mobilise and engage the full range of financing instruments, mechanisms and partners to meet humanitarian needs, while promoting humanitarian leadership and co-ordination at the country level, and promote coherence across humanitarian funding mechanisms and with development funding.	An effective and innovative humanitarian financing system that meets the needs of crisis-affected people.
Policy: OCHA exercises leadership in developing humanitarian policy, setting the agenda for reform of the sector in response to a shifting global landscape.	Leadership to drive transformative change for a more responsive and adaptable humanitarian system.
Advocacy: OCHA's advocacy raises awareness of forgotten crises, promotes respect for international humanitarian law, brings the voices of crisis-affected people to the forefront and helps people to access humanitarian assistance.	International acceptance of the centrality of international humanitarian and human rights law, access and protection that results in meaningful action for affected people, especially internally displaced people.
Information management: OCHA provides information management services to the humanitarian community, to underpin co-ordination, decision making and advocacy.	More credible, comprehensive and evidence-based situational analysis.

OCHA's work is also guided by a number of cross-cutting principles:

- recognition of the value of a **diversity of actors** within the humanitarian system
- promoting **voluntary co-ordination** through relationships of trust, including in OCHA's role as honest broker
- **national and local ownership** of humanitarian action
- **accountability to affected people**, including through the integration of gender, age, disability and other vulnerability considerations in all work
- **gender equality** through the full participation of women and girls in humanitarian action.

Governance arrangements

OCHA is part of the United Nations Secretariat. It is led by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (USG). Between May 2017 and May 2021, the role was filled by Mark Lowcock. Martin Griffiths has been appointed as his successor, taking up the post in July 2021.

As part of the UN Secretariat, OCHA does not have its own executive board, but is directly accountable to the Secretary-General and the General Assembly. OCHA's financial framework is reviewed by three UN General Assembly subsidiary bodies: The Committee for Programme and Coordination, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and the Fifth Committee of the UN General Assembly.

In 1998, a group of donors established the OCHA Donor Support Group (ODSG), which at the time of writing brings together 30 donors in an informal group that acts as a sounding board and source of advice. There is also an Advisory Group for CERF as well as CBPF Advisory Boards, which provide guidance and advice on the respective funds.

As part of the UN Secretariat, OCHA operates according to the Secretariat's administrative procedures, rules and regulations.

Organisational structure

OCHA is organised into three divisions: 1) Coordination; 2) Humanitarian Financing and Resource Mobilization; and 3) Operations and Advocacy (which includes the field presence). Its headquarters (HQ) are divided between New York and Geneva, with an additional corporate office in the Hague and another planned for Istanbul. The USG is based in the New York office and field offices report to the Operations and Advocacy Division in New York. The Geneva office focuses on rapid-onset disasters, co-ordination and the elaboration of Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs) and Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs), outreach to humanitarian focal points of UN member states in Geneva, inter-agency co-ordination (including through IASC), and liaison with multilateral institutions in Europe. In 2021, OCHA had 5 regional offices, 32 country offices and Humanitarian Adviser Teams in 20 countries.[2]

Finances and operations

In its budgets, OCHA treats contributions to CERF and CBPFs as part of its income. According to this definition, OCHA's total income in 2019 reached a record level of over USD 2 billion, up from USD 1.78 billion in 2018, although the funds available to support its core operations remained stable. Its budget is divided between its programme/operational budget (USD 260 million), CERF (USD 835 million) and CBPFs (USD 948 million). Only 6% of OCHA's budget is funded from the United Nations Regular Budget; the remainder comes from voluntary donor contributions, primarily from UN Member States and the European Union. CERF and the CBPFs are entirely funded from voluntary donor contributions.[3] In 2019, the United Kingdom was the largest funder, at 35.9% of the total, followed by Germany (14.2%) and Sweden (10.4%).[4]

In 2019, 25% (USD 65 million) of OCHA's extra-budgetary programme budget was allocated to headquarters activities and 75% (USD 195 million) was allocated to the field (see Table 2).

2 OCHA (2021), *This is OCHA*, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, New York, NY, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/This_is_OCHA_2021_web.pdf , pp. 14-15.

3 OCHA (2019), *Annual Report 2019*, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, New York, NY, www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/2019OCHAannualreport.pdf, p.61.

4 OCHA (2019), *Annual Report 2019*, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, New York, NY, www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/2019OCHAannualreport.pdf,p. 70.

Table 2: OCHA's extra-budgetary programme budget, 2017-19 (USD million)

	2017		2018		2019	
Headquarters activities	81	30%	68	27.5%	65	25%
Field activities	84	70%	179	72.5%	195	75%
Total	**265**		**247**		**260**	

Source: OCHA Annual Reports, 2017-19.

OCHA levies a 7% headquarter programme support charge on its core activities and a 2% central levy on CERF and CBPFs, which is partly retained by OCHA and partly allocated to cover the costs of services from other parts of the UN system. It also levies programme support charges in-country[5] and a 3% management charge on pass-through grants (i.e. grants for activities managed in partnership with other organisations; these are not included in OCHA's programme budget).

OCHA's donors provide a combination of earmarked funding (55% in 2019, including "softly earmarked" contributions to regions or regional crises) and unearmarked resources (45%) to OCHA's programme budget. In 2019, OCHA had multi-year agreements with 18 donors, providing a level of stable and predictable income.

1.2. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

OCHA's Strategic Plan 2018-21 is subtitled "Coordinating humanitarian response in a volatile world". The document notes a number of sources of volatility in the global and humanitarian contexts, including:

- a rise in conflict and violence as the primary cause of humanitarian need
- an increase in protracted crises, with the average inter-agency appeal lasting seven years
- a pattern of increasing violations of humanitarian and human rights law, affecting humanitarian workers
- a range of global reform initiatives reshaping the future of humanitarian assistance.[6]

These trends continued through the review period. The number of people displaced from their homes has risen to record levels. Climate change has grown in importance as a driver of humanitarian need, particularly in areas where conflict and climate-related crises overlapped, leading to rises in food insecurity. Restrictions on humanitarian access continued to be widespread, with humanitarian workers subject to violence and threats of violence. In 2019, the UN and its humanitarian partners supported 61 million people in 22 countries, supported by a record USD 17.4 billion in funding, but the funding gap remained over USD 12 billion, or 41% of total needs.

There have been ambitious attempts to reform international humanitarian assistance. Key reform objectives include increasing the diversity of humanitarian actors and building the capacity of national and local responders; increasing the accountability of humanitarian responders to affected populations; expanding the use of cash-based assistance; expanding flexible and multi-year funding; and improving alignment between humanitarian, peacebuilding and development programming. OCHA's mandate includes advocating for these reforms.

5 OCHA (2019), *Annual Report 2019*, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, New York, NY, www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/2019OCHAannualreport.pdf, p.62.

6 OCHA (2018), *OCHA 2018-2021 Strategic Plan*, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, New York, NY, www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/OCHA%202018-21%20Strategic%20Plan.pdf, p.5.

Against an already volatile background, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound effect on global humanitarian needs, both by exacerbating vulnerabilities within existing humanitarian crises and creating new emergencies. OCHA played a key role in the international humanitarian response, including launching the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan a few weeks after the WHO's announcement of the pandemic. By the end of 2020, this unprecedented global appeal had received commitments of USD 3.8 billion, against identified needs of USD 9.5 billion. The pandemic posed a range of operational challenges for OCHA, including requiring it to co-ordinate humanitarian responses beyond its established areas of operation. Brief treatments of OCHA in the context of the global COVID-19 response are included in Chapters 2 (Box 4) and 3 (Box 8).

1.3. PERFORMANCE JOURNEY

The last MOPAN review of OCHA was conducted in 2015-16, covering the period from 2014 to mid-2016. Using the MOPAN 3.0 methodology, it considered OCHA's organisational systems, practices and behaviours, as well as the results that it had achieved.[7] The assessment affirmed OCHA's strategic relevance, given evolving global humanitarian needs. Its strengths included its knowledge generation on global needs, its efforts to reform the global humanitarian architecture, and its role in improving the co-ordination of humanitarian action. However, the assessment also found a range of weaknesses, including a lack of clear management vision, mismatches between its core functions and its organisational structure, unclear criteria for allocating resources, a lack of a strong performance management system, and weaknesses around the integration of cross-cutting issues (see Box 2). Overall, therefore, the 2015-16 MOPAN assessment found that OCHA did not meet the requirements of an effective multilateral organisation.

The findings of MOPAN's 2015-16 assessment corresponded with the results of an internal functional review conducted by OCHA around the same time, and informed a major organisational restructuring. A New Operating Model, adopted in 2018, reorganised OCHA into functional departments that mirror the organisation's strategic and management objectives. It was intended to improve coherence within the organisation and increase its capacity to operate "as one" across its headquarters, regional offices and its field structure. The entity established to implement this reform evolved into a standing Organisational Development Unit, to keep OCHA's systems, processes and structures under review. OCHA has continued to implement further reforms in response to its recommendations.

7 MOPAN (2016) *MOPAN 2015-16 Assessments: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA): Institutional Assessment Report*, Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network, www.mopanonline.org/assessments/unocha2015-16/, p. VI.

Box 2: Main strengths and areas for improvement from the previous MOPAN assessment

Strengths

- Prioritisation of relevance, through context analysis which has enabled the humanitarian community to come together and take difficult political decisions and implement reforms.
- Knowledge generation, which has provided a platform for dialogue, influenced the humanitarian agenda and informed international-level advocacy.
- External co-ordination, including contributions to major international groups and managing major events.
- Systems building, including improvements in the humanitarian architecture.
- External accountability, with improvements in the accountability and learning of the wider humanitarian system.

Areas for improvement

- Function: core functions not yet clearly defined and undermined by the lack of a clear and cohesive management vision.
- Form: an organisational structure and operating model that require reform to be fit for purpose.
- Internal accountability systems and culture: improvements needed to the performance culture and management systems.
- Prioritisation and sequencing: critical areas of activity and associated criteria for resource allocation need to be defined and geared to a strong vision of the future.
- Cross-cutting issues: critical areas of activity and associated criteria for resource allocation need to be defined and geared to a strong vision of the future.

Source: MOPAN (2016) *MOPAN 2015-16 Assessments: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA): Institutional Assessment Report*, www.mopanonline.org/assessments/unocha2015-16/, p. VII.

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND OUTLOOK

CHAPTER 2

Findings, conclusions and outlook

2.1. ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

A challenging external environment

The period since the last MOPAN assessment of OCHA has been a turbulent one in global humanitarian affairs. Large-scale crises in Myanmar, South Sudan, Syria, Venezuela, Yemen and other places have placed the international humanitarian system under considerable strain. Displacement as a result of conflict, violence and natural disasters has risen to historic levels: by the end of 2019, 50.8 million people were internally displaced and 20.4 million were refugees.[8] Humanitarian crises have also become more complex and more protracted, with the international humanitarian system often called upon to provide emergency support to populations in need over many years.

New causes of humanitarian crises are also emerging. The past decade has been the hottest on record and extreme weather is on the increase. Climate change is also driving more people into food insecurity. Some of the most challenging humanitarian crises involve a combination of climate disruption and conflict. Public health crises are also a growing driver of humanitarian need. Since the 2014 Ebola epidemic, outbreaks have become annual occurrences in parts of Africa. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic created an unprecedented global humanitarian emergency as tens of millions of people lost their livelihoods. The UN estimates that 235 million – 1 in every 33 people worldwide – are in need of humanitarian assistance and protection, the highest figure in decades.[9] In 2020, in response to the pandemic, the UN issued its first ever global humanitarian appeal, seeking USD 10.3 billion for 63 countries.[10]

The rise in humanitarian need placed considerable strain on the global humanitarian sector and, by extension, on OCHA as its co-ordinator. OCHA was also called upon to play a leading role in ambitious reforms to the sector. The Grand Bargain, signed by 63 funders and humanitarian organisations, codified a set of mutual commitments around reforming humanitarian action and humanitarian finance. Long-standing concerns around the lack of sustainable solutions for long-running humanitarian crises led to renewed calls for greater coherence between humanitarian action and development assistance (the nexus approach). The sector also accelerated its efforts to address the longstanding challenge of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). It sought to tackle these challenges against the background of a growing gap between humanitarian needs and resources (see Figure 3).

A clear strategic vision and more coherent organisational structure

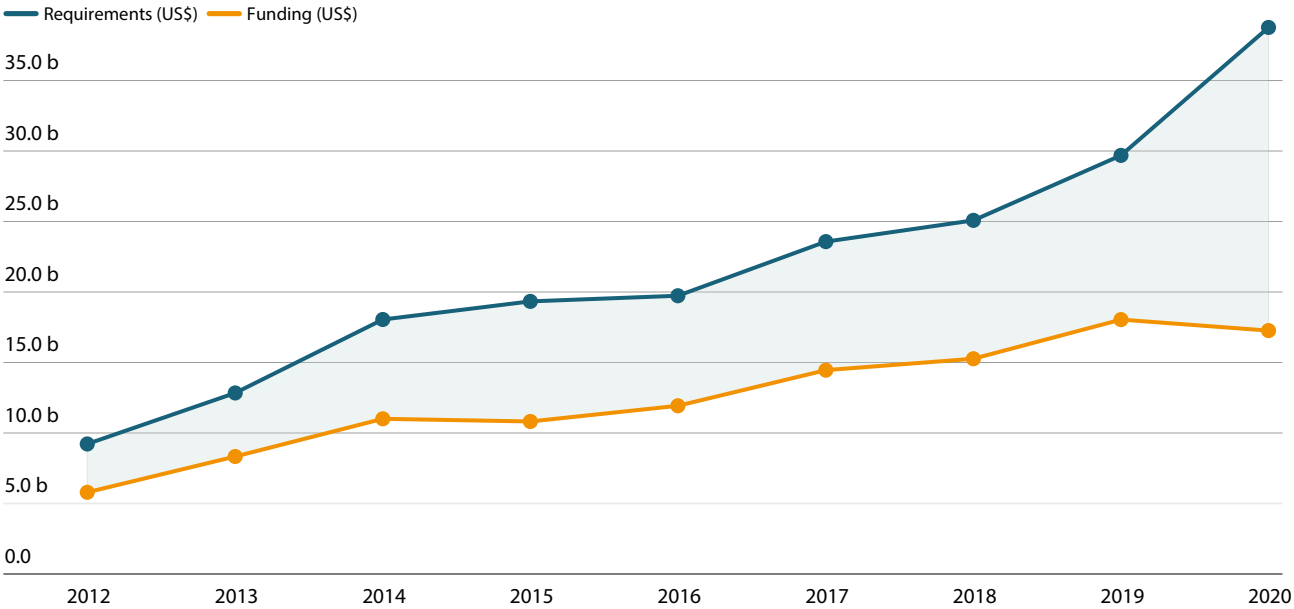
Despite the challenging external context, the assessment found that OCHA has travelled a considerable distance over the review period. The 2015-16 MOPAN Assessment found some significant weaknesses, including a lack of clear management vision, poor fit between function and organisational structure, unclear criteria for allocating resources, a lack of a strong performance management system and culture, and weaknesses in the integration of cross-cutting issues. It also pointed to some core strengths – in particular, OCHA's high level of strategic relevance, given escalating humanitarian needs and the complex challenges facing the humanitarian sector.

8 OCHA (2021), *Global Humanitarian Overview 2021*, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/GHO2021_EN.pdf, p. 27-28.

9 OCHA (2021), *Global Humanitarian Overview 2021*, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/GHO2021_EN.pdf, p. 66.

10 OCHA (2020), *Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19: July Update*, UN Coordinated Appeal, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/GHRP-COVID19_July_update_0.pdf.

FIGURE 3. GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN FUNDING GAP, 2012-20



Source: OCHA (2021), *Global Humanitarian Overview 2021*, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/GHO2021_EN.pdf; MOPAN calculations from Financial Tracking Service Data, https://fts.unocha.org/

This assessment finds that considerable progress has been made on addressing several of the previously identified challenges. OCHA's 2018-21 Strategic Plan sets out a strong strategic vision of a world that comes together to help crisis-affected people rapidly receive the humanitarian assistance they need. It contains clear objectives, built around OCHA's five core functions of co-ordination, humanitarian finance, policy making, advocacy and information management. It clearly articulates OCHA's comparative advantage in these areas, based on its legal mandate and its long and evolving experience. The strategy is well aligned with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (especially Goal 17 on partnerships) and normative frameworks for the humanitarian sector.

Findings from the 2015-16 MOPAN assessment largely matched the results of an internal functional review, and led to a major organisational restructuring that has yielded positive results. OCHA's New Operating Model, introduced in 2018, was designed to promote greater operational coherence and constitutes a clear improvement over the structure assessed by MOPAN in 2015-16. There was a consensus among both OCHA staff and the external partners consulted for this assessment that the reforms had created a more coherent organisation, with better alignment between structure and function. They had also increased OCHA's agility. This was well demonstrated during its early response to the COVID-19 pandemic, when OCHA moved quickly and effectively to co-ordinate the first COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan within a few weeks of WHO's announcement of the pandemic, and then updating it as new information came to light. As part of its reforms, OCHA established an Organisational Development Unit to keep its systems, processes and structures under continuous review, and that unit has continued to introduce further reforms over the assessment period. This is a positive sign of an organisation on an improving trajectory.

However, OCHA's efforts towards decentralisation have fallen short of its ambition to delegate authority closer to the point of delivery to improve its responsiveness to country priorities. It has delegated certain functions, including in procurement and budget execution, which increased the speed and agility of its field-based operations. However, the assessment found no clear trends towards the decentralisation of budget functions and expenditure. On staffing, major cuts to field staff in 2017 have meant that OCHA is now in some respects less decentralised than it was in the previous review period. OCHA is in the process of relocating around 50 posts to regional centres in The Hague and

Istanbul, but this is a limited form of decentralisation and field staff interviewed were not convinced that it would address staff shortages in the field. Partner feedback is that understaffing in the field – including a limited presence outside national capitals – has led to missed opportunities for the timely resolution of problems.

There have also been negative consequences to some of the reforms, suggesting overcompensation for past weaknesses. One of the clearest messages to emerge, both from within OCHA and from external partners, was a concern that decision making had become more top-down and less consultative. Despite the volatile external context, OCHA has not updated its 2018-21 Strategic Plan (a planned mid-term review was cancelled after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic). Some key changes in strategic direction have nonetheless been made, but without any formal strategy-setting process. These include a new corporate priority on anticipatory action and changes to priorities and processes for the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). Whether or not these new strategic directions are appropriate, the lack of consultation around the changes has created uncertainty and a lack of buy-in. Given that OCHA's works by promoting voluntary co-ordination based on relationships of trust (a cross-cutting principle in its Strategic Plan), a breakdown in consensus over OCHA's strategic choices is potentially a serious matter. That said, stakeholders also reported that OCHA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic had been more consultative.

A strong record on external relationships and funds management

OCHA has continued to build on its strengths in relationship management. Through its work on resource mobilisation, information management and advocacy, OCHA enables other humanitarian actors to respond more quickly and flexibly to evolving humanitarian crises. At the global level, the Under-Secretary-General leads the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which is the highest level co-ordination platform for the humanitarian system. OCHA's advocacy for reform and support for joint initiatives have contributed to changing processes across the sector that have improved collaborative working over the review period. OCHA also participates in and supports multiple co-ordination networks and platforms. Feedback from external partners on the quality of its partnerships was generally positive. However, some concerns were raised about a tendency to be directive, rather than collaborative, in working with others, leading to some tensions, particularly with specialised UN agencies.

There have been significant improvements in OCHA's management of its pooled funds. It has clear criteria for allocating funds to urgent or underfunded needs, and its financial management processes are sound. While grantees raised some concerns about inflexible or burdensome processes, OCHA generally succeeds in striking an appropriate balance between the competing demands of speed, flexibility, transparency and accountability. Over the review period, it has taken steps to improve its speed of response and adaptability in volatile contexts. It tracks the speed of implementation of various internal processes, including release of funds, and the data show an overall trajectory of improvement. However, this an ongoing process: an internal review found that CERF's processes remained unnecessarily cumbersome, leading to delays. OCHA is in the process of redesigning its management processes for CERF.

OCHA's knowledge products are highly regarded and contribute to more informed and timely humanitarian responses. However, there are concerns that they have become too numerous and complex. At country level, OCHA's work on needs assessments and co-ordination make an important contribution to joint humanitarian planning and programming. OCHA has a dedicated results indicator for this, which shows progress towards the adoption of high-quality planning at country level.

Persistent weaknesses in performance management, results-based budgeting and risk management

There are some areas where OCHA's performance was found to be weak in the previous assessment and which have not substantially progressed. In particular, performance management remains an area of significant weakness for OCHA which has not improved over the assessment period. OCHA committed in its Strategic Plan to introducing a comprehensive results-based management (RBM) system, but did not proceed with implementation. The Strategic Plan included a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan with a suite of RBM tools designed to "systematically track OCHA's

performance… and support evidence-based decision-making". These included an implementation plan for each strategic objective, with problem statements, results chains, benchmarks and risk management plans, and a range of periodic performance reports, including analytical reports on areas of underperformance. Most of these tools were never introduced, and OCHA shelved plans to develop an information technology system for managing results data (OCHA pointed to plans to align to a common UN results-management system, Umoja Extension 2). Interviews suggest a lack of buy-in to RBM among the organisation's leadership and limited understanding of its core concepts among many staff.

OCHA does report against key performance indicators in its corporate results framework, generating useful performance data. However, OCHA has not identified an explicit causal pathway from its activities and resources through to the achievement of its corporate objectives. This leaves OCHA poorly placed to track progress towards its strategic objectives, to link the allocation of resources (financial and human) to those objectives, or to identify areas of underperformance. OCHA's pooled funds have stronger performance and accountability frameworks, using results chain logic to map their own performance and that of grantees.

As was the case at the time of the last MOPAN assessment, OCHA's planning and budgeting processes are poorly aligned. An August 2020 internal review found that OCHA continues to "struggle with what is perceived by many to be a disjointed set of planning exercises that are not in symmetry with budget preparations or supportive of results-based programming and budgeting". OCHA has however recently begun to take steps to integrate budget and planning processes. The criteria for allocating resources are nonetheless clear and appropriate. The budget process also allows for a good level of flexibility in response to emerging humanitarian needs, aided by a relatively high proportion of unearmarked or softly earmarked funding. OCHA's pooled funds also help to increase the flexibility and coverage of global humanitarian finance. Another potential concern with OCHA's budgeting process is that the organisation consistently maintains higher financial reserves than required under its own financial policies. That may be an overcorrection after a history of overspending, but is difficult to justify in the context of stretched resources.

OCHA's evaluation function is consistently underfunded and lacks either managerial or financial independence. Its corporate evaluation policy has not been updated since 2010. Contrary to UN-wide guidance, the evaluation unit is not free to select its own topics and lacks the resources to achieve adequate coverage of the organisation's strategic objectives. OCHA's evaluation budget covers only the core staff of the unit, which in recent years has declined to a single position. The costs of conducting evaluations (and, on one occasion, the personnel required to manage them) are therefore covered by separate donor contributions. Over the review period, there have been only three inter-agency evaluations (covering the humanitarian sector as a whole) and two internal evaluations. These were, however, conducted to a high standard. OCHA also conducts other review processes, such as CERF country reviews, which are more mixed in quality. OCHA has a system for tracking follow-ups of evaluation and audit recommendations, but there is no formal requirement to demonstrate how lessons from past interventions are taken into account. OCHA staff learn well at an individual level and are often regarded as experts in their fields, but learning processes are not well institutionalised.

OCHA also lacks functioning corporate systems for risk management. In interviews, staff demonstrated a good understanding of political and other risks, but OCHA's corporate risk register was not updated at any point in the review period.

OCHA's lack of investment in corporate systems for performance management, results-based budgeting, learning and risk management are a genuine cause for concern. It may be linked in part to OCHA's status as a part of the UN Secretariat, which limits its ability to adopt its own systems and processes – although there are also areas, such as the evaluation, where its practice falls short of UN-wide guidance. Overall, the situation suggests a lack of demand from OCHA's senior management for performance data.

A mixed record on cross-cutting issues and humanitarian reform commitments

Over the review period, OCHA has been required to respond to an increasing number of humanitarian reform agendas, which have taxed its resources, particularly in the field. The assessment found a mixed picture regarding the extent to which OCHA has incorporated cross-cutting commitments and normative frameworks both into its own operations and into its advocacy and co-ordination work. In general, OCHA's work on advocacy and standard setting is well respected and received by the humanitarian community. However, when it comes to translating that work into practical engagement in the field, gaps have emerged, including some due to resource constraints.

OCHA is a strong advocate for human rights and international humanitarian law, particularly through its promotion of protection in humanitarian emergencies. Protection needs are routinely considered in humanitarian needs assessments and response plans, and are prioritised in grants made by OCHA-managed pooled funds. Humanitarian Country Teams are mandated to promote a collective approach to protection, and there are corporate policies and guidance that support this. Staff receive mandatory training on human rights, and report that protection issues – and human rights more generally – are an important part of their work. OCHA is also a strong advocate for Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP); while it does not work directly with communities, its policies, guidance material, advocacy and training have shaped and strengthened the uptake of AAP approaches across the sector, and its pooled funds require grantees to incorporate AAP elements into their activities.

OCHA has detailed policy statements on gender equality. Its pooled funds have a strong focus on meeting the needs of women and girls, and there are systems in place to track whether women and girls of different ages are being reached. Through the Gender Standby Capacity Project (GenCap), OCHA contributes expertise on gender issues to support the incorporation of gender issues into humanitarian needs assessments and response plans, and has systems in place to track whether this is occurring. However, it sometimes lacks capacity in the field on gender issues. While the survey received a generally positive response on OCHA's efforts on gender equality, many respondents pointed to gaps in implementation.

OCHA is a strong advocate for mainstreaming of protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) across the humanitarian sector and plays an important co-ordination role on prevention and investigations at both global and country levels. It is progressively strengthening its own standards and due diligence processes for pooled fund grantees. Its own policies on PSEA and sexual harassment meet international standards, but their implementation is significantly under-resourced: a single staff member is responsible for OCHA's internal policies while also serving as inter-agency focal point on the issue. A 2018 evaluation found gaps in OCHA's systems for protecting its own staff in the field from sexual harassment. It has taken steps to address the gaps, but their effectiveness has not yet been assessed.

The assessment explored OCHA's support for increasing the diversity of humanitarian actors, which is an objective in its strategic plan. It is principally pursuing this aim by encouraging national NGOs to participate in humanitarian co-ordination processes and increase the share of humanitarian finance allocated to local responders. OCHA's pooled funds provide an important channel for humanitarian donors to support national NGOs, and CERF encourages its UN grantees to work through local responders. However, a 2019 evaluation found considerable variation in the extent to which CBPFs provided capacity building to national actors and supported their participation in governance and decision-making structures. While OCHA has been involved in global initiatives to support the diversity of humanitarian actors, it lacks a systematic approach to building the capacity of national partners and its efforts in-country are mainly at the initiative of individual country heads. OCHA also lacks a consistent approach to working with national governments in non-conflict settings, given their primary responsibility for protecting their citizens in times of crisis.

The assessment also looked at OCHA's support for aligning humanitarian action and development assistance (the nexus approach), to support long-term reductions in humanitarian need. In some countries, OCHA works with

national governments to build their disaster preparedness and response capacity, but its efforts are ad hoc and under-resourced. The assessment looked at the extent to which OCHA supports the tailoring of humanitarian assistance to vulnerable groups, in accordance with the "leave no one behind" principle. This is an area where OCHA's efforts have been less visible, and inter-agency humanitarian evaluations suggest that there has been limited overall progress across the sector. Finally, climate and the environment have not been a significant focus for OCHA during the review period, which is a notable gap given that the Strategic Plan and annual Global Humanitarian Overviews identify the growing role of climate change as a driver of humanitarian need.

Box 3: Main strengths and areas for improvement identified in the 2020 MOPAN assessment

Main strengths

- a coherent mandate and organisational vision
- a reformed organisational structure that is more coherent and better aligned to OCHA's functions and strategic objectives
- flexible resource mobilisation and allocation in response to new and evolving crises
- strong management of pooled funds
- effective partnerships with other humanitarian actors
- a significant contribution to improving the relevance, timeliness and flexibility of humanitarian operations
- effective advocacy for key humanitarian reforms, including accountability to affected populations and PSEA.

Main areas for improvement

- changes to OCHA's strategic direction without sufficient consultation, leading to some uncertainty and lack of buy-in among staff and external partners
- lack of follow through on a commitment to introducing results-based management
- weak systems for corporate risk management
- mixed performance in integrating cross-cutting issues, linked to a lack of resourcing
- lack of an independent evaluation function and underinvestment in evaluations.

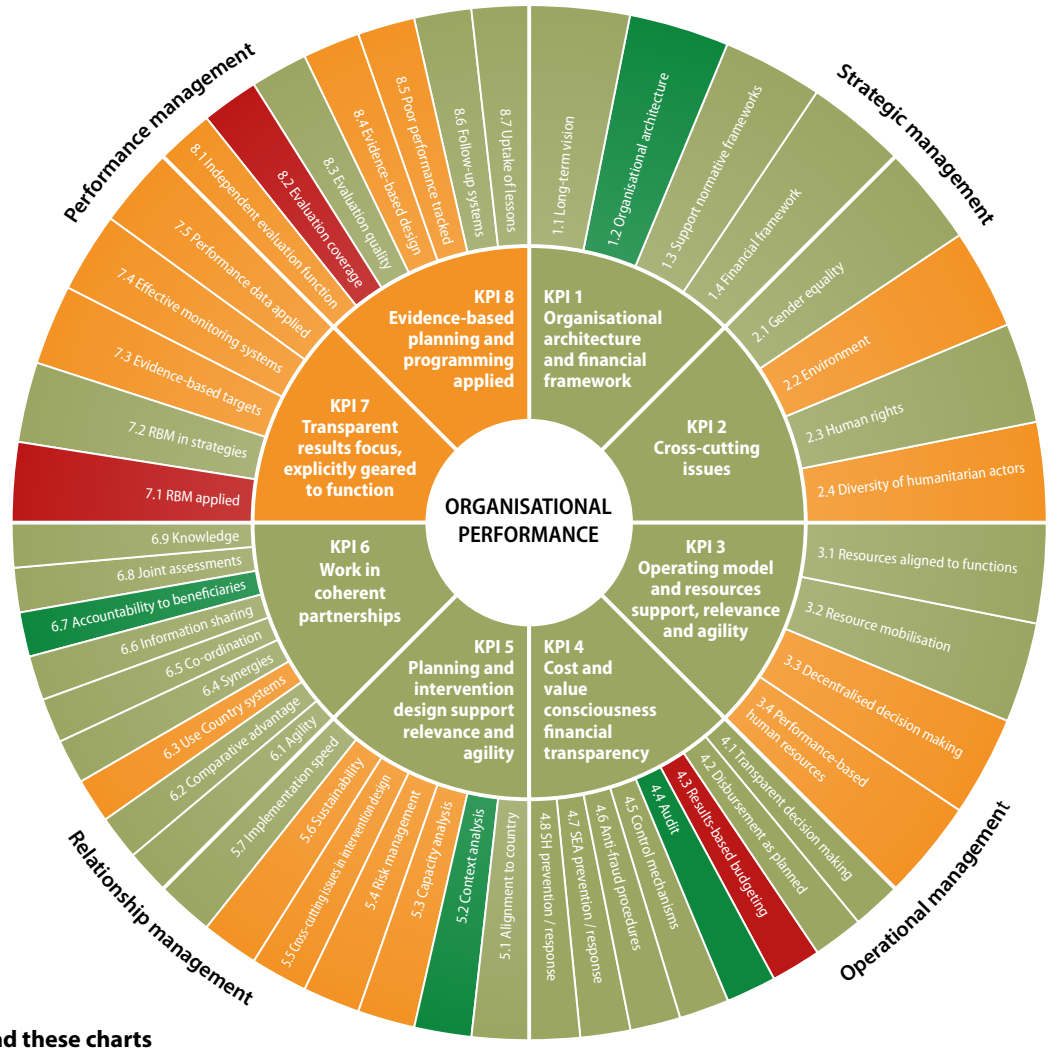
2.2. OCHA'S FUTURE TRAJECTORY

Overall, the assessment shows that OCHA's is on a positive trajectory and is an improving organisation. While changes in the MOPAN assessment methodology mean that the scores are not directly comparable, there is a clear pattern of improvement across the majority of KPIs since the 2015-16 MOPAN Assessment. The reforms undertaken during the review period have significantly improved the alignment between OCHA's functions and its organisation, and contributed to greater operational agility. The creation of an Organisational Development Unit indicates a willingness to keep the organisation's systems and processes under review and work towards continuing improvement. There is also a good trajectory of improvement in the management of its pooled funds, with positive signs that OCHA continues to keep its performance under review and seek out areas for improvement.

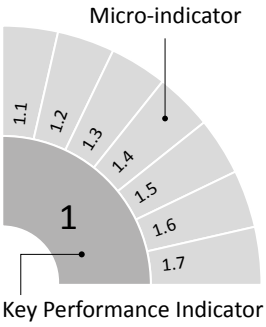
However, there are also signs that OCHA has suffered a loss in both internal and external buy-in to recent changes in its strategic direction. For an organisation that works by promoting voluntary co-ordination, any breakdown in consensus on its role and direction is a potential cause for concern. There are also important areas where OCHA has fallen short of its own reform commitments. In the areas of results-based management and budgeting, risk management, and evaluation, it has made little progress since the last report. While this may be a reflection of OCHA's many competing priorities, it also seems to suggest a lack of recognition of the value of institutionalising performance management, learning and accountability through robust corporate processes.

The period covered in this review, from mid-2017 to early 2021, has been exceptionally demanding for OCHA and for the wider international humanitarian sector. Given limited resources, it is not surprising to find mixed results for OCHA's engagement with cross-cutting issues and humanitarian reform agenda. However, a pattern has emerged of OCHA making ambitious commitments that it is unable to follow through, particularly in the field. This suggests a need to prioritise its areas of engagement and ensure that its areas of focus are backed by resources and implementation plans.

2.3. OCHA'S PERFORMANCE RATING SUMMARY



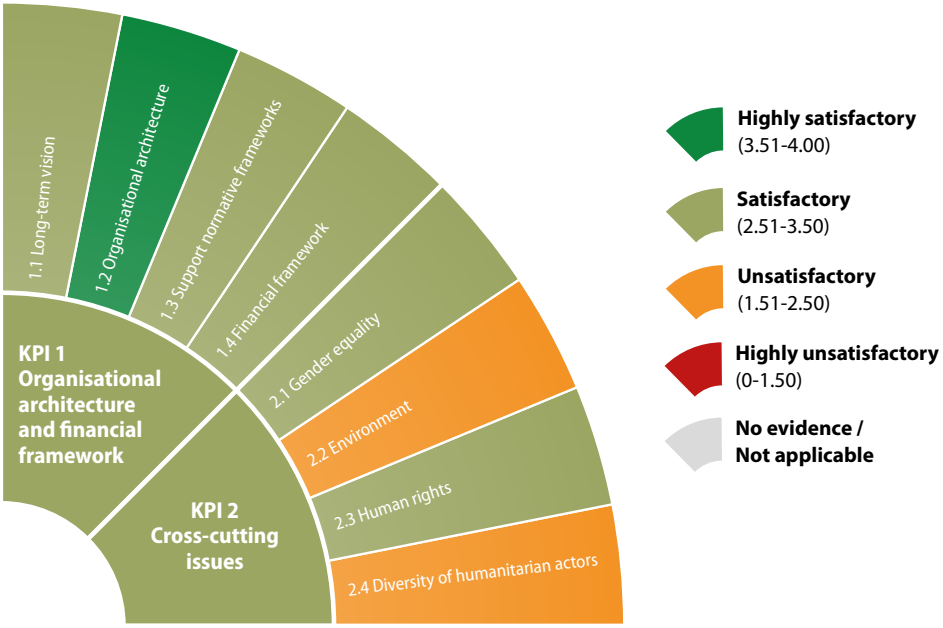
How to read these charts



- **Highly satisfactory** (3.51-4.00)
- **Satisfactory** (2.51-3.50)
- **Unsatisfactory** (1.51-2.50)
- **Highly unsatisfactory** (0-1.50)
- **No evidence / Not applicable**

HIGHLIGHTS BY PERFORMANCE AREA

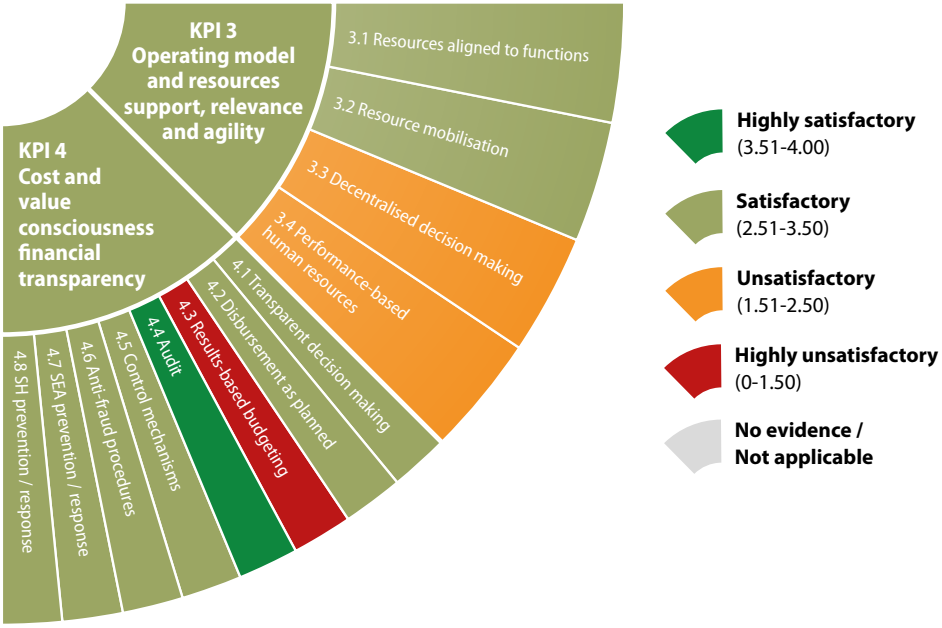
Strategic Management



Strategic Management KPIs	KPI Score
KPI 1: Organisational architecture and financial framework enable mandate implementation and achievement of expected results	3.19
KPI 2: Structures and mechanisms in place and applied to support the implementation of global frameworks for crosscutting issues at all levels, in line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda principles	2.63

OCHA has a coherent vision for its work and an organisational model and financial framework that are aligned with that vision. However, there is evidence of a lack of consensus and buy-in for recent changes in strategic direction. Its performance on the integration of cross-cutting issues has been mixed.

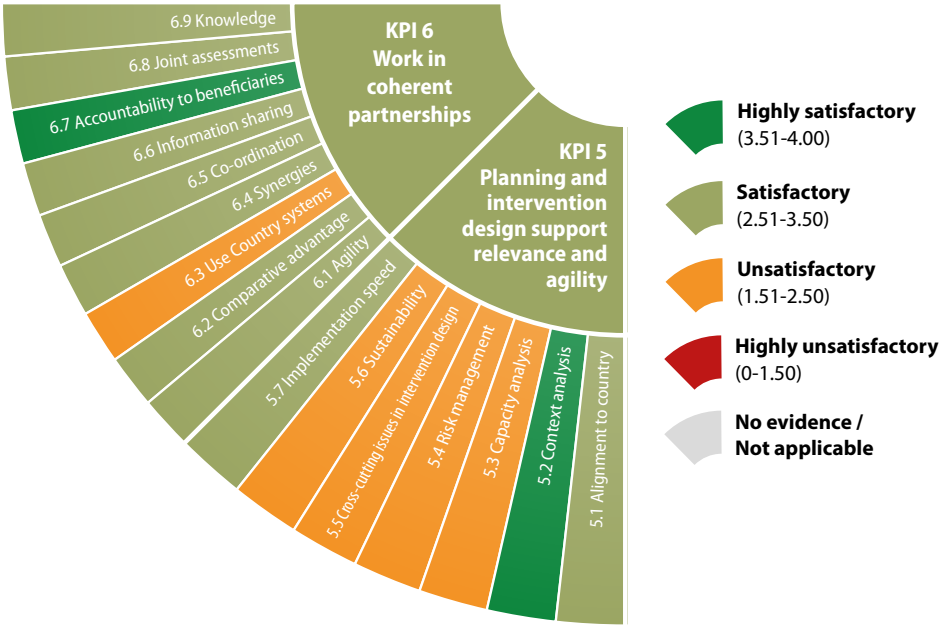
Operational Management



Operational Management KPIs	KPI Score
KPI 3: The operating model and human and financial resources support relevance and agility	2.84
KPI 4: Organisational systems are cost- and value-conscious and enable transparency and accountability	2.86

OCHA's New Operating Model has improved operational agility, but it has not achieved its ambitions on decentralisation. Planning and budgeting process are not integrated, but resource allocation is based on reasonably clear and transparent criteria. The management of pooled funds is generally sound. OCHA's policies on PSEA and sexual harassment meet international standards but their implementation is significantly under-resourced.

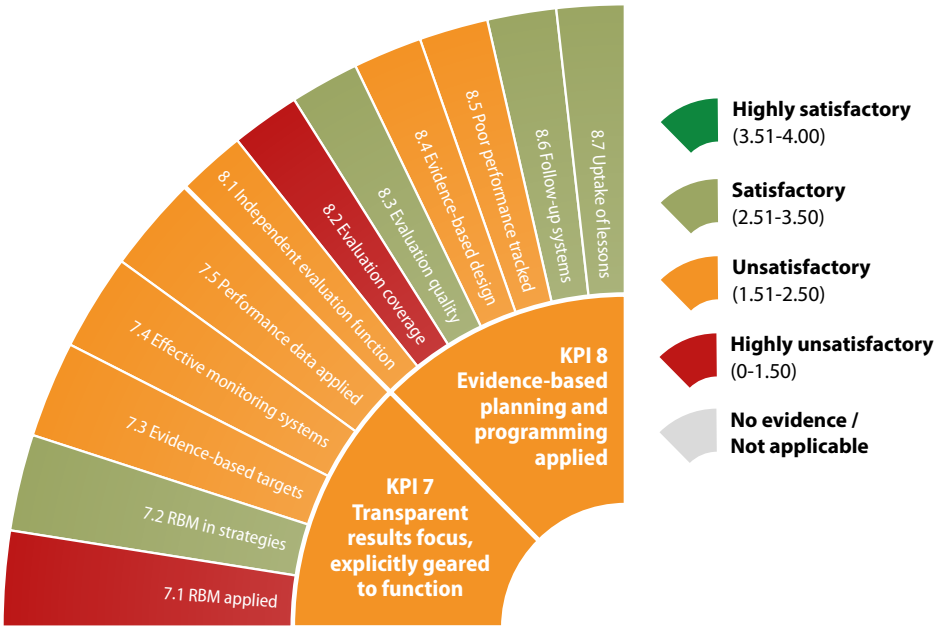
Relationship Management



Relationship Management KPIs	KPI Score
KPI 5: Operational planning and intervention design tools support relevance and agility within partnerships	2.71
KPI 6: Working in coherent partnerships directed at leveraging and catalysing the use of resources	3.12

OCHA supports a wide range of initiatives to enhance collaborative working, and its co-ordination work enables other humanitarian actors to respond more effectively. Feedback on the quality of its partnerships is generally positive, with some concerns that is has a tendency to be directive rather than collaborative. At country level, OCHA makes an important contribution to joint planning and delivery, but lacks a systematic approach to working with national partners.

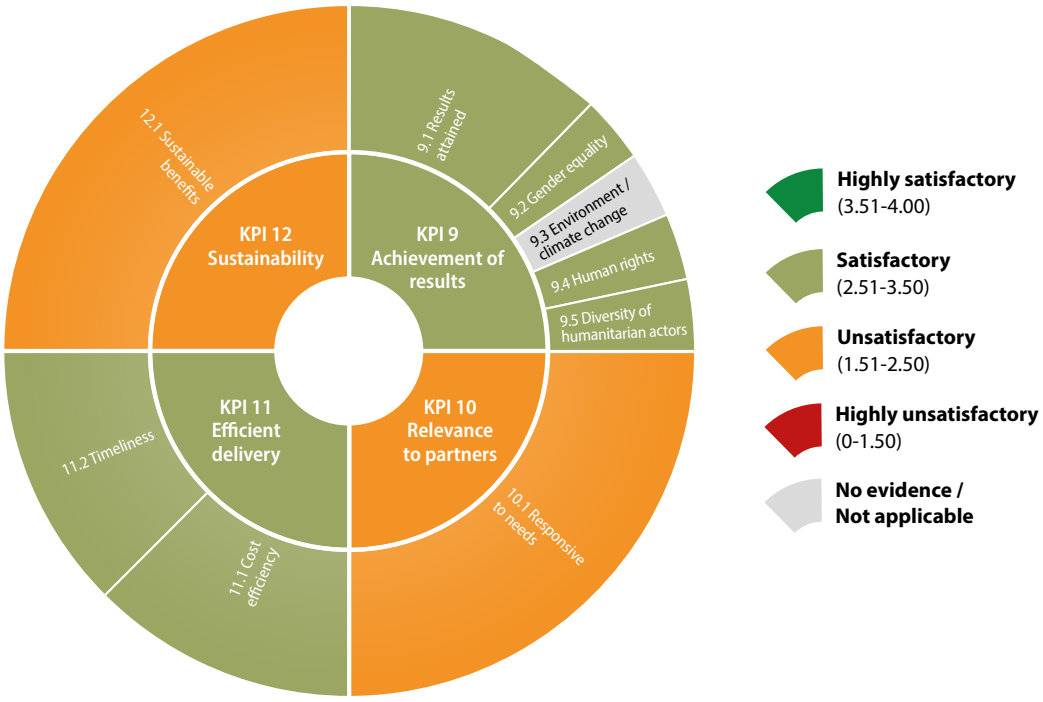
Performance Management



Performance Management KPIs	KPI Score
KPI 7: The focus on results is strong, transparent and explicitly geared towards function	1.95
KPI 8: The organisation applies evidence-based planning and programming	2.27

OCHA committed to developing a comprehensive approach to results-based management in its Strategic Plan, with an ambitious set of tools and processes, but has not proceeded with implementation. Results management therefore remains relatively unstructured, leaving OCHA poorly placed to identify underperformance. The evaluation function is not independent and OCHA does not allocate sufficient resources for adequate evaluation coverage of its strategic objectives.

Results



Results KPIs	KPI Score
KPI 9: Development and humanitarian objectives are achieved and results contribute to normative and cross-cutting goals	3.00
KPI 10: Interventions are relevant to the needs and priorities of partner countries and beneficiaries, as the organisation works towards results in areas within its mandate	2.00
KPI 11: Results are delivered efficiently	3.00
KPI 12: Results are sustainable	2.00

Evidence to inform the assessment of results was more limited than other performance areas, resulting in low or medium confidence for the underlying micro-indicators. OCHA reporting shows a good level of delivery against corporate results targets, and both CERF and CBPFs have been positively reviewed for their contributions to ensuring timely, co-ordinated and targeted humanitarian assistance. However, OCHA has achieved limited results in tailoring support to particular categories of people in need.

CHAPTER 3

DETAILED LOOK AT KEY FINDINGS

Detailed look at key findings

This chapter provides a more detailed assessment OCHA's performance across the five performance areas – strategic management, operational management, relationship management, and performance management and results – and the KPIs that relate to each are, accompanied by their score and rating. Assessment key findings draw on information from the three evidence sources (document reviews, interviews and a partner survey – see Chapter 4 for more information) and the section uses quotes from the survey to illustrate findings and highlight feedback from stakeholders. Further analysis per micro-indicator and detailed scoring can be found in Annex A, while the full survey results are included in Annex C. For the full list and citation details of the documents referred to, please see Annex B.

MOPAN Performance scoring and rating scale

- Highly satisfactory (3.51-4.00)
- Satisfactory (2.51-3.50)
- Unsatisfactory (1.51-2.50)
- Highly Unsatisfactory (0.00-1.50)
- No evidence / Not applicable

3.1. ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Clear strategic direction geared to key functions, intended results and integration of relevant cross-cutting priorities.

OCHA has a coherent vision for its work, based on a clear understanding of its mandate and comparative advantage, but recent changes in strategic direction without a formal strategy update have led to uncertainty and a lack of buy-in among staff and partners. OCHA has undertaken major institutional reforms over the assessment period, improving the organisation's coherence and alignment with its strategic objectives. Budget processes have improved but are not yet integrated with planning, making it difficult for OCHA to align its budgets with its intended results. An overly conservative fiscal stance has led OCHA to hold higher reserves than its financial policies require. OCHA shows mixed but overall satisfactory performance on cross-cutting issues. Gender equality and human rights are well integrated into its policies, budgets, systems and processes, but stakeholder feedback suggests that performance is mixed across its countries of operation. OCHA does not prioritise climate and the environment, and its work on promoting a diversity of humanitarian actors (principally through the "localisation" of humanitarian finance and co-ordination processes), though positive, is not anchored in a clear strategy or approach.

KPI 1: The organisational architechture and the financial framework enable mandate implementation and achievement of results

Score: 3.19

This KPI examines the extent to which OCHA has articulated a clear strategic vision for its work, and whether its organisational architecture and financial framework enable the delivery of its vision, mandate and expected results. OCHA's performance in this area is rated as **satisfactory**.

OCHA's 2018-21 Strategic Plan sets out a clear vision of a world that comes together to help crisis-affected people rapidly receive the humanitarian assistance they need, and of OCHA's role in co-ordinating and strengthening the quality of humanitarian action. OCHA's comparative advantage in this role derives from its legal mandate and its long and evolving experience. Its core co-ordination function is supported by its roles in information management, managing pooled funding at global and country levels, providing thought leadership on humanitarian policy, and its leadership on the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and other global co-ordination bodies.

OCHA's Strategic Plan articulates five strategic objectives: (1) strengthened humanitarian co-ordination, rooted in (2) better situation analysis, supported by (3) an appropriate humanitarian financing system, in a world that (4) accepts

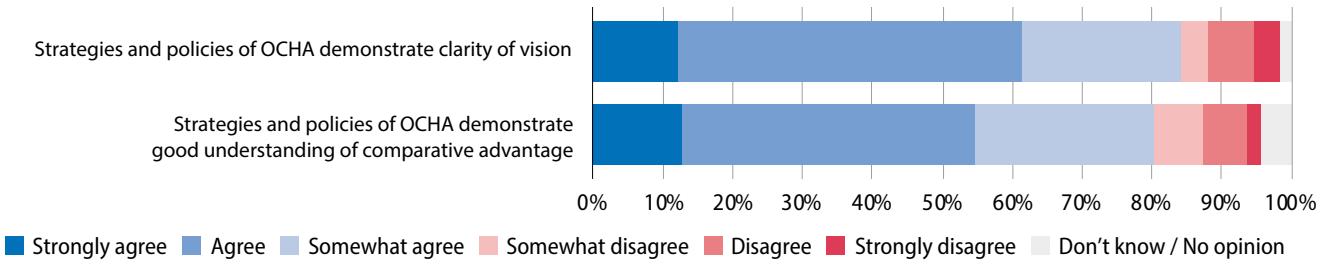
the centrality of international humanitarian and human rights law, and access to and protection for affected people, driven by (5) leadership that works towards a more responsive and adaptable humanitarian system. These objectives are aligned with its mandate, and with applicable normative frameworks such as the Grand Bargain and those aspects of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda that bear on humanitarian action (especially Sustainable Development Goal 17 on partnership).

However, OCHA's Strategic Plan has become dated, leading to some uncertainty over its direction. Work on a mid-term review of OCHA's Strategic Plan started in 2019, but was terminated in March 2020 after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in order to prioritise OCHA's role in co-ordinating the global response. In the meantime, the USG introduced some new corporate priorities. Anticipatory action was added as a new strategic objective, along with a focus on the international financial institutions, and four "strategic steers" were introduced to guide the work of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). These changes, made without any formal strategy review process, were unexpected for some of OCHA's staff and partners, leading to uncertainty and a lack of buy-in. These changes divided opinions among interviewees and survey respondents, both inside and outside the organisation. While some saw them as evidence of adaptability, others were concerned that they represented a divergence from OCHA's core focus on emergency needs. In light of this uncertainty, the failure to keep the Strategic Plan current is a serious shortcoming, resulting in a lack of a shared vision across the organisation. OCHA has also changed its strategic focus in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in a process that has involved much stronger engagement with staff and partners.

OCHA has implemented significant reforms to its organisational structure and operating model over the assessment period. While these changes were designed and largely implemented prior to the current Strategic Plan, they have strengthened the organisation's alignment with its strategy and constitute a significant improvement to the structure and operating model as assessed in the 2015-16 MOPAN Assessment. They were broadly conducive to OCHA's goal of "working as one" at the start of the assessment period, and there have been further improvements since then. However, OCHA could still improve its co-operation between its headquarters and the field.

OCHA continues to display a lack of alignment between its planning and budgeting processes. An August 2020 internal review concluded that OCHA continues to "struggle with what is perceived by many to be a disjointed set of planning exercises that are not in symmetry with budget preparations or supportive of results-based programming and budgeting". It began to take steps to integrate these in 2020, with the establishment of a Planning, Budget and Finance Unit within the Executive Office.

FIGURE 4. SURVEY RESULTS – MISSION AND STRATEGY



Note: Only three of the five types of partner were asked these questions in the survey: 1) governing body representatives/board members including CERF and CBPF Advisory Boards; 2) donors; and 3) peer organisation/co-ordinating partners.

Source: Based on responses to the 2020 MOPAN external partner survey: OCHA, December 2020-January 2021.

Survey respondents rated OCHA highly for its clarity of vision and understanding of its comparative advantage. However, in interviews, concerns were raised about some of OCHA's recent strategic innovations.

"This is an area on which there has been significant improvement over the past three years. There is a better understanding within and without OCHA of the added value of the organisation as a whole, and the core functions it seeks to carry out." – Donor representative.

That said, OCHA budget processes do allow for a good level of flexibility in response to evolving humanitarian needs, coupled with its ability to undertake additional resource mobilisation activities in response to new emergencies. This is supported by its relatively high proportion of unearmarked or softly earmarked funding. OCHA also plays an important role in helping to ensure that wider humanitarian funding flows target priority needs, both through targeted appeals and the catalytic use of its pooled funding.

However, over the assessment period, OCHA maintained a fiscal stance that was more conservative than its own financial policies require, consistently spending less than it received. OCHA reports this as a success, given its history of overspending, and financial management has indeed improved since the previous assessment period. However, the assessment notes that decisions to hold back expenditure from humanitarian operations in a context of stretched resources and unmet needs should be made based on the organisation's financial policies, rather than in an ad hoc manner.

KPI 2: Structures and mechanisms support the implementation of global frameworks for cross-cutting issues at all levels, in line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda principles

Score: 2.63

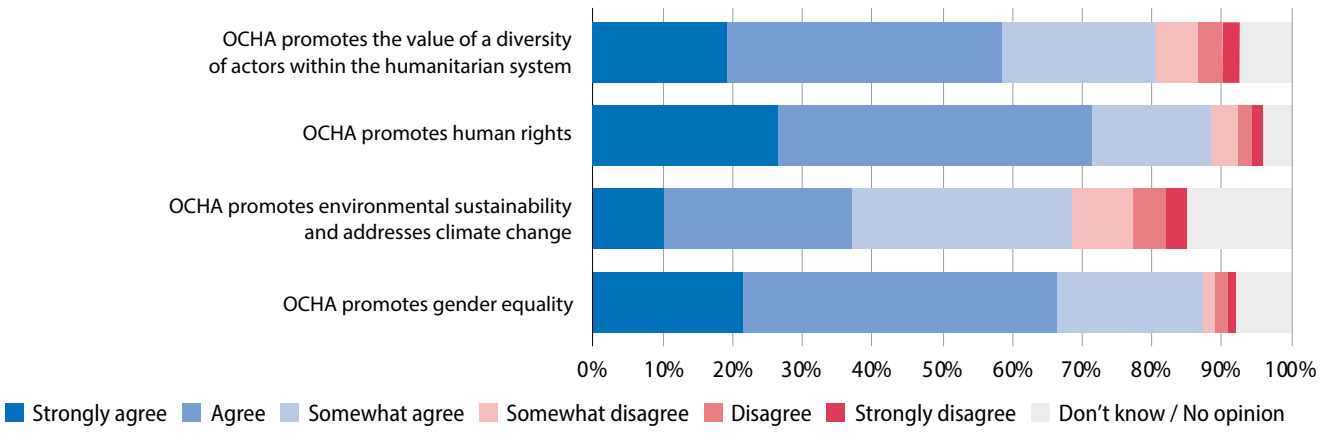
This KPI assesses OCHA's incorporation of global frameworks for cross-cutting issues, in line with the principles of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Given OCHA's humanitarian mandate, the assessment focuses on OCHA's integration of four cross-cutting issues: 1) gender equality and women's empowerment; 2) human rights and humanitarian law and principles, which are manifest mainly in OCHA's protection work; 3) environmental sustainability and climate change; and 4) promoting a diversity of actors within the international humanitarian system, which OCHA pursues primarily through the localisation of humanitarian finance and co-ordination processes.

OCHA shows mixed performance on incorporating these cross-cutting issues into its activities, due to a lack of clear plans and resources for implementation. OCHA's overall performance in this area is rated as **satisfactory.**

OCHA has detailed policy statements on gender equality in humanitarian action, and there is evidence that it is implementing them. Gender is mainstreamed into its Strategic Plan and corporate objectives, but this is not supported by gender-related indicators and targets. A focus on women and girls is one of the four "strategic steers" given to CERF, and OCHA pooled funds use the IASC Gender and Age Marker to track whether women and different age groups are being reached. Across the sector, OCHA in partnership with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) contributes expertise on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through the Gender Standby Capacity Project (GenCap). The key tool is the road map process, which facilitates a collective assessment on gender and helps establish operation-wide priorities and a concrete action plan at the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) level. GenCap provides tailored support to the HCTs in implementing the road map for up to three years, to ensure sustainability of impact and localisation of capacities. GenCap senior advisers also typically help ensure that Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs) and Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) pay due attention to gender. This is one of the criteria that OCHA uses to assess the quality of those documents, and a 2020 Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation confirmed that HRPs now contain more nuanced analysis of gender issues. However, OCHA's reliance on the GenCap advisers means that its own gender equality tools and processes are less effective in countries where they are not present. This was confirmed in the survey: although the overall response on gender was positive, many survey respondents made comments pointing out weaknesses in implementation (see Figure 5).

OCHA has a strong focus on human rights and humanitarian law and principles, particularly within its protection work. While protection is not strongly integrated into OCHA's Strategic Plan or corporate results framework, OCHA has a strong focus on promoting it across the humanitarian sector. Protection is incorporated into all humanitarian needs assessments and response plans, and into the grants made by the OCHA-managed pooled funds. All HCTs are mandated to promote a collective approach to protection across the humanitarian response, and field staff report

Figure 5. SURVEY RESULTS – CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES



Note: Governing body representatives/board members were not asked to respond to this question.

Source: Based on responses to the 2020 MOPAN external partner survey: OCHA, December 2020-January 2021.

Survey respondents rated OCHA's promotion of gender equality and human rights highly, but a significant number of comments drew attention to implementation gaps.

"OCHA has made significant progress on gender-mainstreaming, but still needs to link… promotions and performance evaluations more explicitly to gender performance in their countries and programs." – Donor representative.

"Gender equality continues to be under-resourced." – Donor representative.

that protection issues, and human rights more generally, are an important part of their work. Training of staff on human rights is mandatory and conducted on an ongoing basis, and as of 2021 will be monitored through the staff performance appraisal process. However, in the survey, OCHA's partners expressed the view that OCHA does not always succeed in applying global policies and principles to its operations.

OCHA does not consider environmental sustainability and climate change to be part of its mandate, and does not prioritise them. They are not mainstreamed into OCHA's Strategic Plan, only receiving mention in the context of conducting joint situation and response analyses with a range of actors that include "environment actors". They do not feature in OCHA's results framework, and are not systematically covered in reporting as a cross-cutting issue, although the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)-OCHA Joint Environment Unit does report on its activities. Sustainability and climate change play a limited role in OCHA's humanitarian planning tools and processes, and during the review period OCHA reduced its contribution to the UNEP-OCHA Joint Environmental Unit. This is a significant gap, given OCHA's role as a thought leader on humanitarian policy and the growing links between climate change and patterns of humanitarian need.

OCHA recognises the value of having diversity among humanitarian actors and promotes this at the international level and through its pooled funds. Its Strategic Plan affirms the value of such diversity but has no specific results indicators or targets on the issue. OCHA is leading an IASC initiative to promote participation of national actors in humanitarian co-ordination processes. The pooled funds measure the share of funding channelled directly or indirectly to national and local stakeholders, and serve as a useful intermediary for donors unable to fund local actors directly. CERF encourages UN grantees to pursue localisation, CBPFs award extra points to grant applications from local partners and a number of funds have made significant efforts to support applications from local partners. However, a 2019 CBPF evaluation found considerable variation across countries as to whether local actors were involved in governance and management processes or were provided with capacity-building support. Overall, OCHA does not pursue this issue systematically and in-country efforts are largely at the initiative of individual office heads.

Box 4. How has the COVID-19 response affected OCHA's mandate and delivery?

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the global humanitarian context and on OCHA's operations, with new humanitarian needs emerging in countries where OCHA had not previously been active. The assessment found that OCHA moved quickly and effectively to co-ordinate the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic, producing the first COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan within a few weeks of WHO's announcement of the pandemic and then updating that as more information came to light. It also took action to adjust its own ways of working in response to the new operating environment. In June 2020, OCHA outlined its approach towards the pandemic in a document entitled Responding to the Pandemic: OCHA's strategic direction and adaptation. It listed OCHA's top four priorities in light of the pandemic as to: 1) protect the most vulnerable; 2) sustain support to global humanitarian operations; 3) mobilise adaptive and collaborative responses with OCHA's partners; and 4) protect and support OCHA staff. To do this effectively, OCHA planned to:

- prioritise remote support from OCHA HQ to the field
- take measures to contain increased costs, including the costs of protecting staff
- ramp up effective humanitarian co-ordination in the context of new and dynamic operational settings
- respond to additional demands for needs analysis, information management and response monitoring
- bolster resource mobilisation and humanitarian financing efforts at all levels.

To allow for the COVID-19 response in the context of finite resources, OCHA chose to delay or scale back operations in certain areas, including:

- slowing down research and policy work on climate change, technology and localisation
- scaling down the 2020 World Humanitarian Day to a fully digital campaign
- putting on hold the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations (IAHEs) of Yemen and Ebola, in order to avoid overburdening partners during their response
- delaying CERF Anticipatory Action in Chad and Malawi
- curtailing all activities requiring travel, recruitment processes, and the use of contractual services to deliver services such as training and workshops.

There was a clear consensus among both the OCHA staff and the external partners consulted for this assessment that OCHA's organisational reforms of recent years had significantly improved its capacity to respond effectively to a challenge of this magnitude.

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Assets and capacities organised behind strategic direction and intended results, to ensure relevance, agility and accountability.

OCHA does not follow the principles of results-based budgeting, but its criteria for allocating financial resources are nonetheless clear and transparent, and aligned with the objectives in its Strategic Plan. It has succeeded in expanding its access to multi-year, flexible donor funding, which supports relevance and agility. Reforms to its operating model, together with new mechanisms such as Regional Support Teams, have enhanced its ability to respond to evolving contexts and new challenges. However, recent shifts in OCHA's strategic priorities, made without any formal strategy-setting processes, have led to a lack of clarity and consensus among staff and partners. OCHA has a mixed record on decentralisation. Delegation of certain financial management functions to the field have improved the organisation's flexibility, but there is no clear trend towards decentralisation of the budget and field operations remain understaffed. There are concerns that other aspects of its decision making, particularly around CERF, have become more centralised and less consultative.

OCHA's management of its pooled funds generally strikes an appropriate balance between speed and transparency, and between in-grant flexibility and the need for effective oversight. OCHA is currently redesigning its pooled fund management structures to improve coherence across both CERF and CBPFs. Fiduciary risk management is sound and audits reveal compliance with OCHA's financial policies and UN rules. OCHA is a strong advocate for the mainstreaming of protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) across the humanitarian sector, helps co-ordinate prevention and investigations at both global and country levels, and is progressively strengthening its standards and due diligence processes for pooled fund grantees. Its own policies on PSEA and sexual harassment meet international standards, but their implementation is significantly under-resourced. A 2018 evaluation found gaps in OCHA's systems for protecting staff in the field from sexual harassment. Measures have been taken to address the gaps, but their effectiveness has not yet been assessed.

KPI 3: The operating model and human and financial resources support relevance and agility — Score: 2.84

This KPI explores how well OCHA deploys its resources, both human and financial, to support its core functions and a relevant and agile humanitarian response across the humanitarian sector. It covers OCHA's core budget for its own organisational needs, its pooled funds and the two projects (GenCap and ProCap) that have boosted OCHA's capacity on gender and protection.

OCHA's operating model and its deployment of human and financial resources have strengthened over the assessment period, and rate as **satisfactory.**

OCHA is a strong advocate for multi-year, flexible humanitarian funding at the global level, and its pooled funds contribute to its relevance and agility at the system level. Within its own funding, it has succeeded in maintaining relatively light levels of earmarking and has expanded the pool of multi-year commitments from USD 88 million from 16 donors at the end of 2017 to USD 114 million from 18 donors at the end of 2019. This has improved its ability to allocate financial resources flexibly and in support of its core functions. OCHA has been less successful at diversifying away from its dependence on a small donor base, and plans to raise funds from the private sector were largely abandoned as infeasible due to the heavy investment required.

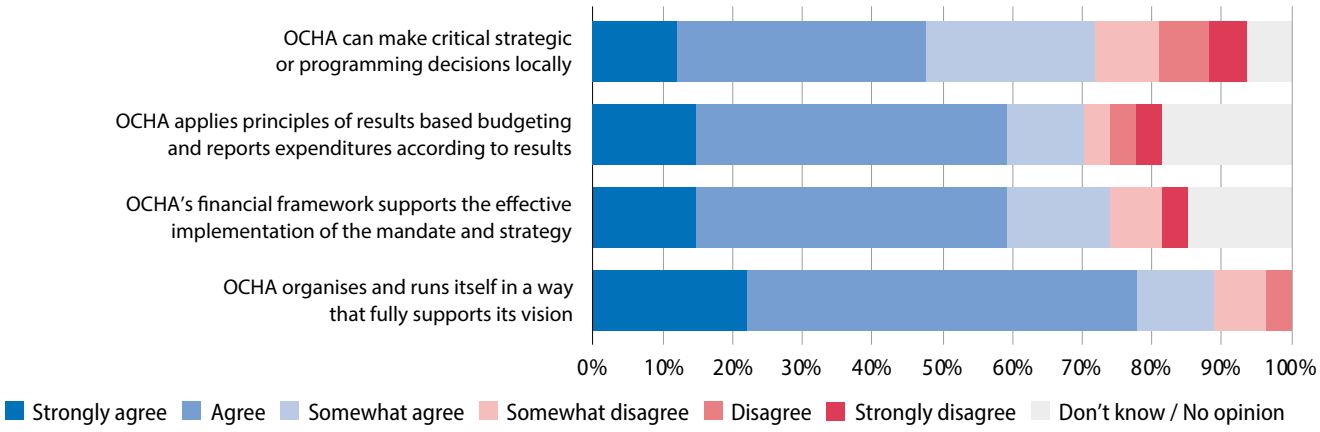
OCHA's reformed operating model and human and financial resources are broadly aligned with the objectives in its Strategic Plan. This has been enhanced by the introduction of the New Operating Model, together with new mechanisms such as Regional Support Teams and improved online platforms. There was a clear consensus among both OCHA staff and external partners that these reforms have enabled the organisation to respond with speed and

agility to evolving contexts and to new challenges, including COVID-19. However, as noted above, the incorporation of new organisational priorities outside any strategy-setting process have resulted in uncertainty and a lack of buy-in among some members of the organisation.

OCHA's staff performance management system improved over the review period, under its People Strategy. Improvements include the introduction of an integrated system for managing performance appraisals and improvements in the support offered to managers by the human resource (HR) department. However, the system does not yet deal effectively with excessive work pressure or poor performance. In interviews, many OCHA staff complained of unsustainable work pressure. OCHA is now moving to a new agile performance management approach, focusing on empowerment and accountability, as part of broader UN reforms.

OCHA's record on decentralisation is mixed and on balance it has fallen short of its ambition to delegate authority closer to the point of delivery to improve responsiveness to country priorities. There has been greater delegation of certain functions, including procurement, travel authorisation and budget execution, which has increased the speed and agility of its field-based operations. However, some aspects of OCHA's decision making have reportedly become more centralised and less transparent, including around CERF's strategic direction and the allocation of multi-country block grants during the COVID-19 response. OCHA reports that its management of extra-budgetary funds has become more decentralised, but when the entire budget is considered, there is no clear trend towards decentralisation. Major cuts to field staff in 2017 have meant that when staffing is considered, OCHA is now less decentralised than it was in the previous review period. OCHA is in the process of relocating around 50 posts to regional centres in The Hague and Istanbul, but this is a limited form of decentralisation and field staff interviewed were not convinced that it would help to address staff shortages in the field. Partner feedback is that the combination of understaffing and remote working (linked to a limited field presence outside national capitals) have led to missed opportunities for timely resolution of problems (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. SURVEY RESULTS – OPERATING MODEL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES



Source: Based on responses to the 2020 MOPAN external partner survey: OCHA, December 2020-January 2021.

Survey respondents rated OCHA positively for its organisational structure and use of financial resources, but many raised concerns about staffing capacity in the field.

"OCHA field staff is rather poor in number and could be more experienced and foster an enhanced, inclusive coordination capacity." – Cluster implementing member.

"I do not think they have sufficient staff in all locations in [country] to deliver the results it intends. Some of their staff are really very well experienced and skilled, while others are less so." – Governing body representative.

"The staff of OCHA is not sufficient to cover the annual and repetitive emergency problems in [country] (cyclone, flood, drought, displacement of the population, others)." – Cluster lead.

KPI 4: Organisational systems are cost- and value-conscious and enable transparency and accountability

Score: 2.86

This KPI assesses whether OCHA's organisational systems are cost- and value-conscious and support financial transparency and accountability. The assessment finds that OCHA's financial management systems are broadly **satisfactory.**

OCHA does not apply results-based budgeting principles. Financial resources are not explicitly matched to strategic objectives or result areas, and OCHA does not track costs from activities to results. CERF and CBPFs do so, however, at grant level. The costing of results in OCHA's budget documents has not improved over the review period, but this may change in the near future, as OCHA has begun integrating its budget and planning functions.

Nonetheless, OCHA's spending is based on criteria that are reasonably clear and transparent. OCHA's own budget goes primarily towards staffing and related costs. Periodic "lifecycle of operations" analyses aim to ensure that it maintains an appropriate configuration of staff and related budgets wherever it has a presence. OCHA-managed pooled funds are designed to be adaptable within their funding criteria. CERF's criteria focus on life-saving measures. These criteria were updated and broadened in 2020, and the USG has been granted some limited discretion to fund activities outside these criteria, in exceptional circumstances. However, feedback from interviewees and the survey revealed mixed views as to whether CERF's allocations for durable solutions are aligned with these criteria. CBPFs have fund-specific criteria, alongside overall criteria such as complementarity with other funding channels and priority setting on the basis of Humanitarian Response Plans and/or emerging priorities. These criteria align with OCHA's aim of ensuring a "humanitarian financing system that meets the needs of crisis-affected people".

OCHA's pooled fund grant allocation is generally well managed, and strikes an appropriate balance between the need for flexibility, transparency and effective oversight. There are some shortcomings in how pooled funds report on variations in grant implementation against plans. Furthermore, in the survey, some grant applicants raised concerns about a lack of transparency in grant-making and a lack of flexibility once grant agreements have been signed. On the whole, OCHA manages to find a good balance between speed of decision making, transparency in proposal scoring, in-grant flexibility and the need for effective oversight. OCHA is currently redesigning its pooled fund management structures to improve efficiencies across both CERF and CBPFs, and to further accelerate end-to-end funding application processes.

OCHA's fiduciary risk management is sound. OCHA's operations are subject to internal and external audits and they are conducted according to international standards. They concluded that OCHA's operations have been in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations. OCHA records its responses to audit recommendations and follows up on each recommendation until it deems it has been dealt with satisfactorily. OCHA maintains detailed records in its Recommendations Tracking System and has a dashboard that provides headline data on the status of recommendations and the time taken to follow up on them. OCHA has adequate policies on fraud and corruption, and on the protection of whistle-blowers.

OCHA can demonstrate a longstanding commitment to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) across the humanitarian sector, including through central policy initiatives and inter-agency co-ordination in the field. Through IASC, it brokered a 2018 joint commitment to "collective, sector-wide action" on PSEA, which led to inter-agency taskforces on investigations and sector-wide referencing. It co-chairs the IASC Technical Experts Group on PSEA and established a fund to provide rapid grants to IASC organisations and partners for SEA investigations. It incorporated information on SEA into the 2019 Global Humanitarian Overview and has contributed to other inter-agency knowledge products and guides. It integrated PSEA into the Humanitarian Programme Cycle, including multi-sector needs assessment, and helped to develop an IASC PSEA country-level framework template with results-based indicators.

At the country level, the inter-agency Protection Standby Capacity Project (ProCap) and GenCap advisers contribute to promoting PSEA as part of wider agendas on protection and gender equality. This includes ensuring its inclusion as a standing agenda point in Humanitarian Country Team meetings, providing technical expertise to other agencies and partners, supporting PSEA networks and community-based complaint mechanisms, and hosting skills and awareness-raising workshops. According to OCHA documents, OCHA's field offices work to raise awareness of the rights of affected populations, the standards expected of humanitarian personnel and the options for raising complaints. A peer review of OCHA's operations in Mozambique concluded that PSEA measures had been initiated very early on in the emergency response, led by OCHA and UNICEF.

Internally, OCHA's policies and procedures on PSEA reflect UN standards, but it has not allocated adequate resources to implementing them. As part of the UN Secretariat, it is covered by UN policies on the issue, and has also elaborated organisation-specific policies and procedures, with associated monitoring mechanisms. At the central level, efforts to prevent both SEA and sexual harassment within the organisation are the responsibility of a single staff member, the Senior Coordinator for PSEA and Sexual Harassment. She leads OCHA's internal PSEA processes, including a cross-functional PSEA task force and staff training programme, and also serves as inter-agency focal point for SEA across the sector. She is supported by consultants, but is significantly under-resourced given the breadth of her responsibilities. In country offices, Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs) are responsible for ensuring that systems are in place for preventing and monitoring SEA, and are required to report on progress to the USG, via the Senior Coordinator. They are supported by OCHA SEA focal points in country, but these individuals are not specialists in the subject and depend on technical support from the Senior Coordinator.

OCHA is developing standards and due diligence processes to ensure that implementing partners under its pooled funds prevent and respond to SEA. Its grant agreement templates commit partners to UN PSEA standards and require a zero tolerance approach to incidents of SEA. NGO grantees must undergo due diligence on their PSEA policies and capacities. OCHA has also developed a standard operating procedure (SOP) for CBPF implementing partners on responding to SEA cases, and its introduction has been supported by training. The CBPF Oversight and Compliance Unit is responsible for monitoring action on SEA but, according to an internal review, lacks the capacity to fulfil this function alongside "an increasingly heavy regular workload of managing the CBPF SEA allegations themselves".

OCHA also has suitable policies on sexual harassment within its own workforce but limited resources to implement them. Its People Strategy sets out the goal of creating a working environment that is "respectful, caring, and free of harassment and discrimination", and it has an SOP on Sexual Misconduct which reflect UN rules and standards. Training on the subject is mandatory for staff, and monitored through performance assessments. There are a number of formal and informal mechanisms for staff to raise grievances and seek support. Formal complaints are referred to UN Office for Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), whose investigations can be protracted. OCHA participates in the UN ClearCheck system – a centralised screening database which seeks to avoid the re-employment of staff against whom SEA or sexual harassment allegations have been substantiated.

A 2018 evaluation found that OCHA's structures and processes for implementing its guidelines on sexual harassment were inadequate, especially in the field, and that staff lacked confidence in the available grievance mechanisms. OCHA updated its SOP in response to recommendations from the evaluation, but has not yet conducted new research to determine whether staff confidence in the mechanisms has improved.

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Engaging in inclusive partnerships to support relevance, leverage effective solutions and maximise results.

As a co-ordination agency, at both global and national levels, OCHA enables other humanitarian actors to respond quickly to evolving humanitarian contexts and to prioritise the populations and groups most in need. At the global level, it plays an important role in improving the coherence of the international humanitarian system though global reform initiatives and a wide range of formal and informal platforms and networks. Its work supports joint planning, programming, monitoring and evaluation through its support for the Humanitarian Programme Cycle. That said, some external partners raised concerns that a recent trend towards more cumbersome processes and top-down decision making had undermined the quality of its partnerships.

OCHA's pooled funds help to influence other funding flows, including by increasing the visibility of underfunded disasters, providing rapid funding to kick-start urgent humanitarian responses and by filling gaps in the coverage of support. OCHA plays a key role in collating, analysing and sharing information on humanitarian needs and funding flows, contributing to greater transparency across the sector, and its knowledge products are highly regarded, although there are concerns that they have become too numerous and complex. While OCHA does not work directly with communities, it is a strong advocate for accountability to affected people across humanitarian operations.

OCHA's main shortcomings in this area are in its unstructured risk management and its lack of a systematic approach to working with national partners. While OCHA is naturally limited in its ability to align to national priorities and use country systems in conflict settings, it lacks a clear approach to promoting country leadership of humanitarian response in other contexts. OCHA does not undertake routine assessments of national delivery capacity, which undermines its ability to pursue localisation in an informed way.

KPI 5: Operational planning and intervention design tools support relevance and agility within partnerships

Score: 2.71

This KPI assesses whether OCHA's systems and processes support relevant and agile partnerships. The evidence suggests that OCHA delivers effectively on its core role of co-ordinating across the humanitarian sector, despite some weaknesses in risk management and working with national partners. This yields a **satisfactory** rating for this KPI.

At both global and national levels, OCHA's own work and its co-ordination of the humanitarian sector are well adapted to evolving humanitarian contexts. To ensure accurate and up-to-date analysis of each context, OCHA and its partners have developed strong tools and approaches for situation analysis and needs assessment. In the survey, OCHA received very positive ratings from partners on its responsiveness to the needs of target communities (Figure 7). OCHA works to ensure that the priorities of affected populations are systematically captured and integrated into needs assessments. This includes the priorities of sub-groups and marginalised groups.

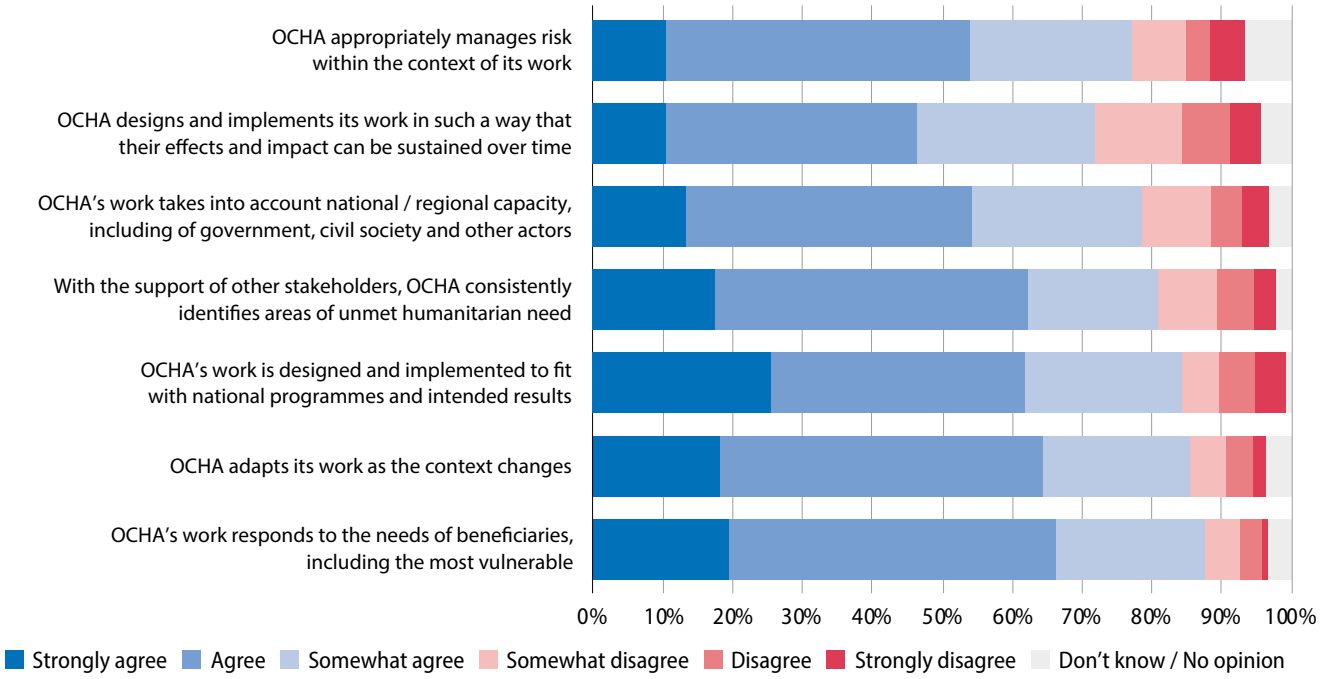
However, there is mixed evidence on OCHA's advocacy for the "leave no one behind" principle. While some survey respondents criticised OCHA for not adequately prioritising the issue, there are examples of OCHA undertaking effective advocacy and leadership in this area. It has taken action at the global level to promote responsiveness to the needs of people with disabilities in humanitarian action. OCHA has various tools to ensure that due attention is paid to the needs of particular vulnerable groups. Survey respondents gave OCHA positive ratings for its responsiveness to the needs of beneficiaries, including the most vulnerable. However, as discussed under KPI 10 below, IAHEs of humanitarian responses in Mozambique and Ethiopia found that the tailoring of humanitarian assistance for particular vulnerable groups remained an area of weakness across the humanitarian sector. While OCHA is not accountable for the performance of the sector as a whole, the evidence suggests that this is an area where OCHA needs to make greater effort.

OCHA lacks a systematic approach to building the capacity of national partners, which undermines its approach to localisation. Given the urgent nature of its work and the need to maintain neutrality in conflict settings, OCHA is necessarily limited in its ability to align with the strategies and priorities of national partners and to make use of country systems to deliver its operations. However, OCHA does not systematically pursue alignment with national actors in non-conflict settings, despite the primary responsibility of states for their own citizens in times of crisis, under UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182. Doing so would enhance the sustainability of OCHA's interventions. Its work with partner countries to build disaster preparedness and response capacity does not take a considered approach to diagnostic assessment and capacity building. OCHA does not undertake routine assessments of national humanitarian delivery capacity, other than for recipients of CBPF grants, and so in this regard lacks a systematic approach to pursuing localisation.

OCHA has made progress in streamlining its processes to improve speed of implementation and adaptability in volatile contexts. It has decentralised parts of its procurement function, which has accelerated the process and reduced costs. It tracks the speed of implementation of various internal processes, including release of funds from the pooled funds, and the data show an overall trajectory of improvement. However, an internal review found that CERF's processes remained unnecessarily cumbersome, detailed and duplicated, leading to delays. OCHA is in the process of redesigning its CERF management processes.

There are notable gaps in OCHA's approach to risk management and mitigation. OCHA contributes meaningfully to sector-wide risk management efforts. It promotes use of the Index for Risk Management tool (INFORM) and, in October 2020, it issued enhanced risk analysis guidance for HNOs and HRPs. In high-risk environments, it also helps produce jointly owned contingency plans. However, OCHA's own risk-management processes are of variable quality.

Figure 7. SURVEY RESULTS – PARTNERSHIPS



Source: Based on responses to the 2020 MOPAN external partner survey: OCHA, December 2020-January 2021.

Survey respondents endorsed OCHA's adaptability and responsiveness to humanitarian needs, but were less positive about its focus on the sustainability of results.

"Targeting of vulnerable groups has significantly improved in recent years – some excellent initiatives. Need to ensure/share lesson learning, and to demonstrate impact." – Donor representative.

It has strong processes for managing risks to pooled funds and to staff safety, although its provision of psychosocial support to staff is insufficient, particularly for those deployed to sudden-onset and complex disasters. It lacks an overarching approach to reputational risk, although it does have processes in place for the rapid rebuttal of false news reports. OCHA's approach to strategic risk is also unsystematic: despite explicit commitments in its Strategic Plan, OCHA has not updated its corporate risk register at any point in the period covered by the assessment. Country-specific risk registers are updated annually, but these are too basic to serve as effective risk management and mitigation tools. In interviews, OCHA staff showed a good understanding of political risks, but OCHA rarely documents its insights and approaches in this field. Acknowledging the limits to its current political risk capabilities, OCHA has recently sought support from the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs.

KPI 6: Working in coherent partnerships directed at leveraging and catalysing the use of resources

Score: 3.12

This KPI explores OCHA's approach to partnerships and how well it supports the mobilisation of funding for humanitarian responses. Developing and fostering partnerships and mobilising humanitarian finance are at the core of OCHA's mandate and it performs them well in most respects, yielding a **satisfactory** rating.

At the global level, OCHA's core function is to build partnerships across the humanitarian sector to support a more effective, agile and joined-up humanitarian response. It has strong procedures in place to encourage, lead on and facilitate joint planning and programming. At the global level, through its support for the USG's leadership of IASC and the Emergency Directors Group (EDG), it has contributed to a significant number of reforms and co-ordination mechanisms that have enhanced the coherence and responsiveness of the humanitarian sector. It is also active within a large number of formal and informal co-ordination platforms and networks. Its promotion of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle has created a framework of joint processes around which humanitarian actors can align their efforts (Box 5). At country level, Humanitarian Needs Overviews and Humanitarian Response Plans, and the overall Humanitarian Country Teams architecture, all contribute to joint humanitarian planning and programming. OCHA has been a strong proponent of the cluster system for co-ordinating humanitarian action. It acts as a central player in all these areas and has dedicated KPIs to assess progress, measuring the number of countries with high-quality joint needs analysis and joint response planning.

Box 5. The Humanitarian Programme Cycle

The Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) is a co-ordinated series of actions undertaken to help prepare for, manage and deliver humanitarian response. It organises humanitarian response around five elements, designed to link together logically into a coherent process:

1. needs assessment and analysis
2. strategic planning
3. resource mobilisation
4. implementation and monitoring
5. operational peer review and evaluation

Co-ordination and information management are at the heart of the cycle. OCHA provides a set of tools and information platforms to enable the humanitarian community to manage and publish structured information around the HPC.

Source: https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/programme-cycle/space

To support its co-ordination role, OCHA maintains a wide range of partnerships, and is generally clear on their scope and function and on its own roles and contributions and those of its partners. Co-ordination is also enhanced by its work on knowledge management, policy development, thought leadership and humanitarian advocacy, and the management of pooled funds. These functions are well reflected in OCHA's organisational structure, operating model, resource allocation and staffing.

OCHA collects feedback on its performance through an annual partnership survey, and the assessment identified examples of OCHA adapting in response to the feedback it received. Overlaps between OCHA's co-ordination role and the technical leadership of other UN agencies can on occasion give rise to tensions. Some external partners raised concerns that OCHA was sometimes directive rather than collaborative in its partnerships, and some implementing partners suggested that its planning processes had grown too heavy, at the cost of effective partnership. Overall, however, feedback from external partners is that OCHA manages a complex balancing act well.

OCHA's budgetary and other processes are designed around the ability to adjust in response to changing humanitarian needs and contexts. OCHA's strategic objectives include ensuring that co-ordination mechanisms adapt to new contexts and challenges. OCHA's pooled funds help to mobilise and influence humanitarian funding flows, including by increasing the visibility of underfunded disasters, providing rapid funding to kick-start urgent responses and filling gaps in coverage. In its operational budget, recent measures to delegate more spending authority to field offices have improved their speed of response and adaptability. OCHA's People Strategy outlines its plans to ensure a flexible and mobile workforce, that can adapt to changes in demand for services of the availability of financial resources, and to improve OCHA's surge capabilities. OCHA's response to COVID-19 illustrates its ability to adjust budgets and programming when conditions change.

OCHA is a key source of knowledge and data for the humanitarian sector. It recognises the importance of efficient dissemination of data and knowledge to support partnerships. OCHA produces a wide range of knowledge products, both on its own and jointly with partners, at both global and county levels. They include knowledge and data platforms (e.g., Reliefweb, Humanitarian Data Exchange, Humanitarian Insights), policy guidelines, thought pieces, handbooks and tools, situational analyses, maps, a humanitarian notification system, and the annual reports of pooled funds. OCHA collates and manages information from a wide range of sources to inform its own decisions and those of wider sector.

OCHA's corporate reporting processes measure both the annual growth rate in readership of its products and partner feedback on their utility. The survey statement that "OCHA's knowledge and information products are useful for my work" received one of the most positive responses in the survey, particularly from development partners. It has a

Box 6. Insights from key informants – partnership approach

Representatives from partner organisations interviewed for the assessment praised OCHA's co-ordination and information management, but raised concerns that its approach to partnerships was sometimes more directive than consultative:

"The humanitarian architecture would not work without OCHA's HPC tools and guidance; and, through their core deliverables and knowledge products, OCHA have set the standard for cluster coordination."

"Key decisions are taken by a small group of senior people, and the other stakeholders are merely informed and 'asked to comment'."

"OCHA sometimes sees itself as an agency with a UN focus, and then frames its knowledge products with the UN in mind, rather than the broader humanitarian sector."

strong focus on generating real-time data in emergency contexts, but faces some difficult trade-offs between speed and quality, with some partners raising concerns that OCHA products were not always up to date. It has made good progress in improving its own transparency, and is now rated "good" on the Aid Transparency Index. OCHA also supports transparency of humanitarian data across the sector, by collating, managing and circulating spending data from other agencies. Its Financial Tracking Service and the more recently established Centre for Humanitarian Data, which has been positively evaluated, also support sharing of data.

OCHA's knowledge products are used to inform its advocacy for reform of the humanitarian system, targeting multiple audiences. OCHA's advocacy goals and messages are generally clear, and its products well-tailored to target audiences. However, a recent internal analysis suggested that OCHA should produce fewer products which are more in line with its advocacy priorities. This was echoed by a number of survey respondents, who observed that OCHA produces too many products, or iterations of products, and that these are sometimes more complex than they need to be.

OCHA prioritises the timely generation of information, but often has to strike a difficult balance between speed and data quality. The first version of the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan was produced within a few weeks of WHO declaring the pandemic, for example, but was criticised for the top-down nature of its development process. There is room to improve synchronisation: information from OCHA headquarters is sometimes only conveyed to partners by the field structure after a delay, causing implementing partners to receive contradictory information from different levels within OCHA.

OCHA is a strong advocate for Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), although it does not work directly with communities. Its policy statements, technical work, advocacy and training work have shaped and strengthened ownership of AAP principles, standards and procedures across the sector. OCHA encourages engagement with affected people in HNO and HRP exercises, and its processes for assessing their quality take this into account. OCHA's pooled funds require grantees to incorporate AAP elements (such as accessible and functioning community feedback and/or complaint mechanisms) into their projects, and monitors their progress.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Systems geared to managing and accounting for development and humanitarian results and the use of performance information, including evaluation and lesson-learning

Performance management is an area of weakness for OCHA. Its business processes are designed around responsiveness to humanitarian needs, rather than results logic. In its Strategic Plan, OCHA committed to developing a comprehensive approach to results-based management (RBM), with an ambitious set of tools and processes, but did not proceed with implementation. Its results management therefore remains relatively unstructured: it has a corporate results framework with KPIs and various reporting mechanisms, but does not track progress towards its objectives in a systematic way and is poorly placed to identify underperformance. OCHA-managed pooled funds have much stronger performance and accountability frameworks, using results chain logic to map their own performance and that of their grantees.

OCHA's evaluation function is not independent, either managerially or financially. Its evaluation policy has not been updated since 2010. The evaluation unit is not at liberty to choose its own topics, there is no systematic evaluation coverage of the organisation's strategic objectives, and OCHA does not allocate enough resources to allow evaluation of all its core functions. Its formal evaluations are conducted to a high standard, with strong methodologies and quality assurance processes, but the quality of other review products is mixed. OCHA has a system for tracking follow-up on evaluation recommendations, but there is no formal requirement to demonstrate how lessons from past interventions are taken into account in the design of new ones. OCHA staff learn well at an individual level and are often regarded as experts in their fields, but learning processes are not well institutionalised.

KPI 7: The focus on results is strong, transparent and explicitly geared towards function

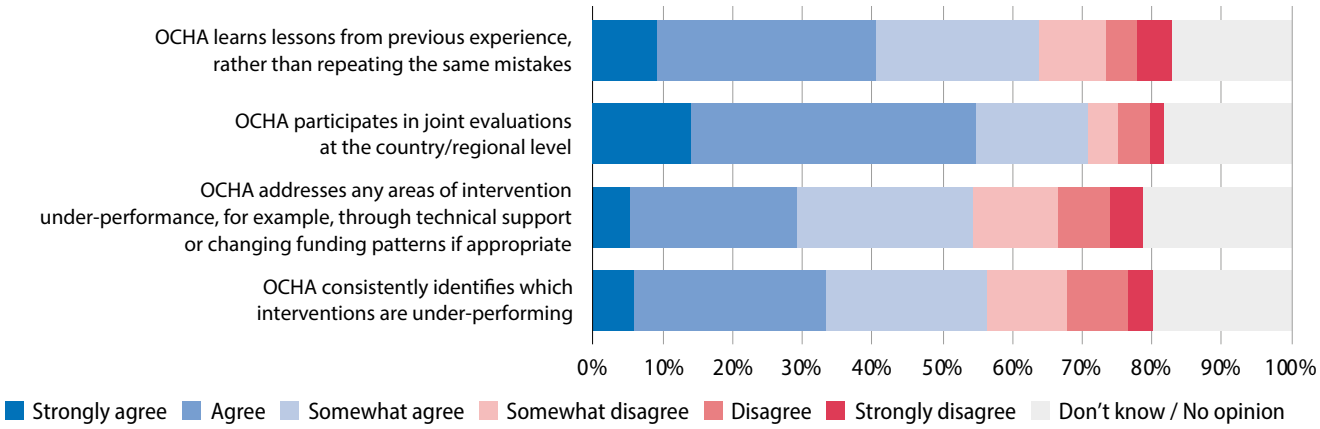
Score: 1.95

This KPI explores whether OCHA's business processes are geared towards maximising results and performance. OCHA has opted not to proceed with developing a systematic approach to results-based management and therefore rates as **unsatisfactory** in this area.

The Strategic Plan includes a results framework with high-level indicators linked to OCHA's core functions and strategic objectives. Several of these KPIs aggregate progress from project level (e.g. the proportion of timely allocations from pooled funds) or country level (e.g. the percentage of countries where partners are satisfied with the performance of the Humanitarian Country Team). However, in most cases, no explicit causal pathway is identified from activities and resources through to the achievement of KPIs. Country workplans align their activities to corporate objectives, but without identifying explicitly how they contribute to them or setting out intermediate steps to monitor progress.

Most of the tools outlined in OCHA's Monitoring and Evaluation Plan have not been operationalised, or were discontinued after some initial work, as OCHA did not go on to develop a comprehensive RBM approach. The Strategic Plan included a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan intended to "systematically track OCHA's performance against its 2018-21 Strategic Plan and support evidence-based decision-making in the organization". It anticipated an implementation plan for each strategic objective, with problem analyses, results chains, benchmarks, timelines, risks and mitigating actions. Other tools mentioned in the Strategic Plan include analytical reports on areas that need improvement, quarterly progress reports, mid-year reviews, mid-year workplan updates (where needed) and annual reports. Of these, only annual reports were produced throughout the review period, but these reports do not really qualify as performance-tracking tools, as they are public-facing documents that lack critical analysis. Proposals to incorporate RBM tools into OCHA's Anaplan and Umoja budgeting and planning systems and to procure monitoring software were not approved, and no comparable performance-tracking investments were made. OCHA did not provide RBM-related training to its staff, and interviews suggest there is no widespread awareness of the basic elements of an RBM approach.

Figure 8. SURVEY RESULTS – PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT



Source: Based on responses to the 2020 MOPAN external partner survey: OCHA, December 2020-January 2021.

The statement that "OCHA consistently identifies which interventions are underperforming" received the most negative responses of any question in the survey.

While it has no overall RBM system, OCHA does have a number of mechanisms that produce performance data. It reports annually against its results framework, with commentary by KPI, noting areas that need improvement. These updates are compiled from reports produced by departments and country offices. OCHA's functional leads report to the Executive Management Committee on progress towards strategic objectives, although these reports are verbal and not supported by a defined methodology. The Organisational Development Unit identifies periodic functional reviews of aspects of the organisation and proposes reforms. GenCap introduced a monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework in 2020, and efforts are underway to establish a single data hub to support the consolidation and analysis of data across pooled funds. Overall, however, the lack of a strong results architecture means that these various performance monitoring mechanisms are not well integrated across the organisation.

OCHA's pooled funds have much stronger performance and accountability frameworks, following the conventional structure of inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact. Those used for CBPFs are the most well-developed. They combine a Common Performance Framework with outcome-level indicators and a Grant Management System that monitors the speed and the quality of grant-management processes, including allocations, disbursement, monitoring and audit. Result targets are grant-specific and set by proposals from implementing partners. They generally fall within the targets set out in HRPs, which themselves are based on HNOs, which are developed through a process that includes consultation with affected populations.

Overall, OCHA's lack of integrated RBM system leaves it poorly placed to identify and address underperformance in a timely fashion. Of all the performance areas covered by the survey, OCHA's ability to identify and deal with underperformance received the lowest proportion of positive responses (Figure 8).

Score: 2.27

KPI 8: The organisation applies evidence-based planning and programming

This KPI assesses OCHA's use of evidence to inform its planning and programming. OCHA undertakes inter-agency evaluations, which assess the international humanitarian system as a whole, as well as a range of internal evaluations and reviews. During the assessment period, it only undertook a limited number of evaluations, including three inter-agency evaluations and two internal evaluations (on Country-Based Pooled Funds and OCHA's duty of care), together with a number of CERF country reviews.

As OCHA lacks a functionally independent and adequately funded evaluation function, it rates as **unsatisfactory** for this KPI.

OCHA's evaluation function is not independent, either managerially or financially. The head of the evaluation unit does not report to a governing body or to the highest authority within OCHA, but to the Executive Officer and the Assistant Secretary-General. OCHA's evaluation policy has not been updated since 2010, and is therefore not aligned with the UN Secretariat's 2019 draft self-evaluation policy. The evaluation unit is not at liberty to select evaluation topics; these are chosen by the USG, in part in reaction to donor priorities. There is no attempt at systematic coverage of OCHA's strategic and management objectives.

The evaluation function is not adequately resourced. Its evaluation policy stipulates that at least 1% of the annual budget should be dedicated to the central evaluation function. In practice, the Strategic Plan says that OCHA's evaluation plans are "subject to availability of resources", and only the core staff costs of the evaluation unit are covered by OCHA's assessed contributions. The staffing of the unit has gradually reduced over the past decade and at the end of the review period consisted of only a single position (at the P5 level). Over the review period, funding was insufficient for OCHA to achieve the evaluation targets in its Strategic Plan. The largest evaluative expense – for a series of CBPF evaluations – was covered by earmarked donor funding and conducted following donor pressure. OCHA did not allocate any resources for evaluation activities for 2018, and in 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic led it to suspend all evaluation work in the first three quarters of the year. OCHA's underspending on evaluation is longstanding, being first highlighted in a 2007 OIOS assessment, and does not meet the requirements of the UN Secretariat's 2019 draft self-evaluation policy, which stipulates that all its entities are required to ensure funding to deliver their annual self-evaluation plan.

OCHA's formal evaluation products (both inter-agency and internal evaluations) are methodologically sound and subject to suitable quality assurance processes. They come to credible and balanced findings and recommendations. Its decentralised reviews and CERF country reviews are methodologically lighter and not subject to any centralised quality assurance, and over the review period have been variable in quality. This is potentially a concern, as the limited number of formal evaluations means that OCHA relies on these other review products to inform its operations and programming.

OCHA publishes its evaluation reports and management responses, which include an action plan with commitments against each recommendation (often but not always with associated timelines). These commitments are also captured in its Recommendations Tracking System, which monitors follow-up, notes delays and closes recommendations once they are judged to have been adequately addressed. OCHA reports on follow-up to recommendations to the General Assembly in a published document. Its results framework includes a KPI on the timeliness of this follow-up, achieving results of 51% in 2017, 66% in 2018, 49% in 2019 and 70% in 2020, against a target of 80%. The Recommendations Tracking System is in active use, although in some cases it can take a year before the first updates on management actions are provided, even for recommendations that are categorised as critical. The system does not include MOPAN reviews, partner surveys, Organisational Development Unit (ODU) reviews, peer

Box 7. Survey results – staffing

"A supportive, helpful and experienced staff across the board." – Financing or technical assistance recipient

"OCHA staff were knowledgeable on their mission and they were all well experienced and well skilled in humanitarian work." – Cluster lead"

"OCHA's staff were very knowledgeable and were approachable to deal with." – Cluster implementing member

Box 8. How has OCHA demonstrated its operational flexibility in responding to COVID-19?

There is consensus amongst OCHA staff that its New Operating Model and People Strategy helped OCHA meet the challenges posed by the pandemic. Through its pooled funds, it allocated early funding to respond to the worst effects of the pandemic in around 50 of the most vulnerable countries (including a USD 120 million CERF allocation and USD 211 million from CBPFs). In its co-ordination efforts, OCHA prioritised ensuring that the 100 million people already reliant on support from UN humanitarian agencies continued to receive support during the pandemic, and supporting the wider humanitarian response to COVID-19. In the latter area, OCHA co-ordinated an IASC effort to produce an initial USD 2 billion COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan within weeks of WHO's announcement of the pandemic. There were downsides to this rapid process, which allowed for only limited consultation at the field level, and stakeholders criticised the limited allocation of funding to NGOs. Further consultations were then held under IASC auspices, leading to an expanded USD 10.3 billion appeal that incorporated feedback from a wide range of stakeholders. OCHA also worked through IASC to accelerate the global response to the pandemic, and supported UN Resident Coordinators and Humanitarian Coordinators to work with governments to prepare national response plans. Some stakeholders observed that OCHA had worked hard to identify and address the differential impacts of the pandemic on women.

reviews or CERF country studies, but there is evidence that these are also followed up. There is active monitoring of projects supported by pooled funds, for which there is a system of field visits and quality scoring of reports that feeds into a performance index and risk rating, used to inform subsequent funding rounds. In all cases, it is generally clear which part of OCHA and its pooled funds is responsible for following up.

There is no formal requirement to demonstrate how lessons from past interventions have been taken into account in the design of new ones. However, OCHA's New Operating Model encourages lesson learning, with peer-to-peer learning among Heads of Office and Deputy Heads of Office and the sharing of best practice through the Global Function Teams. Unlike the previous Strategic Plan period, the current period will not be covered in a Quadrennial Evaluation Synthesis report due to a lack of resources and capacity.

OCHA has no formal system for tracking underperforming interventions. However, the organisation does keep its structures, systems and processes under review through its Organisational Development Unit, and its annual Partner Survey collects feedback from partners on its performance.

OCHA has not invested sufficiently in institutionalising learning across its geographically dispersed organisation. Interviews confirmed that OCHA staff are generally well aware of, and try to apply, lessons learned and established best practice principles, but this learning is individual rather than institutionalised. Staff are incentivised to maintain their status as experts in their respective fields, to enable them to play leadership roles within the humanitarian community. External interviews and survey respondents confirmed that OCHA staff are indeed generally regarded as having up-to-date expertise (Box 7). However, the response to the statement that "OCHA learns lessons from previous experience, rather than repeating the same mistakes" was one of the lowest-scoring in the survey.

3.2 DEVELOPMENT/HUMANITARIAN EFFECTIVENESS

RESULTS

Achievement of relevant, inclusive and sustainable contributions to humanitarian and development results in an efficient manner

OCHA has conducted only five centralised evaluations during the assessment period, three of which related to the performance of the humanitarian sector as a whole, plus a decentralised evaluation of the Centre for Humanitarian Data. To complement this relatively limited set of evaluation data, the assessment in this section also draws on internal management data, but the level of confidence in the evidence base is lower than for other performance areas. Internal reporting shows a good level of delivery against corporate results indicators, with most targets met or exceeded. In country reviews, CERF was assessed positively for its contribution to mobilising rapid support for sudden-onset disasters, while an evaluation found CBPFs to have made a significant contribution to ensuring timely, co-ordinated and principled humanitarian assistance. Despite a strong focus from the pooled funds on the needs of women and girls, progress across the sector in integrating gender equality has been slow. OCHA has made an important contribution in ensuring that humanitarian needs assessments and response plans address the needs of vulnerable groups, but there has been limited progress across the sector in tailoring support to particular categories of people in need, in accordance with the "leave no one behind" principle. OCHA has largely met its own targets for the efficiency of its management of pooled funds, but there is mixed evidence as to whether this has improved the timeliness of humanitarian response. It has made only limited progress in encouraging more sustainable forms of humanitarian support.

KPI 9: Development and humanitarian objectives are achieved and results contribute to normative and cross-cutting goals

Score: 3.00

This KPI considers how well OCHA has delivered its intended results over the assessment period. It draws on two internal evaluations of OCHA's performance (on CBPFs and duty of care) and three inter-agency evaluations, which relate to the humanitarian sector as a whole but contain some observations on or allow inferences about OCHA's performance. Given the limited number of evaluations, it also draws on other information, such as CERF country reviews and internal management data. Overall, OCHA achieves a **satisfactory** rating for its performance, but with only a **medium** confidence level in the evidence because of the limited coverage and robustness of the evaluation data.

OCHA reports a good level of achievement against its strategic objectives and cross-cutting objectives, meeting or exceeding its targets in most areas (Box 9). It uses the annual partner survey to track partner satisfaction with a range of services, and exceeded its targets on both readership of and satisfaction with its situational analysis. It has met its targets for rapid response to requests for emergency assistance, while the pooled funds met their targets for timely release of funding and overall numbers of people reached with support. Many of the areas where OCHA is behind on its targets relate to changes in practice across the humanitarian sector, such as the number of countries where high-quality joint needs assessments, joint planning and collective monitoring has been introduced. This reflects the relatively slow nature of reform within the sector, and suggests that OCHA still has some way to go to achieve its intended outcomes.

Both CERF and the CPBFs received positive assessments. CERF succeeded in kick-starting a rapid response by UN agencies to hurricanes in Cuba and the eastern Caribbean. It also provided a significant share of overall funding in higher-income countries with limited access to other funding. Overall, it was assessed as having achieved most of its performance benchmarks in that response.

A 2019 global evaluation of CBPFs found that they play a growing role in humanitarian response, with the number of donor contributors rising from 19 in 2015 to 34 in 2018. By allowing donors to pool unearmarked funds, they promote inclusive and transparent allocations to emerging needs or under-served groups. They have enabled

Box 9. Selected results against OCHA's corporate targets

Corporate targets achieved or exceeded:

- readership of and partner satisfaction with its situational analysis
- emergency response services deployed within ten days of request
- timely allocation from pooled funds
- number of people in target groups reached by CERF and CBPFs
- proportion of HRPs that include strategies to meet the special needs of internally displaced persons.

Corporate targets missed or lagging:

- number of countries with collective monitoring exercises
- high-quality joint needs assessment and joint response planning
- systematic implementation of the IASC Emergency Response Preparedness approach
- number of countries with a monitoring framework for humanitarian access
- proportion of Humanitarian Response Plans that were sufficiently funded
- CERF fundraising targets.

donors to increase their funding for national responders by acting as an intermediary. The evaluation found that the introduction of a standardised Grant Management System had increased efficiency and promoted inclusivity, as well as the achievement of other Grand Bargains commitments. CBPFs were found to be aligned with Humanitarian Response Plans but also responsive to emerging needs, and had made a significant contribution to the overall timeliness and co-ordination of assistance.

> *"The evaluation collected strong evidence that CBPFs have contributed to providing timely, coordinated and principled assistance."*
>
> OCHA (2019), *OCHA Evaluation of Country-Based Pooled Funds: Global Synthesis Report*, p. iv

OCHA places a strong focus on gender in its own operations, but there is limited evidence that it has helped strengthen the focus on gender equality and women's empowerment across the humanitarian sector. Monitoring data show that the integration of gender considerations into HNOs and HRPs has improved. OCHA-managed pooled funds have allocated substantial funding to projects tackling gender-based violence and to humanitarian support tailored to the needs of women and girls. In Yemen, 97% of CPBF projects were assessed as likely to contribute to gender equality, while 63% of these gave due consideration to the needs of women of different age groups. An IAHE evaluation on gender equality found progress had been made on mainstreaming gender equality within humanitarian responses, but not to the extent envisioned in IASC policy, with most progress found in protracted crises. It found that women continue to have limited meaningful influence on decision making on humanitarian response. The evaluation found no clear "home" for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (GEEWG) issues in IASC, and suggested that OCHA take on the role of enhancing leadership capacity development in this field.

OCHA has promoted the tailoring of humanitarian support to the needs of people living with a disability. It helped promote the first UN Security Council resolution, in June 2019, on the protection of persons with disabilities

in armed conflict. In November 2019, IASC launched its first inter-agency guidelines on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action. Monitoring data show that 88% of HNOs now include analysis of humanitarian needs by population group, including persons with disabilities, and most HRPs propose interventions to support those needs. There is limited evaluation evidence on whether these efforts have improved the focus on disability within humanitarian operations. The 2020 IAHE of the response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique found that disabled people's organisations played an advisory role to the Protection Cluster but were not directly involved in the design, planning and implementation of interventions, and that few of the surge staff deployed in the early phase of the response had expertise or training in disability issues. Similarly, the 2019 IAHE of the drought response in Ethiopia over the 2015-18 period found that cross-cutting issues, including gender and disability, received little attention in planning processes and, even when they did, were not informed by detailed analysis of the needs of vulnerable people.

> ***"Droughts are relatively predictable. Yet year after year, inter-agency planning took place under enormous time pressure... [T]his urgency made it difficult to address crucial 'soft components' of the response, such as… cross-cutting issues such as gender, disability, and protection."***
>
> IASC (2019), *Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Drought Response in Ethiopia 2015 – 2018.*

OCHA has helped to promote human rights and humanitarian principles through its advocacy for protection. OCHA's reports point to a number of instances in which its advocacy work has increased the attention given to protection within the humanitarian response, and both CERF and CBPF provide substantial resources for protection activities. IAHEs for Ethiopia and Mozambique suggest that there remain significant gaps in mainstreaming protection activities into humanitarian responses. There is no evaluative evidence on the wider impact of OCHA's human rights work.

Progress on increasing the diversity of humanitarian actors has been relatively slow across the sector, but OCHA has helped to put some of the building blocks in place. Its pooled funds serve as a useful intermediary between donors and local responders, and were assessed in the Grand Bargain 2020 Independent Report as meeting the target of allocating 25% of resources to local responders. OCHA's Financial Tracking System also supports localisation by tracking the share of funding allocated to local responders. However, a 2019 evaluation found considerable variation in the extent to which CBPFs prioritised funding for local responders, provided them with capacity-building support, and included them in governance and management structures, suggesting a lack of a systematic approach.

KPI 10: Interventions are relevant to the needs and priorities of partner countries and beneficiaries, as the organisation works towards results in areas within its mandate

Score: 2.00

This KPI assesses the extent to which OCHA tailors its support to the specific needs of partner countries and target populations. While OCHA plays a key role in helping to tailor humanitarian action to the needs of crisis-affected people, it does less well at targeting vulnerable groups, rating as **unsatisfactory** overall. As with KPI 9, the limited evaluation evidence means that the confidence level in the evidence for this KPI is only rated **medium**.

Evidence from its own monitoring and internal reviews suggests that OCHA has contributed to a more tailored and appropriate response through its work to improve the quality of needs assessments and response plans and to co-ordinate humanitarian finance. The majority of Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) now incorporate a co-ordinated approach to engaging with affected populations, to identify their needs and priorities. OCHA-managed pooled funds make an important contribution to meeting priority needs, by aligning funding with HRPs and establishing systems for prioritising the most relevant projects. The 2019 evaluation of CBPFs found that they supported principled humanitarian assistance, in particular the principles of humanity and impartiality, filled gaps in humanitarian responses, and provided life-saving assistance, thereby playing "an essential role in contributing to the alleviation of the most urgent humanitarian needs".

OCHA helps to increase the agility of international humanitarian responses in the face of changing needs. CERF often plays a useful role in triggering the international response to sudden-onset disasters, and is able to respond quickly to new and deteriorating crises at national and sub-national levels. CERF's funding for the hurricane response in Cuba and the eastern Caribbean was assessed as timely; whether this led to more rapid humanitarian response depended upon whether the grantee UN agencies had existing response capacity in the affected areas. Across humanitarian theatres, OCHA tracks changing humanitarian needs and conditions, co-ordinates updates of HNOs and HRPs, and helps to promote a co-ordinated international response.

The evaluation evidence suggests that OCHA has had only limited success in ensuring that humanitarian operations are tailored to particular categories of people in need, in accordance with the "leave no one behind" principle. OCHA's internal monitoring data suggest clear improvements in needs assessment and planning processes: 88% of HNOs now include analysis of humanitarian need by population groups, while 90% of HRPs proposed actions to address those needs. However, the evaluation evidence suggests that this has not yet translated into significant differences in humanitarian response. The 2020 IAHE of the Response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique found that considerations of gender and age had not significantly influenced the distribution of assistance. A majority of the households surveyed during that response reported that the assistance had not been targeted according to needs. The 2019 IAHE of the drought response in Ethiopia concluded that the credibility and accuracy of the needs assessment data used for collective response planning were highly contested, accountability to affected populations was weak, lessons from past failures had not been learned, support for vulnerable groups was mixed, and there had been a lack of tailored support for specific needs.

Similarly, the CBPF global evaluation found "weaknesses in partner capacity to understand the differential effect of humanitarian crises on different groups, particularly women, and the additional challenges that they faced in participating in program design or having access to feedback and complaints mechanisms". On a more positive note, the evaluation also found that some CBPFs had been responsive to the needs of affected communities by supporting multi-sector or integrated programming, to try to overcome the siloed nature of humanitarian action.

Overall, while OCHA has succeeded in improving the quality of needs assessment and in reflecting the needs of different groups in HRPs, it still needs to overcome some structural challenges in order to instil the "leave no one behind" commitment across the humanitarian sector.

KPI 11: Results are delivered efficiently

Score: 3.00

This KPI assesses OCHA's ability to deliver results in an efficient and cost-effective way, and its contribution to promoting greater efficiency across the humanitarian system. OCHA's **satisfactory** rating in this area relates in large part to its speed of disbursement from its pooled funds, given a lack of evidence in other areas. OCHA has undertaken organisational reforms over the assessment period, but there is not enough evidence to reach a conclusion on whether these have improved the overall efficiency of the organisation.

There is mixed evidence as to whether OCHA's has contributed to greater efficiency across the wider sector, with gradual improvements in some operating theatres and missed opportunities in others. OCHA's own reporting does indicate that its provision of emergency response services is timely.

OCHA's management data suggest that it operates its pooled funds efficiently, meeting or exceeding its targets for the timely and predictable release of funding. OCHA's Partner Survey also found that allocations from OCHA-managed pooled funds are generally made within the required timelines. The synthesis of CBPF evaluations concluded that they contribute to efficiency by providing resources to the responders best placed to reach those most in need. However, CERF country reviews had mixed findings on efficiency. CERF's release of funding for the hurricane response in Cuba and the eastern Caribbean was predictable and timely, even though implementation

by partners was sometimes delayed. However, funding for the Venezuelan refugee crisis was not. There is limited evidence evaluating whether timely disbursement from the pooled funds has translated into more timely humanitarian responses. CERF's rules for sudden-onset disasters enable grants to be used for activities up to six weeks before the date of the grant, which can enhance the speed of response. However, a review of the cyclone response in Cuba and the eastern Caribbean found that the practical value of this depended on the extent to which UN agencies already had capacity to respond in the affected areas. There are instances of CERF using joint projects to promote common platforms for cash-based assistance, which leads to efficiency gains.

> ***"The evaluation collected strong evidence that CBPFs have contributed to providing timely, coordinated and principled assistance."***
>
> OCHA (2019), *OCHA Evaluation of Country-Based Pooled Funds: Global Synthesis Report*

KPI 12: Results are sustainable

Score: 2.00

Given its humanitarian mandate, its lack of a direct operational role and the short-term nature of the majority of its funding, most of OCHA's work is not intended to generate sustainable results directly. However, within the norms of humanitarian action, there is scope for OCHA to encourage approaches to humanitarian support that achieve more sustainable results. Under this KPI, the assessment also explored OCHA's contribution to building national disaster preparedness and recovery capacity, and to promoting the humanitarian-development nexus. While there is little evaluative evidence to draw from, what is available suggests only limited progress towards promoting more sustainable results, meriting an **unsatisfactory** rating.

The evidence suggests only limited progress on encouraging partners to adopt more sustainable approaches to the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The IAHE in Mozambique noted the lack of a transition plan for moving from relief into early recovery, and recommended a shift towards "cost efficient interventions that address both humanitarian and early recovery needs". On the other hand, the evaluation of CERF's response to hurricanes in Cuba and the east Caribbean found instances in which CERF projects had helped kick-start longer-term recovery efforts and more sustainable approaches. For CBPFs operating in protracted crises, there are opportunities to encourage implementing partners to adopt more sustainable approaches to delivering humanitarian assistance. The CBPF evaluation offers Somalia as a positive example, where partners were encouraged to adopt more sustainable approaches, such as prioritising boreholes over water trucking. However, it also found that the short project time frames typically adopted by CBPFs (6-9 months) work against more sustainable approaches, particularly when bureaucratic impediments lead to delays in implementation. Both CERF and the CBPFs have been experimenting with funding that extends beyond a single year.

There is no evaluative evidence on the sustainability of OCHA's efforts to promote resilience or on the extent of its contribution to nexus working. In some cases – particularly in countries with a Humanitarian Advisory Team – OCHA works with national governments to build national disaster preparedness and recovery capacity, but there is no evidence about the sustainability of the results. There are examples of OCHA allocating resources from pooled funds towards resilience building, disaster preparedness and other nexus approaches, within the norms of humanitarian action. Through its co-ordination work and CERF-related inter-agency consultations, OCHA helps to create platforms for dialogue between humanitarian and development agencies in support of the nexus approach. However, there is no evaluative evidence on the extent of OCHA's contribution to the nexus approach.

ABOUT THIS ASSESSMENT

About this assessment

4.1. THE MOPAN APPROACH

The approach to MOPAN assessments has evolved over time to adjust to the needs of the multilateral system. The MOPAN 3.1 Approach, applied in this assessment, is the latest iteration.

MOPAN conducted Annual Surveys from 2003 to 2008 and used a methodology titled the MOPAN Common Approach during 2009-14. The MOPAN 3.0 Approach was first adopted for the 2015-16 cycle of assessments.

In 2019, MOPAN 3.0 was relabelled as MOPAN 3.0* to acknowledge a change in how ratings (and their corresponding colours) were aligned with the scores defined for indicators. Compared to previous cycles conducted under MOPAN 3.0, the threshold for ratings was raised to reflect increasing demands for organisational performance in the multilateral system. The underlying scores and approach to scoring remained unaffected.

Starting in 2020, all assessments have used the MOPAN 3.1 Methodology,[11] which was endorsed by MOPAN members in early 2020. The framework draws on the international standards and references points, as described in the MOPAN Methodology Manual. The approach differs from the previous 3.0 approach in the following ways:

- Integration of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda into the framework.
- Two new micro-indicators (MIs) for the prevention of and response to SEA/SH.
- The incorporation of elements measuring key dimensions of reform of the UN Development System (UNDS Reform).
- A reshaped relationship management performance area, with updated and clearer key performance indicators (KPIs) 5 and 6, which better reflect coherence and which focus on how partnerships operate on the ground in support of partner countries (KPI 5), and how global partnerships are managed to leverage the organisation's resources (KPI 6).
- A refocused and streamlined results component.
- A change to how ratings (and their corresponding colours) are applied, based on scores defined for indicators. Compared to previous cycles conducted under MOPAN 3.0, the threshold for a rating has been raised to reflect the increasing demands for organisational performance in the multilateral system. The underlying scores and approach to scoring are unaffected. This approach was already implemented in MOPAN 3.0* (2019 cycle).

Table 3 lists the performance areas and indicators used in MOPAN 3.1.

11 MOPAN (2020), *MOPAN 3.1 Methodology Manual: 2020 Assessment Cycle*, Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network, www.mopanonline.org/our-work/themopanapproach/MOPAN_3.1_Methodology.pdf.

Table 3: Performance areas and key performance indicators

Aspect	Performance area	Key performance indicator (KPI)
Organisational effectiveness	Strategic management	**KPI 1**: Organisational architecture and financial framework enable mandate implementation and achievement of expected results
		KPI 2: Structures and mechanisms support the implementation of global frameworks for cross-cutting issues at all levels in line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda principles
	Operational management	**KPI 3**: The operating model and human and financial resources support relevance and agility
		KPI 4: Organisational systems are cost- and value-conscious and enable financial transparency and accountability
	Relationship management	**KPI 5**: Operational planning and intervention design tools support relevance and agility in partnerships
		KPI 6: Partnership working is coherent and directed at leveraging and catalysing the use of resources
	Performance management	**KPI 7**: The focus on results is strong, transparent and explicitly geared towards function
		KPI 8: The organisation applies evidence-based planning and programming
Development/ humanitarian effectiveness	Results	**KPI 9**: Development and humanitarian objectives are achieved and results contribute to normative and cross-cutting goals
		KPI 10: Interventions are relevant to the needs and priorities of partner countries and beneficiaries, as the organisation works towards results in areas within its mandate
		KPI 11: Results are delivered efficiently
		KPI 12: Results are sustainable

Source: MOPAN 3.1 Methodology Manual, 2020 Assessment Cycle, http://www.mopanonline.org/ourwork/themopanapproach/MOPAN_3.1_Methodology.pdf

4.2. APPLYING MOPAN 3.1 TO OCHA

Interpretations and adaptations to the methodology

This assessment has used the MOPAN 3.1 methodology, but the KPIs have been interpreted so as to be meaningful given OCHA's specific mandate.

In addition to managing its own budget and operations, OCHA plays a wider role within the humanitarian sector, through co-ordination, information management and advocacy. It also manages CERF, CBPFs and other ad hoc financial allocations on behalf of UN member states. Where appropriate, the analysis distinguishes these different levels of operation, and in some instances its conclusions are limited to just one level. The assessment includes observations on OCHA's contribution to improving humanitarian practice across the sector, which is treated as the intended outcome of OCHA's co-ordination and advocacy work.

To more appropriately apply the assessment framework for OCHA, agreement was reached in consultation with OCHA during the inception phase to modify a number of KPIs and micro-indicators (MIs), or to give them a specific interpretation, as follows:

- A number of KPIs and MIs refer to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Given OCHA's humanitarian mandate, the assessment also considers OCHA's incorporation of other global frameworks and normative agendas, including humanitarian law and principles, the Grand Bargain, and the "Triple Nexus" on linkages between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding interventions.

- OCHA is committed to promoting a diversity of actors within the humanitarian system. This has been incorporated into KPI 2 as one of the cross-cutting issues to be assessed. OCHA's work in this area is principally focused on increasing the participation of national NGOs in humanitarian co-ordination processes and the localisation of humanitarian financing, in accordance with the Grand Bargain commitment.

- Some individual elements within the assessment framework were not assessed, as they were not considered relevant to OCHA's mandate.

- Under the Results performance area, MI 9.3 (environmental sustainability) was not assessed due to a lack of evidence.

- KPI 5 concerns operational planning and intervention design tools. OCHA is not an operational agency, but it does produce tools that are used to guide and co-ordinate humanitarian action across the sector. Where appropriate, MIs under KPI 5 are interpreted as applying to OCHA's contributions to improving the effectiveness of humanitarian operations.

- KPI 6 includes assessment of OCHA's partnerships with national authorities, among other partners, and its use of country systems for aid delivery. In interpreting this principle, the assessment recognises that OCHA is governed by humanitarian principles and that this makes it inappropriate to work with national authorities in some contexts.

- MI 5.6 and KPI 12 both refer to "sustainability". Given the nature of OCHA's mandate, much of its work is not intended to generate sustainable results. In line with the approach set out during inception, for the purposes of this assessment these references to sustainability are interpreted as covering OCHA's efforts to promote more sustainable approaches to humanitarian assistance by its pooled fund implementing partners, its contribution to building national capacity for disaster preparedness and recovery, and its contribution to promoting the humanitarian-development nexus.

- Several indicators mention governing bodies, but as part of the UN Secretariat, OCHA is formally accountable to the General Assembly and does not have its own governing body. The assessment therefore considers how OCHA interacts with the General Assembly and other relevant UN bodies, as well as advisory bodies such as the OCHA Donor Support Group.

Lines of evidence

The assessment is based on four lines of evidence: a document review, interviews with internal OCHA staff both at headquarters and in the field, interviews with external partners, and an online survey. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, all interviews were conducted remotely via video conference, rather than through visits to OCHA offices. To mitigate the limitations of virtual visits, the team conducted additional interviews where necessary to fill remaining data gaps and triangulate key evidence points.

The evidence base was as follows:

- **Document review:** The assessment screened a large pool of documents from the OCHA, OIOS and IASC websites, provided by OCHA or elsewhere in the public domain, from which over 200 were selected for detailed review (see Annex B for a list of the documents relied on for the assessment; these are cross-referenced in the detailed micro-indicator analysis in Annex A).

- **Interviews with OCHA staff:** During the inception and data collection phases of the assessment, the team interviewed more than 40 OCHA staff at headquarters and from regional and country offices, in accordance with the country sample (see below).

- **Interviews with external stakeholders:** While not standard to the MOPAN methodology, given OCHA's role as a co-ordinating entity, it was agreed during the inception phase to conduct 12 interviews with external stakeholders, to triangulate information collected from the documents. The interviews collected feedback on OCHA's role in co-ordinating humanitarian responses and the quality of its partnerships. The external stakeholders were selected from the following groups:

  - cluster leads for partner organisations, both at the global and in the case-study countries
  - implementing partners for OCHA-managed pooled funds
  - headquarters-level counterparts, such as members of IASC
  - academics and thought leaders on global humanitarian policy.

- **Partner survey:** The assessment involved an online survey of external partners. This was sent to an initial contact list of 3 657 individuals provided by OCHA and MOPAN members, and respondents were also invited to share the survey link with additional individuals well-placed to respond. Screening questions within the survey ensured respondents were knowledgeable and had experience with OCHA.

  A total of 553 survey responses were received, including:

  - 27 members of the CERF and CBPF Advisory Boards
  - 108 donor representatives
  - 257 representatives of peer organisations and co-ordinating partners
  - 109 recipients of financing or technical assistance from the CERF and CBPFs
  - 53 other individuals who were users of OCHA knowledge products.

  Additional details from the survey, including a comprehensive presentation of the quantitative data are provided in Annex C. As well rating OCHA's performance on a Likert scale, respondents were offered the opportunity to provide feedback through open responses. A selection of those responses have been included in the Chapter 3 analysis.

Country sample

The review methodology involved selecting a sample of 13 OCHA field operations, including 3 Regional Offices, 7 Country Offices and 3 Humanitarian Advisory Teams. This selection guided the sampling of documents for review, OCHA staff outside headquarters for interview and external partners to participate in the survey. The selection criteria for the country sample were as follows:

- representation of all regions in which OCHA is active
- representation of each of OCHA's levels of operation: Advisory Teams, Country Offices and Regional Offices
- inclusion of the world's two system-wide Level 3 responses (Yemen and parts of the Syria response)
- coverage of CERF allocations and CBPFs
- coverage of emergency response preparedness, response to sudden-onset emergencies, forgotten crises and complex emergencies
- length of establishment of the country operation – including both those with a shorter history of operation as well as long-standing operations.

These criteria yielded the sample presented below in Table 4.

Table 4: Country sample used to identify evidence

Type of operation	Selection
Regional Offices	Africa: Kenya
	Middle East: Regional Office for the Syria Crisis
	The Americas: Panama
Country Offices	East Africa: Ethiopia
	Central Africa: Central African Republic
	West Africa: Chad
	Central Asia: Afghanistan
	East Asia: Philippines
	The Americas: Venezuela
	Middle East: Yemen
Humanitarian Advisory Teams	Central Asia: Tajikistan
	Africa: Madagascar
	Latin America: Peru

4.3. LIMITATIONS

OCHA is a co-ordination rather than a delivery agency, which complicates the application of MOPAN assessment standards. Where the MOPAN assessment framework calls for judgments on the quality of operations, this has been applied to OCHA's five core functions of co-ordination, humanitarian financing, policy making, advocacy and information management. These activities are not subject to typical programme-management processes and their efficacy depends upon the quality of OCHA's interactions with the wider international humanitarian system. This has posed challenges for both data collection and analysis. To increase the robustness of its findings, the assessment drew upon a wider range of data sources, including additional external stakeholder interviews, in order to achieve a high level of triangulation.

In addition to its core functions, OCHA manages CERF and CBPFs. These are subject to separate financial and results-management processes. For some KPIs, the assessment reached an aggregate judgment on OCHA's capacity across these three levels, while in others, it was only possible to reach a conclusion for one level. Aggregating results across different areas of practice necessarily introduced an additional element of subjectivity to the assessment.

The MOPAN assessment methodology draws chiefly on evaluation evidence to assess multilateral organisations' delivery of development and humanitarian results. OCHA completed only five centralised evaluations during the assessment period, and three of these related to the performance of the humanitarian sector as a whole, with only limited findings that were specific to OCHA. There was also a decentralised evaluation of the Centre for Humanitarian Data. To compensate for the limited evaluation evidence, the assessment also drew on OCHA's internal management data. Nonetheless, the confidence in the strength of evidence for the fifth performance area (Results) is weaker than for the other four.

While the survey achieved a satisfactory response rate, the numbers were not high enough to permit detailed statistical analysis by respondent group or geographical area. Only a minority of respondents from partner organisations had experience with dealing with OCHA in more than one country. The rating of OCHA's performance were strongly positive for all questions, suggesting possible shortcomings in the design of the Likert scale. In accordance with MOPAN's methodology, the survey results were used primarily to triangulate other evidence.

Due to the pandemic-related travel restrictions, the assessment team was not able to visit OCHA headquarters to conduct interviews in person. Online interviews provided a reasonable alternative, but in some cases may have limited the depth in which issues could be explored.

ANNEXES

Annex A. Performance ratings and analysis table

METHODOLOGY FOR SCORING AND RATING

The approach to scoring and rating under MOPAN 3.1 is described in the 2020 Methodology Manual,[12] which can be found on MOPAN's website.

Each of the 12 KPIs contains a number of micro-indicators (MIs), which vary in number. The KPI rating is calculated by taking the average of the ratings of its constituent MIs.

Scoring of KPIs 1-8

The scoring of KPIs 1-8 are based upon aggregated scoring of the MIs which each contain a number of elements, which vary in number, that represent international good practice. Taking the average of the constituent scores per element, a score is then calculated per MI. The same logic is pursued at aggregation to the KPI level, to ensure a consistent approach. Taking the average of the constituent scores per MI, an aggregated score is then calculated per KPI.

Scoring of KPIs 9-12

The scoring of KPIs 9-12 is based upon a meta-analysis of evaluations and performance information, rated at the MI level and aggregated to the KPI level. For KPI 9, results against the mandate and contribution to cross-cutting results are given equal weight. KPIs 9-12 assess results achieved as assessed in evaluations and annual performance reporting from the organisations

Rating scales

Whenever scores are aggregated, rating scales are used to translate scores into ratings that summarise the assessment across KPIs and MIs. The rating scale used under MOPAN 3.1 is shown below.

- **Highly satisfactory** (3.51-4.00)
- **Satisfactory** (2.51-3.50)
- **Unsatisfactory** (1.51-2.50)
- **Highly Unsatisfactory** (0.00-1.50)
- **No evidence / Not applicable**

- **High evidence confidence**
- **Medium evidence confidence**
- **Low evidence confidence**

A score of "N/E" means "no evidence" and indicates that the assessment team could not find any evidence but was not confident of whether or not there was evidence to be found. The team assumes that "no evidence" does not necessarily mean that the element is not present (which would result in a zero score).

Elements rated N/E are excluded from any calculation of the average. A significant number of N/E scores in a report indicates an assessment limitation (see the Limitations section at the beginning of the report). A note indicating "N/A" means that an element is considered to be "not applicable". This usually owes to the organisation's specific nature.

12 MOPAN (2020), MOPAN 3.1 Methodology Manual: 2020 Assessment Cycle, Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network, www.mopanonline.org/ourwork/themopanapproach/MOPAN_3.1_Methodology.pdf.

OCHA SCORING OVERVIEW

Strategic management

KPI 1: Organisational architecture and financial framework

- 1.1 Long-term vision
- 1.2 Organisational architecture
- 1.3 Supports normative frameworks
- 1.4 Financial framework

KPI 2: Cross-cutting issues

- 2.1 Gender equality
- 2.2 Environment
- 2.3 Human rights
- 2.4 Diversity of humanitarian actors

Operational management

KPI 3: Resources support relevance and agility

- 3.1 Resources aligned to functions
- 3.2 Resource mobilisation
- 3.3 Decentralised decision making
- 3.4 Performance-based human resources

KPI 4: Cost and value consciousness, financial transparency

- 4.1 Translarent decision making
- 4.2 Disbursement as planned
- 4.3 Results-based budgeting
- 4.4 Audit
- 4.5 Control mechanisms
- 4.6 Anti-fraud procedures
- 4.7 SEA prevention / response
- 4.8 SH prevention / response

Relationship management

KPI 5: Planning / intervention design support relevance and agility

- 5.1 Alignment to country
- 5.2 Context analysis
- 5.3 Capacity analysis
- 5.4 Risk management
- 5.5 Cross-cutting issues in intervention design
- 5.6 Sustainability
- 5.7 Implementation speed

KPI 6: Work in coherent partnerships

- 6.1 Agility
- 6.2 Comparative advantage
- 6.3 Use country systems
- 6.4 Synergies
- 6.5 Co-ordination
- 6.6 Information sharing
- 6.7 Accountability to beneficiaries
- 6.8 Joint assessments
- 6.9 Knowledge

Performance management

KPI 7: Transparent results focus, explicitly geared to function

- 7.1 RBM applied
- 7.2 RBM in strategies
- 7.3 Evidence-based targets
- 7.4 Effective monitoring systems
- 7.5 Performance data applied

KPI 8: Evidence-based planning and programming applied

- 8.1 Independent evaluation function
- 8.2 Evaluation coverage
- 8.3 Evaluation quality
- 8.4 Evidence-based design
- 8.5 Poor performance tracked
- 8.6 Follow-up systems
- 8.7 Uptake of lessons

Results

KPI 9: Achievement of results

- 9.1 Results obtained
- 9.2 Gender equality
- 9.3 Environment / climate change
- 9.4 Human rights
- 9.5 Diversity of humanitarian actors

KPI 10: Relevance to partners

- 10.1 Responsive to needs

KPI 11: Results delivered efficiently

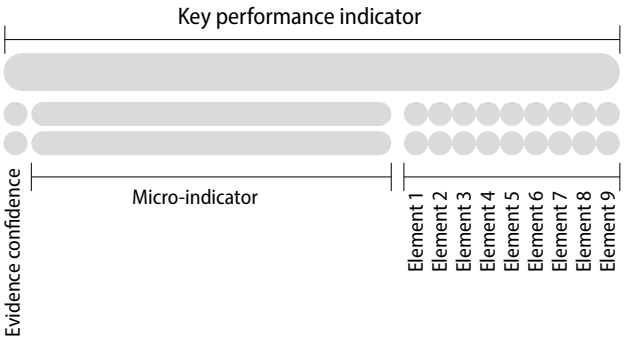
- 11.1 Cost efficiency
- 11.2 Timeliness

KPI 12: Results are sustainable

- 12.1 Sustainable benefits

High confidence
Medium confidence
Little to no confidence

Highly satisfactory
Satisfactory
Unsatisfactory
Highly unsatisfactory
No evidence/Not applicable



PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS TABLE

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Clear strategic direction geared to key functions, intended results and integration of relevant cross-cutting priorities

KPI 1: Organisational architecture and financial framework enable mandate implementation and achievement of expected results	KPI score
Satisfactory	**3.19**

OCHA's organisational architecture and financial framework support the implementation of its mandate and position it well to achieve its expected results. OCHA's 2018-21 Strategic Plan sets out a clear vision of a world that comes together to help crisis-affected people rapidly receive the humanitarian assistance they need. It articulates OCHA's role and comparative advantage in co-ordinating and improving the quality of humanitarian action, based on its legal mandate and its long and evolving experience. The Strategic Plan sets out five strategic objectives that are aligned with OCHA's mandate and with applicable normative frameworks for humanitarian action, such as the Grand Bargain and the Triple Nexus.

However, OCHA has not formally reviewed its Strategic Plan since its adoption. Work on a mid-term review began in 2019 but was terminated in March 2020 after the announcement of the COVID-19 pandemic. OCHA has adopted new priorities, including a focus on "anticipatory action" and four "strategic steers" to guide the work of CERF. These changes, made without a formal strategy review process, came unexpectedly for OCHA staff and partners, causing uncertainty and a lack of buy-in. OCHA has also changed its strategic focus in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in a process that was more consultative. Despite major changes in the global context, OCHA's corporate risk register has not been refreshed since it was first endorsed in July 2018. While OCHA has demonstrated agility in responding to new risks, especially COVID-19, the lack of an updated plan and risk register means that this cannot be said to happen systematically.

In recent years, OCHA has undertaken major reforms of its organisational structure and operating model. These have significantly increased the organisation's alignment with its strategy and have clearly helped OCHA achieve its goal of "working as one", although it could still improve its co-operation between its headquarters and the field.

OCHA's budgetary process has become more efficient but displays certain weaknesses, due primarily to a lack of alignment between budgeting and planning, which OCHA only began integrating towards the end of 2020. Annual budgets are reviewed by the appropriate governance bodies, and are well-integrated and broadly aligned with its stated priorities and those of the wider humanitarian sector. The relatively light earmarking of donor contributions to OCHA facilitates the efficient allocations of funds to fulfil OCHA's mandate. However, OCHA has adopted a more conservative spending profile than is required by its financial policies, leading to unnecessarily high reserves, which reduces the funds available for humanitarian response.

MI 1.1 Strategic plan and intended results based on a clear long-term vision and analysis of comparative advantage in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.50**
Element 1: A publicly available strategic plan (or equivalent) contains a long-term vision	4
Element 2: The vision is based on a clear analysis and articulation of comparative advantage	4
Element 3: The strategic plan operationalises the vision and defines intended results	4
Element 4: The strategic plan is reviewed regularly to ensure continued relevance and attention to risks	2

MI 1.1 Analysis	Source documents
OCHA's has a publicly available 2018-21 Strategic Plan that clearly states its long-term vision of a world that comes together to help crisis-affected people rapidly receive the humanitarian assistance they need. **OCHA's vision is logically related to a clear analysis and articulation of its comparative advantage.** OCHA exists to co-ordinate humanitarian action to ensure that crisis-affected people receive the assistance and protection they need. OCHA states that its added value is to support the humanitarian system as an honest broker, facilitator, manager of pooled funds, thought leader and global advocate. **OCHA's Strategic Plan operationalises OCHA's vision in the form of five strategic objectives**: 1) transformed co-ordination for a more efficient and tailored humanitarian response; 2) more credible, comprehensive and evidence-based situational analysis; 3) an effective, innovative humanitarian financing system that meets the needs of crisis-affected people; 4) international acceptance of the centrality of international humanitarian and human rights law, access and protection that results in meaningful action for affected people, especially internally displaced people; and 5) leadership to drive transformative change for a more responsive and adaptable humanitarian system. For each strategic objective, the Strategic Plan defines the intended results, and explains how OCHA will promote effective humanitarian operations in countries in crisis. **OCHA has not formally reviewed its 2018-21 Strategic Plan and the document is now dated.** A mid-term review was begun in 2019 but set aside to prioritise OCHA's response to COVID-19. Though OCHA's annual workplans continue to align their plans with its strategic and management objectives, interviews and documents suggest that the Strategic Plan no longer provides much strategic guidance, and that strategic priorities have shifted in four distinct ways: 1. Meeting the needs of people living with disabilities has emerged as a stronger priority than envisioned in the strategic plan. 2. The area of anticipatory action is not mentioned in the Strategic Plan but has since become a priority issue promoted by the USG. 3. The USG gave CERF four "strategic steers" (women and girls, persons with disabilities, emergency education, and other areas of protection) that were not clearly anticipated in the Strategic Plan. The USG also directed the use of pooled funds for purposes, such as durable solutions and anticipatory action, that were not anticipated in either OCHA's Strategic Plan or in CERF's foundational documents (the most recent one of which is 2005 Resolution A/RES/60/124). Only in 2020 was CERF's guidance on its life-saving criteria updated to provide that the USG can, "on a very exceptional basis… expand the Life-Saving Criteria if… it is deemed necessary for CERF to fund activities not ordinarily included within the Criteria". 4. Some stakeholders were concerned that the use of multi-country block grants for COVID-19, without prior consultation with Resident Coordinators(RCs)/Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs) in each country, could be at odds with the CERF objective of providing tailored humanitarian responses. OCHA's senior leadership argues that the budgetary implications of these shifts are modest, and that they are an illustration of OCHA's responsiveness, agility and thought leadership. However, only the fourth of the shifts described above is in response in real time to a new development; the others represent changes in priorities that should be reflected in the strategy. Interviews revealed mixed views and a lack of buy-in to these changes, illustrating the risks of developing strategy without a formal consultative process. OCHA has however taken a number of steps to create buy-in after the fact, particularly on anticipatory action.	2, 6, 10, 11, 28, 36, 43, 45, 54-56, 60, 63, 77, 78, 80, 81, 86, 249

OCHA has a corporate risk register that "lists the most critical strategic risks that could threaten OCHA's ability to function effectively and achieve its objectives [and]… identifies strategies to mitigate those risks". The Strategic Plan states that "OCHA's top corporate risks… will be monitored throughout the year to review and update risk mitigation strategies". Notwithstanding several staff attempts to place the issue on the Executive Management Committee (EMC) agenda, no formal reviews have taken place since July 2018 and no updates have been made. According to OCHA senior staff, in view of many competing priorities, the EMC has not found the time to update the risk register since it was first endorsed in 2018. While OCHA has in fact demonstrated its agility in responding to new risks, such as COVID-19, the defunct nature of the corporate risk register means that this cannot be said to happen systematically.	2, 6, 10, 11, 28, 36, 43, 45, 54-56, 60, 63, 77, 78, 80, 81, 86, 249
MI 1.1 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 1.2: Organisational architecture congruent with a clear long-term vision and associated operating model	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.60**
Element 1: The organisational architecture is congruent with the strategic plan	4
Element 2: The operating model supports implementation of the strategic plan	4
Element 3: The operating model is reviewed regularly to ensure continued relevance	4
Element 4: The operating model allows for strong co-operation across the organisation	3
Element 5: The operating model clearly delineates responsibilities for results	3
MI 1.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA's organisational architecture is congruent with its strategic plan. OCHA underwent a major organisational restructure over the review period. Throughout this organisational process, each part of OCHA's architecture was clearly associated with one or more of its strategic objectives and management objectives, and the structure in its entirety covers all strategic and management objectives. **OCHA's operating model supports the implementation of OCHA's Strategic Plan.** The 2018 documents on OCHA's New Operating Model outline OCHA's commitment to the implementation of the Strategic Plan, and broadly align with the strategic and management objectives set out in this Strategic Plan. **OCHA adopted a New Operating Model in July 2018 and an Organisational Development Unit was set up to review the performance of its systems, processes and structure.** Since the New Operating Model was established, OCHA has also conducted a number of other reviews of its continued relevance and performance, in the light of evolving realities. For example, an Executive Office review was conducted partly in response to COVID-19 because OCHA expected the pandemic to put disproportionate strain on this function. The assessment found evidence of systematic follow-up on the recommendations of these reviews. **OCHA's New Operating Model allows for strong co-operation across the organisation.** It was designed to give effect to OCHA's ambition to work "as one" across New York, Geneva and the field structure, and includes cross-organisational mechanisms such as regional support teams and a Humanitarian Programme Cycle Reference Group. It included a shift towards a functional approach, which helped to break down organisational siloes. Efforts to promote working "as one" are ongoing. For example, OCHA restructured its policy function to ensure a more coherent approach	4, 7, 8, 9, 38-47, 51, 52, 53, 84-86

to engaging with Member States and other strategic partners. While a number of interviewees suggested that significant further progress is possible (especially in relation to the headquarters-field co-operation), there was a consensus among longer-serving staff that OCHA now works far better "as one" than it did prior to the New Operating Model, and that this is reflected in a stronger and more coherent OCHA voice with regard to donors and other stakeholders. **OCHA's documents outlining its operating model do not include the delineation of responsibilities for results.** However, this is inherent in the shift to a functional model, whereby offices, units and divisions each contribute to multiple results, and each result requires contributions from various parts of the organisation. The trade-off here is therefore defensible, in light of the priority given to working "as one".	4, 7, 8, 9, 38-47, 51, 52, 53, 84-86
MI 1.2 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 1.3: Strategic plan supports the implementation of global commitments and associated results	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.67**
Element 1: The strategic plan is aligned to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, wider normative frameworks and their results (including, for example, the Grand Bargain and the QCPR)	3
Element 2: A system is being applied to track normative results for the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and other relevant global commitments (for example, the QCPR and the Grand Bargain, where applicable)	3
Element 3: Progress on implementation and aggregated results against global commitments are published at least annually	2
MI 1.3 Analysis	**Source documents**
Given OCHA's humanitarian mandate, the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda is relevant but not a major reference point for the organisation. The assessment therefore focuses on international commitments on reform of the humanitarian sector, including the Grand Bargain and the goal of strengthening the link between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding initiatives (Triple Nexus). **OCHA's Strategic Plan 2018-21 makes only passing references to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, but is well aligned to the Grand Bargain.** It states that OCHA "supports the Secretary-General's vision for a more robust, results-oriented, efficient and cohesive UN Development System (UNDS) which is repositioned to better support achieving the 2030 Agenda, particularly the commitment to 'leave no-one behind' and to 'reach the furthest behind first'." The Strategic Plan repeatedly mentions and is aligned with the Grand Bargain commitments, in particular the localisation agenda (through support for increasing the diversity of humanitarian actors) and supporting "the effective and principled scale-up of cash". The Strategic Plan predates the Triple Nexus Development Assistance Committee (DAC) recommendation but includes commitments on aligning development and humanitarian action, where context allows without undermining humanitarian principles. Regarding internally displaced people (IDPs), OCHA has a Senior Adviser on Internal Displacement who advocates for the implementation of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs. However, there is no internal IDP policy and, a lack of clarity on OCHA's role in relation to promoting durable solutions. OCHA's four-year planning cycle is aligned to the QCPR cycle.	2, 15, 29-31, 39, 46, 59

OCHA's results framework includes KPIs that relate to the SDGs (mostly SDG 17) and Grand Bargain commitments (such as the development-humanitarian nexus and humanitarian financing), but does not have a strong system for tracking and reporting on results. In its planning documents, Grand Bargain commitments (such as those related to localisation, AAP and transparency) feature prominently. They are no longer commonly referred to as Grand Bargain commitments, which suggests that these commitments have been effectively mainstreamed. However, as assessed below under KPI 7, it lacks corporate systems for tracking and reporting on achievements under its KPIs. **OCHA does not publish reports on its contributions to the SDGs, but OCHA's communication and public advocacy strategy aims to highlight how humanitarian efforts are helping to deliver on them.** OCHA did publish annual self-reports on progress against the Grand Bargain, but this annual reporting was terminated after the report of 2019, which was published in February 2020.	2, 15, 29-31, 39, 46, 59
MI 1.3 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 1.4: Financial framework supports mandate implementation	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.00**
Element 1: Financial and budgetary planning ensures that all priority areas have adequate funding in the short term or are at least given clear priority in cases where funding is very limited	2
Element 2: A single integrated budgetary framework ensures transparency	3
Element 3: The financial framework is reviewed regularly by the governing bodies	3
Element 4: Funding windows or other incentives in place to encourage donors to provide more flexible/unearmarked funding at global and country levels	4
Element 5: Policies/measures are in place to ensure that earmarked funds are targeted at priority areas	3

MI 1.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA manages its own operational budget, as well as the budgets of CERF and country-based pooled funds (CBPFs). This indicator is applied to each, so far as is relevant. **OCHA's budgetary and financial planning processes do not maximise funding for priority areas.** OCHA has a relatively high percentage of unearmarked or only softly earmarked funding for its extra-budgetary programming. This flexibility, supplemented with additional pledging and resource mobilisation activities in response to new emergencies, helps OCHA to align its own and the wider humanitarian budgets to priority needs. However, in the review period, OCHA's maintained an overly conservative financial stance, consistently spending less than it received, and maintaining a higher level of operational reserves than required by its own policy (see figures below).	1-5, 10, 35, 37, 52, 75, 79, 248

Year (source)	Actual operational cash balance at year end, in USD million	OCHA's required operational cash balance for year end, in USD million, as defined by OCHA itself for that particular year end	Excess operational cash balance, in USD million
2018 (Annual report 2018, page 64)	111.5	100/103 (two conflicting figures)	11.5/8.5
2019 (Annual report 2019, page 70)	130.4	114	16.4
2020 (Annual report 2020, page 83)	144.3	114	30.3

This was reported as a success in its results frameworks, given its history of overspending. However, if higher reserves are needed, this should be specified in the financial policies and not taken on a seemingly ad hoc basis. This is especially the case when the effect is to reduce allocations for OCHA's core functions in the context of high humanitarian need. The budgetary planning process has become more efficient and is regarded as efficient at the country level. However, it remains sub-optimal, especially at the central level, because OCHA is yet to integrate its budget and planning functions. While integration has been part of its organisational reform plans since 2017, an August 2020 internal review concluded that OCHA continues to "struggle with what is perceived by many to be a disjointed set of planning exercises that are not in symmetry with budget preparations or supportive of results-based programming and budgeting". OCHA is in the process of correcting this with the establishment of a Planning, Budget and Finance Unit within the Executive Office. **OCHA has a publicly available integrated budgetary framework that includes the management of the pooled funds.** It does not include the funding that OCHA-managed pooled funds allocate to implementing partners, but this is appropriate. **OCHA's financial framework is regularly reviewed by three UN General Assembly subsidiary bodies: the Committee for Programme and Coordination, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee of the UN General Assembly.** The ODSG also reviews OCHA's budgets, but does so on the basis of limited information and without the authority to "approve" OCHA's budgets. **OCHA proactively encourages and incentivises donors to provide more flexible/unearmarked funding at global and country levels.** Assessed contributions cover some 4% of OCHA's budget, and OCHA has cost-recovery mechanisms to finance the management of its pooled funds and administrative services. For the remainder, OCHA depends on donor response to appeals and on annual and multi-year contributions. OCHA successfully encourages and – through positive public messaging – incentivises donors not to earmark these voluntary contributions. Its 2019 Annual Report states: "in 2019, donors gave USD 121.3 million, or 45 per cent of programme income, as unearmarked funding… In addition, the USD 834.6 million in contributions to CERF are fully unearmarked, while the USD 948 million in contributions to CBPFs are softly earmarked." **Measures are in place to ensure that earmarked funds are targeted at priority areas.** OCHA says it and the pooled funds it manages do not accept funding that is not aligned with its stated priorities. For the humanitarian sector at large, OCHA seeks to ensure that funding is channelled to what OCHA sees as priority areas, and influences these flows through targeted appeals and by choices made in the allocation of its pooled funds.	1-5, 10, 35, 37, 52, 75, 79, 248
MI 1.4 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

KPI 2: Structures and mechanisms in place and applied to support the implementation of global frameworks for cross-cutting issues at all levels, in line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda principles	KPI score
Satisfactory	**2.63**

Alongside the SDGs, OCHA's primary normative frameworks are the international humanitarian principles and reform agendas such as the Grand Bargain and the Triple Nexus. The assessment explored OCHA's organisational performance on gender equality, human rights and humanitarian law, environmental sustainability and climate change, and increasing the diversity of humanitarian actors (principally through including national NGOs in humanitarian co-ordination structures and improving their access to humanitarian finance). OCHA's record in these cross-cutting areas is mixed. Gender equality and human rights are clearly reflected in its policy statements, its contributions to inter-agency efforts, its performance indicators and targets, its allocation of human and financial resources, accountability systems, the checklists that inform decision making and planning, and its staff capacity and capacity development processes. However, in the survey and interviews conducted for this assessment, some concerns were raised that OCHA does not always succeed in applying global policies and principles to its in-country operations.

Climate and environmental sustainability have not been prioritised, as OCHA's leadership does not see them as central to its mandate. OCHA has no dedicated environment and climate policy, and planned research and policy work on climate change and humanitarian action were postponed due to the pandemic. This is a significant gap, given the growing links between climate change and patterns of humanitarian need. OCHA's strategic plan recognises the value of a diversity of humanitarian actors and sets an objective around promoting co-ordination mechanisms and processes that are open to the participation of all relevant local and global humanitarian actors. While there are no targets for this objective, OCHA-run pooled funds are an important channel for increasing the share of humanitarian finance going to local responders, and OCHA is leading an IASC initiative to assess the extent of local participation in humanitarian co-ordination mechanisms.

MI 2.1 Corporate/sectoral and country strategies respond to and/or reflect the intended results of normative frameworks for gender equality and women's empowerment	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.17**
Element 1: Dedicated policy statement on gender equality available and showing evidence of application	4
Element 2: Gender equality indicators and targets fully integrated into the MO's strategic plan and corporate objectives	3
Element 3: Accountability systems (including corporate reporting and evaluation) reflect gender equality indicators and targets	3
Element 4: Gender equality screening checklists or similar tools inform the design for all new interventions	3
Element 5: Human and financial resources are available to address gender equality issues	3
Element 6: Staff capacity development on gender is being or has been conducted	3
MI 2.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
Dedicated policy statements on gender equality are available and there is evidence of their application. OCHA makes regularly reference to IASC gender-related policies and guidelines, provides gender-related guidance for HNOs and HRPs, and has a number of OCHA-specific documents setting out gender equality objectives, such as: a 2016-2020 Gender Equality Policy (updated in 2021), a 2019 *OCHA Message on Gender in Humanitarian Action*, and a document titled *Three ways OCHA can promote Gender Equality during COVID-19 Emergency Response*. A draft *Policy Instruction on Gender Equality 2021-2025* was under preparation in March 2021.	2-4, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 25, 27, 33-34, 37, 50, 59, 61, 62, 64, 66

These policies inform OCHA's work on co-ordination, advocacy, information management and humanitarian financing. OCHA-managed pooled funds also integrate OCHA's gender equality principles through their programme cycles. However, the application of gender polices is not systematic, and there are discrepancies between the high-level standards and operational realities, although this is in part a reflection of the demanding nature of the standards. For example, it is difficult to get appropriately disaggregated data in rapid-onset and conflict contexts. A number of survey respondents expressed that OCHA does not truly and systematically prioritise issues of gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, and the involvement of women leaders in decision making. Overall, however, the response to the statement that "OCHA promotes gender equality" was among the most positive in the survey.

Gender equality is mainstreamed into OCHA's Strategic Plan and corporate objectives, but these are not supported by gender equality indicators and targets. OCHA's Strategic Plan presents gender equality as a key principle and emphasises the importance of gender-disaggregated data. OCHA does not have a specific Strategic Objective that covers these issues, but they are integrated into three of its five Strategic Objectives and its Management Objectives. However, OCHA's results framework does not include KPIs on gender and therefore it lacks systematic high-level monitoring data on policy application. Work is underway to change this. OCHA-managed pooled funds use the Gender and Age Marker, to enable them to track whether women of different ages are being reached.

Accountability systems include gender-related indicators and targets, but not to the full extent possible. At strategic level, accountability for gender-related objectives is provided by OCHA's leadership team and a Gender Board, with representation from headquarters and the field, established towards the end of the review period. At the operational level, OCHA supports IASC's work to advance accountability on gender equality in humanitarian action through the Gender and Age Marker, which assesses whether humanitarian operations are reaching women of different age groups, and the IASC Gender Accountability Framework. An inter-agency humanitarian evaluation on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls was published in November 2020. The pooled funds commonly collect and publish gender equality indicators, although data availability and quality remain a challenge across the humanitarian sector. The available data are not always used to best effect.

2-4, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 25, 27, 33-34, 37, 50, 59, 61, 62, 64, 66

Gender equality tools inform intervention design for OCHA's pooled funds through the use of the Gender and Age Marker in their application and reporting templates. The use of this marker is most meaningful where there is in-country IASC GenCap support. HNOs and HRPs both pay attention to gender equality, and gender equality is one of the dimensions that OCHA's evaluation quality assessment protocol checks against.

Human and financial resources are available to address gender equality issues. OCHA has a small Gender Unit that reports to the Assistant Secretary-General (ASG), a Gender Board (established towards the end of the review period), and in-country Gender Champions. OCHA recognises the need for continuing investments in gender equality, and it took an explicit decision to continue prioritising gender equality through the COVID-19 pandemic strategic refocus, although this proved challenging in practice. Within CERF, the USG has made a focus on women and girls one of the four "strategic steers". Within the wider sector, OCHA contributes expertise on gender equality through its Gender Capacity (GenCap) adviser, and facilitates the funding of gender-related work, such as through the Ending Sexual and Gender Based Violence Conference in Oslo, which attracted pledges of USD 363 million (not all new money). GenCap advisers support HCTs on the incorporation of gender equality into HNOs and HRPs, and there is evaluation evidence that their

focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls has improved over time. OCHA identifies and follows up on weaknesses, such as its insufficiently gender-sensitive Duty of Care practices, which have now been revised, and the proportion of women at all levels within its own organisation, which OCHA is working to improve as per its People Strategy. However, OCHA's system of Gender Focal Points does not have any decision-making authority and is not yet effective in driving the gender agenda.	
Staff capacity development on gender is conducted on an ongoing basis. Under the UN System-wide Action Plan on gender, OCHA was assessed in 2019 as "approaching the requirement" on performance indicators 14 (capacity assessment) and 15 (capacity development). All OCHA staff are obliged to complete online gender training, and OCHA monitors and follows up to ensure compliance. Gender is integrated into OCHA's foundational and technical training, along with self-study learning packages that are available to all staff. Gender is also a "non-negotiable" training focus for all HCs. Additional gender-related training is more selectively available. However, feedback from some interviewees and survey respondents suggested that not all OCHA staff are fully behind the gender agenda yet, and that "gender" is often narrowly interpreted as purely a protection issue, i.e. prevention of SEA and gender-based violence (GBV). The current leadership's emphasis on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls may gradually be changing this.	2-4, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 25, 27, 33-34, 37, 50, 59, 61, 62, 64, 66
MI 2.1 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 2.2: Corporate/sectoral and country strategies respond to and/or reflect the intended results of normative frameworks for environmental sustainability and climate change	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.00**
Element 1: Dedicated policy statement on environmental sustainability and climate change available and showing evidence of application	2
Element 2: Environmental sustainability and climate change indicators and targets fully integrated into the MO's strategic plan and corporate objectives	1
Element 3: Accountability systems (including corporate reporting and evaluation) reflect environmental sustainability and climate change indicators and targets	2
Element 4: Environmental screening checklists or similar tools inform design for all new interventions	3
Element 5: Human and financial resources are available to address environmental sustainability and climate change issues	2
Element 6: Staff capacity development on environmental sustainability and climate change is being or has been conducted	2
MI 2.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA does not have a dedicated policy statement on environmental sustainability and climate change and its senior leadership do not consider the issue to be part of its core mandate. OCHA is, however, covered by the September 2019 UN Secretariat Environmental Policy (ST/SGB/2019/7), the UN System Sustainability Strategy and the UN Secretariat Climate Action Plan. OCHA's 2020 *Strategic Direction* document deprioritised part of OCHA's longer-term research and policy work on climate change because of COVID-19, and work on a "climate change and humanitarian action" report, scheduled for 2020, was put on hold. While this is understandable in the context of pandemic, climate remains a significant gap in the organisation's strategy, given its growing importance in driving patterns of humanitarian need.	10, 20, 49, 53, 58, 67-71, 72

Environmental sustainability and climate change indicators and targets are not integrated into OCHA's Strategic Plan or strategic objectives. OCHA does not have high-level indicators that cover environmental sustainability or climate change, and it is not currently using the UN Secretariat's toolkit for Environmentally Sound Management. Some of the HNOs include environmental indicators. **There is no systematic corporate reporting on the cross-cutting issues of environmental sustainability and climate change.** OCHA produces a mandatory annual report on its environmental footprint as an organisation, and the UNEP/OCHA Joint Environment Unit publishes annual "major activities" reports. During this assessment's review period, the issue has not been covered in evaluations. **OCHA has some environmental guidance documents that support the development of environmentally sensitive HNOs and the assessment of environmental contexts and environmental elements of humanitarian projects.** However, these are not systematically used. OCHA co-developed and sometime makes use of the Flash Environmental Assessment Tool (FEAT), the Nexus Environmental Assessment Tool (NEAT+) and an environment marker for humanitarian projects, but not all relevant OCHA staff are aware of the existence of these tools and they are not systematically used. Some HNOs include environmental indicators, and there is an HNO guidance document on environmental sensitivity, but the annual quality reviews of HNOs and HRPs do not include explicit criteria related to environmental sustainability or climate change. The Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework (JIAF), introduced in the HPC in 2020, and the JIAF guidance issued for the 2021 HPC make explicit reference to environmental issues as part of the context analysis of needs. **OCHA has limited human and financial resources available to address environmental sustainability and climate change issues.** For issues related to OCHA's own environmental footprint, OCHA has an Environmental Focal Point in its Executive Office. For broader work related to environmental sustainability and climate change, OCHA works with the United Nations Environment Programme on the Joint Environment Unit and its Environmental Emergencies Centre, although OCHA reduced its contribution over the review period which currently consists of only one staff member. In some parts of OCHA, environmental issues are a priority: climate is the first of only three priority themes in OCHA's most recent global communications and public advocacy strategy; and in 2020, OCHA Venezuela hosted a UNEP consultant for six months to help it and its partners to strengthen environmental themes across all response work. **There is some provision for staff capacity development on environmental sustainability and climate change, in the form of optional training courses that staff are encouraged to participate in.** Data are not available on the uptake of these courses.	10, 20, 49, 53, 58, 67-72
MI 2.2 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 2.3: Corporate/sectoral and country strategies respond to and/or reflect the intended results of normative frameworks for human rights and the upholding of humanitarian law and principles, including the protection of vulnerable people (those at risk of being "left behind")	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.17**
Element 1: Dedicated policy statement on human rights available and showing evidence of application	3
Element 2: Human rights indicators and targets fully integrated into the MO's strategic plan and corporate objectives	3
Element 3: Accountability systems (including corporate reporting and evaluation) reflect human rights indicators and targets	3
Element 4: Human rights screening checklists or similar tools inform design for all new interventions	3
Element 5: Human and financial resources are available to address human rights issues	4
Element 6: Staff capacity development on human rights is being or has been conducted	3
MI 2.3 Analysis	**Source documents**
Promotion of human rights falls within OCHA's protection work, which is supported by dedicated policies. In 2019, OCHA published an Occasional Policy Paper on "Building a Culture of Protection". There is evidence of their application in OCHA's co-ordination work (all HNOs have a section on protection, for example), and in the grants issued through the OCHA-managed pooled funds. **Human rights indicators and targets are not fully integrated into OCHA's Strategic Plan and corporate objectives, but the Strategic Plan does include a sub-strategic objective on OCHA's commitment to humanitarian principles, international humanitarian law and international human rights law.** **There are no KPIs on human rights in OCHA's results framework, but protection (and sometimes human rights more broadly) were covered in most evaluations and in OCHA's corporate reporting (including reporting by pooled funds).** The USG's monthly statement to the Security Council (in his capacity as Emergency Relief Coordinator) always includes a brief on the protection of civilians. **OCHA helps to ensure that human rights tools inform the design of humanitarian response.** HNOs and HRPs have sections on protection, which focus on issues including GBV, livelihood support and various rights-based issues. The HRP highlights that the protection cluster strategy is rights-based. CERF's project proposal template includes a range of protection-related questions. Almost all the country and regional workplans reviewed included planned protection activities. **Human and financial resources are available to address human rights issues in general, and protection issues in particular.** Within the wider sector, the establishment of collective approaches to protection is one of IASC's four mandatory responsibilities for all HCTs. OCHA's Heads of Offices and their staff contribute to this, and dedicate significant time and effort to protection, and to human rights issues more generally. Furthermore, OCHA, in partnership with the NRC, contributes expertise for protection at strategic and operational levels to RCs/HCs and HCTs through the inter-agency Protection Standby Capacity Project (ProCap), while OCHA-managed pooled funds make funding available for protection-related programming.	2, 12, 19, 21, 23, 24, 33, 38-47, 56, 57, 73, 84, 85

Staff capacity development on human rights is conducted on an ongoing basis. All OCHA staff are obliged to complete the UN mandatory training on human rights, and OCHA monitors and follows up to ensure compliance, which currently stands at 72%. As of 2021, non-compliance will be an issue to address in the staff performance appraisal process. Additional training on human rights is integrated into OCHA foundation programmes, as well as a repository of online resources including on Human Rights Law and Human Rights Mainstreaming.	2, 12, 19, 21, 23, 24, 33, 38-47, 56, 57, 73, 84, 85
MI 2.3 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 2.4: Corporate/sectoral and country strategies respond to and/or reflect the intended results of normative frameworks of recognising the value of a diversity of actors within the humanitarian system	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.17**
Element 1: Dedicated policy statement on the value of a diversity of actors within the humanitarian system	3
Element 2: Indicators and targets in relation to a diversity of actors within the humanitarian system fully integrated into the organisation's strategic plan and corporate objectives	2
Element 3: Accountability systems (including corporate reporting and evaluation) reflect indicators and targets related to the diversity of actors within the humanitarian system	2
Element 4: Actor diversity screening checklists or similar tools inform design for all new interventions	2
Element 5: Human and financial resources are available to strengthen diversity of actors within the humanitarian system	3
Element 6: Staff capacity development on diversity within the humanitarian system is being or has been conducted	1
MI 2.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA's 2018-21 Strategic Plan recognises the value of a diversity of humanitarian actors and commits the organisation to promoting co-ordination mechanisms and processes that are open to the participation of national actors. OCHA is a signatory to the Grand Bargain and much of its work on promoting diversity is conducted under the banner of the Grand Bargain localisation commitment, which seeks to maximise the share of humanitarian finance going as directly as possible to national actors. OCHA is also leading an IASC working group on localisation and the preparation of localisation guidance. Its pooled funds provide an important channel for donors to direct funding to local responders; while they are required to award grants to the "best-placed partners", national NGOs are awarded additional points in the assessment criteria to help them access funds. On the other hand, project proposals must be submitted in correct English, which could be a barrier to access. Some CBPFs promote greater participation of local NGOs in governance and decision-making bodies and provide capacity-building support to national actors, but practice varies considerably across CBPFs and a 2019 evaluation found that there is scope to strengthen guidance in order to promote a more consistent approach. At the country level, there are no guidelines for country offices on promoting diversity of humanitarian actors and the level of effort devoted to it depends largely on the level of priority given to it by individual Heads of Office. However, there is also recent evidence that OCHA has used the shift to online co-ordination platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic to improve the engagement of national and local partners in co-ordination processes.	4, 14, 19, 22, 26, 34, 38-48, 50, 57, 74, 82-85, 89, 106

While beyond the assessment period, OCHA's draft Gender Action Plan from January 2021 includes objectives around promoting the participation of women-led and women's rights organisations in humanitarian action, including targets for the proportion of CERF funding on GBV going to such organisations, and ensuring that they participate in all CPBF Advisory Boards. OCHA has also made some effort to develop joint initiatives with private-sector entities, which were underway in 2 of the 12 countries that were case studies for this assessment. OCHA's Strategic Plan also mentions the need for the organisation to broaden its strategic partnerships, including with parliamentarians, local authorities and the private sector. However, the assessment has not seen any evidence of OCHA promoting the participation of these groups in humanitarian processes. A plan to raise humanitarian funding from the private sector was discontinued, as the investment required was found to be too high. **OCHA does not have a KPI or corporate target on diversity of humanitarian actors.** In 2020, OCHA volunteered to lead an IASC workstream on localisation. This included consultation with stakeholders on whether there should be global targets on the localisation of co-ordination mechanisms, which found mixed views. OCHA is in the process of compiling a baseline on the level of participation of national NGOs in Humanitarian Country Teams and on the share of cluster or sector co-ordination mechanisms that use an official or local language of the country of operation, with a view to informing further discussion. **OCHA-managed pooled funds report on the percentage of funding that is directly and indirectly channelled through local and national stakeholders.** **Other than these reporting mechanisms, OCHA does not use checklists or tools to promote localisation across the sector.** There is no common approach to assessing the capacity of national actors to participate in humanitarian action or to building their capacity to access donor funding. **Human and financial resources are available to increase the diversity of actors within the humanitarian system.** As per the GenCap and ProCap Strategic Framework 2018-2021, and more systematically following GenCap and ProCap reforms in 2020, localisation is a key focus for both GenCap and ProCap advisers. They, as well as some OCHA staff, dedicate considerable time to localisation. OCHA's localisation efforts are both at the global level (such as in the context of IASC investments in ensuring a stronger voice for local stakeholders) and country level (such as in Venezuela, where OCHA's localisation efforts are diverse and noteworthy). Strengthening localisation strategies is a key pillar of GenCap's work following recent reforms to the project. In addition, CERF encourages its UN grantees to pursue localisation, including a 2020 allocation to the United Nations Population Fund and UN Women to support local women-led and women's rights organisations working on gender-based violence. CBPFs have adapted their scoring process to award local applicants additional points, in order to improve their chances of selection. **There is no staff capacity development specifically on this area.**	4, 14, 19, 22, 26, 34, 38-48, 50, 57, 74, 82-85, 89, 106
MI 2.4 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Assets and capacities organised behind strategic direction and intended results, to ensure relevance, agility and accountability

KPI 3: The operating model and human and financial resources support relevance and agility	KPI score
Satisfactory	**2.84**

OCHA's operating model and human and financial resources promote organisational relevance and agility, but not in all respects. OCHA is a strong advocate for multi-year humanitarian funding at the global level, and its pooled funds make an important contribution to promoting relevance and agility across the humanitarian system. Within its own financing, it has succeeded in expanding the number donors that make such commitments and the total volume of their commitments. It has been less successful at diversifying away from dependence on a small donor base, and plans to raise funds from the private sector did not prove feasible.

OCHA's reformed operating model and human and financial resources are broadly aligned with the objectives in its Strategic Plan. The operating model, together with new mechanisms such as Regional Support Teams and improved online platforms, have enabled the organisation to respond with speed and agility to new challenges, such as COVID-19.

However, interviews and survey responses revealed a divergence of opinion around shifts in OCHA's strategic direction that have taken place outside the strategic planning process, including its new advocacy priority of anticipatory action and the focus on international financial institutions. While some cite these as evidence of adaptability, others are concerned that OCHA, and CERF in particular, are drifting away from the original mandate of supporting field-level decision making and focusing on emergency needs. These disagreements show the risks of adopting new strategic directions without a consultative approach. Partner feedback is that the combination of understaffing and remote working (linked to a limited field presence outside national capitals) have led to missed opportunities for timely resolution of problems. Many OCHA staff also complained of unsustainable work pressure.

OCHA's staff performance management system has improved over the review period under OCHA's People Strategy. It has enhanced OCHA's ability to identify and foster good performance, but does not yet deal effectively with excessive work pressure or poor performance.

There is a mixed record on decentralisation; on balance OCHA has fallen short of its ambition of delegating authority closer to the point of delivery to improve responsiveness to country priorities. There has been greater delegation of certain functions, including procurement, travel authorisation and budget execution, which has increased the speed and agility of OCHA's field-based operations. However, some staff perceive that other parts of OCHA's decision making has become more centralised and less transparent, particularly in respect of CERF. OCHA reports that its management of extra-budgetary funds has become more decentralised, but there is no clear trend towards decentralisation of the operational budget. OCHA is in the process of relocating around 50 posts to regional centres in The Hague and Istanbul, but the field staff interviewed were not convinced that this is helping to address staff shortages in the field.

MI 3.1: Organisational structures and staffing ensure that human and financial resources are constantly aligned and adjusted to key functions	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.20**
Element 1: Organisational structure is aligned with, or being reorganised to, requirements set out in the current strategic plan	4
Element 2: Staffing is aligned with, or being reorganised to, requirements set out in the current strategic plan	3
Element 3: Resource allocations across functions are aligned to current organisational priorities and goals as set out in the current strategic plan	2

Element 4: Internal restructuring exercises have a clear purpose and intent aligned to the priorities of the current Strategic Plan	4
Element 5: [UN] Engagement in supporting the resident co-ordinator systems through cost-sharing and resident co-ordinator nominations	N/A
Element 6: [UN] Application of mutual recognition principles in key functional areas	3
MI 3.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA's organisational structure is well aligned with the requirements of its current Strategic Plan. It has continued to evolve during the review period as OCHA's role and functions have developed, under the guidance of OCHA's Organisational Development Unit. Where the alignment is less obvious, OCHA staff were able to articulate a clear rationale behind choices made in relation to OCHA's organisational structure. **Staffing is aligned with the objectives of the Strategic Plan, but also with objectives that OCHA has since adopted outside the strategic planning processes.** Some human resource investments were made in response to evolving needs, such expansion of the Executive Office to deal with COVID-19's implications for human resource management. A new staff member was also recruited for the issue of anticipatory action, which has become a priority but is not yet included in the Strategic Plan. Moreover, some of the staff interviewed expressed a sense of uncertainty and loss of focus, owing to perceived or real shifts in the organisation's objectives and priorities. OCHA's 2018-21 Strategic Plan aims to work towards a "flexible, skilled, mobile and diverse OCHA workforce". This work is ongoing, underpinned by OCHA's People Strategy 2018-21. However, while survey respondents in countries of operation were positive about OCHA's staffing flexibility, skills, mobility and diversity (with some critical feedback in each of these fields), they were more critical regarding staffing numbers. One of the most frequently expressed concerns from survey respondents from partner organisations was that OCHA was systematically understaffed in both country offices and HATs (although not in Yemen or in the Syria-focused offices). Respondents noted that low staffing levels, in combination with OCHA's remote working practice, at times left OCHA poorly placed to resolve problems emerging in particular humanitarian contexts before they escalated. **Resource allocations across functions are aligned to current organisational priorities and goals, although these have continued to evolve outside the formal strategy process.** In 2020, in line with its need to be flexible and adaptive, OCHA redeployed financial resources for its COVID-19 response, which was appropriate. However, it has also directed financial resources to new organisational priorities adopted outside its formal strategic planning processes. An example is anticipatory action, which has received allocations from pooled funds. Resource allocations through CBPFs and CERF are influenced by country-level Humanitarian Response Plans as well as by OCHA's strategic priorities and the USG's four "strategic steers", which have also been adopted outside the strategy-setting process. Opinions were divided among the staff and external stakeholders interviewed as to whether this was an example of appropriate adaptation to a changing humanitarian system, or evidence of mission drift. One interviewee warned that CERF was evolving into "a fund for all, for everything". **Internal restructuring exercises have helped to align the organisation to its Strategic Plan and core functions**. They have support the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan for OCHA to become a "more focused, agile, transparent and collaborative organization". OCHA's Organisational Development Unit was established to keep the organisation's structure and processes under	2-4, 7, 10, 19, 33, 90-99

review. Agility and responsiveness have been enhanced by improvements in online platforms and the introduction of new mechanisms such as Regional Support Teams, multi-office workshops for communications officers and HATs, and various field-to-field communication mechanisms. Most of OCHA staff interviewed believed that these reforms had improved the organisation's performance. **OCHA applies some mutual recognition principles (such as in relation to audits and fraud risk mitigation) but does not yet, in practice, use the Mutual Recognition Statement in relation to its work with other signatories.** However, the principles are not fully relevant to OCHA as a non-implementing agency.	2-4, 7, 10, 19, 33, 90-99
MI 3.1 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 3.2: Resource mobilisation efforts consistent with the core mandate and strategic priorities	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.25**
Element 1: Resource mobilisation strategy/case for support explicitly aligned to current strategic plan	3
Element 2: Resource mobilisation strategy/case for support reflects recognition of need to diversify the funding base, particularly in relation to the private sector	3
Element 3: Resource mobilisation strategy/case for support seeks multi-year funding within mandate and strategic priorities	4
Element 4: Resource mobilisation strategy/case for support prioritises the raising of domestic resources from partner countries/institutions, aligned to goals and objectives of the strategic plan/ relevant country plan	3
MI 3.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
This assessment interprets this indicator as encompassing OCHA's joint resource mobilisation through CERF and CBPFs, as well as for its own purposes, and its efforts to expand the donor base. **OCHA's resource mobilisation strategy does not refer explicitly to OCHA's Strategic Plan, but does follow the same spirit.** It has clear annual targets and a system of annual monitoring and reporting. OCHA's January 2021 version of its Corporate Resource Mobilization Strategy for OCHA (2018-21) focuses on acquiring long-term unrestricted commitments, and engaging a larger number and more varied types of donors. This is consistent with the Strategic Plan and aligned with OCHA's role in advocacy and policy development, which require stable and predictable funding that is sufficiently diverse to provide the organisation with broad credibility across the sector. At country level, OCHA helps partners collaborate within the context of a Humanitarian Programme Cycle that includes resource mobilisation, and uses the OCHA-managed pooled funds to help secure responsive and strategic humanitarian financing. OCHA's Financial Tracking Services captures real-time progress on funding for Humanitarian Response Plans. **OCHA's resource mobilisation strategy recognises the need to diversify the funding base**. OCHA mobilises resources for its own budgets, the Gender and Protection Capacity Advisers programmes and the OCHA-managed pooled funds. Its resource mobilisation strategy and case for support reflect the need to diversify OCHA's funding base, and for its pooled funds in particular. In the review period, OCHA made efforts to expand the number of contributing governments. OCHA's Strategic Plan also committed to private-sector fundraising, but OCHA largely discontinued this after its research and the experience of other UN agencies revealed that there is no global private-	2, 4, 38-47, 50, 63, 84, 85, 100-104

sector market for pooled fund contributions. OCHA does engage in private-sector fundraising in a few countries and sometimes produces "business guides" that have a fundraising dimension. The USG also frequently advocates for a larger role in humanitarian financing for the international financial institutions, in particular in light of the impact of COVID-19 on the world's poorest groups. Notwithstanding its efforts to expand its funding base, OCHA remains highly dependent on a small group of institutional donors and this did not significantly change in the review period.	
OCHA's resource mobilisation strategy seeks multi-year funding within its mandate and strategic priorities. Its Strategic Plan says that "OCHA will… seek to renew and further expand the number of its multi-year commitments", and it has pursued this actively in its fundraising efforts. By the end of 2019, OCHA annual income from multi-year agreements with 18 donors amounted to USD 114 million, compared to USD 88 million from 16 donors in 2017. In 2019, multi-year agreements for OCHA-managed pooled funds amounted to USD 644 million. **OCHA does not prioritise the raising of domestic resource from partner countries and institutions**. In most cases, this is appropriate.	2, 4, 38-47, 50, 63, 84, 85, 100-104
MI 3.2 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 3.3: Resource reallocation/programming decisions responsive to need can be made at a decentralised level	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.50**
Element 1: An organisation-wide policy or guidelines exist that describe the delegation of decision-making authorities at different levels of the organisation	4
Element 2: Policy/guidelines or other documents provide evidence of a sufficient level of decision-making autonomy available at the country level (or other decentralised level as appropriate) regarding resource reallocation/programming	2
Element 3: Evaluations or other reports contain evidence that reallocation/programming decisions have been made to positive effect at country or other local level as appropriate	2
Element 4: The MO has made efforts to improve or sustain the delegation of decision making on resource allocation/programming to the country or other relevant levels	2
MI 3.3 Analysis	**Source documents**
The OCHA Internal Control Framework Policy Document distributes decision-making authority across different levels of the organisation. For the delegation of specific functions, OCHA uses a system called Portal that allows managers to delegate functions to their staff. OCHA's People Strategy says that OCHA will follow the Secretary-General's guidance to move from a culture of ex ante controls to ex post compliance and accountability for results, and that managers will be trusted to make decisions while being held accountable for those decisions through greater delegation of authority, including in human resources. **OCHA documentation suggests mixed progress, with some reversals, towards OCHA's stated goal of decentralising management authority closer to the point of delivery, so as to be more responsive to country priorities.** Following major cuts in field staff in 2017, OCHA remains less decentralised than it was in the previous MOPAN review period. At the time of writing OCHA was in the process of moving around 50 positions from New York and Geneva to regional centres in Istanbul and The Hague, but some of the field staff interviewed were of the view that this is not true decentralisation, as it is not strengthening OCHA's field structure.	2, 4, 34, 35, 37, 52, 56, 95, 98, 105-111

Some decision-making authority has been devolved. OCHA is piloting streamlined, field-based procurement processes within the UN Secretariat. CBPF operations are now supported rather than managed from headquarters. Recruitment authority up to P4 level was devolved for a period, but according to staff interviewed this was reversed as it conflicted with the goal of achieving global gender parity. Country offices now have greater authority to move funds across budget lines and to approve staff travel, but the budget envelopes for regional and country offices are set by headquarters and, among the staff interviewed, not everybody agreed that preparatory consultations with OCHA's field structure around budget setting were meaningful. Cost plan endorsement also comes from the top of the organisation. OCHA has informed donors that its budgetary split between headquarters and the field would change from 30%-70% in 2017 to 25%-75% in 2019, but this related only to its extra-budgetary funds. Where OCHA's entire budget is concerned, there is no clear trend towards decentralisation. On CERF, there has been a trend towards greater centralisation. While its management was always centralised, interviewees told us that decision making used to be less top-down and more informed by advice from the field. Among survey respondents, both donors and in-country partners expressed frustration with this. Overall, a significant number of internal and external interviewees and survey respondents were of the view that key decision making on CERF has become more centralised and less transparent than before, and is not always aligned with CERF's stated goal of being driven by national priorities. **Most of the evaluations and other reviews conducted during the review period did not investigate a causal link between decentralisation and results.** Exceptions are the global CBPF evaluation, which found that devolution of management responsibilities had been valuable in increasing CBPFs' adaptability to country contexts; and the evaluation of CERF's work in Venezuela, which criticised top-down decisions for having been inappropriate. **OCHA has made limited efforts to improve or sustain the delegation of decision making on resource allocation to the country and other relevant levels.** Fields in which progress in decentralisation and the delegation of authority was achieved were widely supported and the consequence of deliberate action. Successes were announced in OCHA's Strategic Plan and People Strategy, and reported in OCHA's annual reports. However, this has been counterbalanced by other fields in which there has been no action on decentralisation or the trend has even been towards re-centralisation.	2, 4, 34, 35, 37, 52, 56, 95, 98, 105-111
MI 3.3 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 3.4: HR systems and policies are performance based and geared to the achievement of results	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.40**
Element 1: A system is in place which requires all staff, including senior staff, to undergo performance assessment	3
Element 2: There is evidence that the performance assessment system is systematically and implemented by the organisation for all staff and to the required frequency	3
Element 3: The performance assessment system is clearly linked to organisational improvement, particularly the achievement of corporate objectives, and to demonstrate ability to work with other entities	2

Element 4: Staff performance assessment is applied in decision-making on promotion, incentives, rewards, sanctions etc.	2
Element 5: A clear process is in place to manage disagreement and complaints regarding staff performance assessments	2
MI 3.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA uses the UN Performance Management System (ePAS), which includes performance assessments for all staff, including senior staff. However, the system is considered less effective in dealing with underperformance, and in respect of senior staff. **There is evidence from both documentation and interviews that the performance assessment system is systematically implemented by the organisation for all staff and to the required frequency (with three appraisal milestones per year).** However, using ePAS to its full extent is time consuming and relatively few managers make enough time available. **The assessment system is linked to organisational improvement through OCHA's People Strategy and the use of the UN Secretariat's performance assessment system**. It aims to reward high performance and address poor performance "no matter how difficult [or] uncomfortable". The improvements include an integrated system for managing performance appraisals, through the ePAS system, and more strategic human resource support to managers. However, interview feedback suggests that the system works better for rewarding and strengthening good performance (through training, peer-to-peer learning and learning-by-doing opportunities, and by placing particularly well-performing individuals in a pool of "high potential individuals" that gives access to enhanced professional development facilities) than managing poor performance or identifying overloading among staff, and that 360-degree assessments of more senior staff do not yet work well. In the interviews and survey, there were mixed levels of confidence in the performance appraisal system and some staff are under the impression that OCHA's ability to manage poor performance is so inadequate that it sometimes resorts to restructuring in order to justify making underperforming staff redundant. In interviews, a significant number of staff complained of unsustainable work pressure. **OCHA's staff performance assessments are applied in decisions on promotion, incentives and rewards, but rarely on sanctions.** OCHA's People Strategy outlines OCHA's commitment to identifying high-performing staff and developing "talent pools". It also commits to paying particular care to identify and foster high-performing women (with the aim of eventually achieving full gender parity) and citizens from non-WEOG (Western European and Others Group) countries. According to interviewees, the risk of time-consuming rebuttal processes render the assessments less suitable for making decisions on sanctions. **A clear process, led by a Performance Management and Appraisal Rebuttal Panel, is formally in place to manage disagreement and complaints regarding staff performance assessments.** An internal OCHA review concluded that improvements in OCHA's HR management had led to a reduction in complaints submitted to this panel. However, from interviews, it is understood that the fear of time-consuming complaint procedures mean that OCHA's staff performance assessments focus more on positive achievements than on opportunities to improve performance.	2, 5, 8, 52, 112, 113
MI 3.4 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

KPI 4: Organisational systems are cost- and value-conscious and enable financial transparency and accountability	KPI score
Satisfactory	2.86

OCHA does not apply results-based budgeting principles, but its organisational systems are otherwise cost- and value-conscious, and enable transparency and accountability.

OCHA's spending is based on criteria that are reasonably clear. OCHA's own budget goes primarily towards staffing and related costs. Periodic "Lifecycle of Operations" analyses aim to ensure that it maintains an appropriate configuration of staff and related budgets wherever it has a presence. OCHA-managed pooled funds have clear allocation criteria, while allowing for a sufficient level of flexibility. In the survey, a number of grant applicants raised concerns about a lack of transparency in grant-making and a lack of flexibility once grant agreements have been signed. Notwithstanding these concerns, OCHA generally strikes an appropriate overall balance between speed of decision making and transparent proposal scoring, and between in-grant flexibility and the need for effective oversight.

OCHA does not apply strong results-based budgeting principles. Financial resources are not explicitly matched to strategic objectives or result areas, and OCHA does not track costs from activities to results (although its pooled funds do so, at grant level). The costing of results in OCHA's budget documents has not improved over the review period, but this may change in the coming period, as OCHA has recently begun integrating its budget and planning functions (following up on a commitment from 2017).

Over the review period, OCHA's operations were subject to internal and external audits that were conducted according to international standards, and OCHA's response to audit recommendations are clear and transparent. OCHA does not have a whistle-blower policy but does have adequate policies on fraud, corruption, sexual misconduct and other serious misdeeds, together with adequate internal control mechanisms.

OCHA states that prevention of SEA is an overarching priority. It has a zero-tolerance policy statement, a 2020 action plan, code of conduct and standard operating procedure (SOP) on SEA that apply to all categories of personnel, with responsibilities differentiated according to roles. OCHA has allocated some human resources, but the capacity may not be sufficient. There is evidence of monitoring of implementation and ongoing work to strengthen PSEA guidelines in grant agreements, to align with the Secretary-General's Protocol. OCHA makes PSEA-related training, awareness-raising material and resources available to implementing partners. OCHA plays a meaningful role in global and national PSEA efforts and networks, which had begun well before the 2018 PSEA scandals raised the profile of the issue in the humanitarian sector. In 2018, it established an SEA/SH Investigations Fund to provide rapid grants to IASC organisations and affiliated partners to help ensure appropriate investigation of SEA/SH allegations. A peer review of OCHA's operations in Mozambique concluded that PSEA measures had been initiated very early on in the response, led by OCHA and UNICEF.

As part of the UN Secretariat, OCHA participates in the UN's centralised PSEA reporting system that maintains a publicly accessible summary database of allegations, the status and timelines of the process for responding to each allegation, and, once this process is finalised, the actions taken. In this process, OCHA aims to take a victim-centred approach.

The prevention of sexual harassment within OCHA is another corporate priority. OCHA subscribes to the UN Secretariat's 1992 policy on the promotion of equal treatment of men and women in the Secretariat and prevention of sexual harassment. OCHA also has an SOP on sexual harassment, including one that incorporates the UN System model policy on sexual harassment, with roles, structures and resources identified for the implementation of the policy. In a 2018 OCHA staff survey, a substantial majority of respondents reported knowing about the mechanisms for reporting harassment (there are several possible routes to take), but only one-quarter believed that they would be protected from retaliation if they reported a grievance. Since then, OCHA has modified its SOP but has not yet conducted new research to assess to what extent staff confidence in the mechanisms has improved. Overall, OCHA is working towards a model of leadership that is consultative and collaborative, rather than hierarchical, and based on duty of care obligations, hoping thereby to create a culture in which the risks of harassment are reduced.

MI 4.1: Transparent decision making for resource allocation, consistent with strategic priorities over time (adaptability)	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.00**
Element 1: An explicit organisational statement or policy is available that clearly defines criteria for allocating resources to partners	4
Element 2: The criteria reflect targeting to the highest priority themes/countries/areas of intervention as set out in the current strategic plan	3
Element 3: Resource allocation mechanisms allow for adaptation in different contexts	3
Element 4: The organisational policy or statement is regularly reviewed and updated	2
MI 4.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA's allocation of resources follows criteria that are clearly set out in its strategies and policies. Its pooled funds have explicit criteria for allocating resources to partners. CERF has an overall set of life-saving criteria (which were updated and broadened in 2020), and its windows for rapid response and underfunded emergencies each have their own window-specific criteria. The CBPF Operational Handbook outlines high-level criteria (such as complementarity with other funding channels and priority-setting on the basis of HRPs), and states that more specific criteria for allocating resources to partners are to be developed by country offices and captured in an Allocation Strategy Paper and prioritisation scorecards. The criteria of OCHA-managed pooled funds direct the allocation of resources to the highest priority areas of need, as set out in the Strategic Plan. They are aligned with OCHA's third strategic objective of ensuring a "humanitarian financing system that meets the needs of crisis-affected people", while CERF's rapid response window is closely linked to OCHA's vision of a world that comes together to help crisis-affected people rapidly receive the humanitarian assistance and protection they need. However, in interviews, the assessment found a range of views as to whether CERF block grants and multi-country cash transfer project are aligned with OCHA's first strategic objective of a "tailored humanitarian response". Allocation criteria are also aligned with the functions of the pooled funds. CERF's allocation criteria are designed to promote early responses to reduce loss of life, enhance the response to time-critical requirements, and strengthen core elements of the humanitarian response in underfunded crises. CBPF allocation criteria align with the objectives of promoting inclusiveness, flexibility, timeliness and efficiency. While the allocation criteria are generally followed, this is less clear in the case of some of CERF's recent innovations, such as UN multi-country block grants (in several regions), a multi-year education grant (in Bangladesh) and grants with components on durable solutions (in Sudan). Furthermore, given that emergency needs usually exceed the available resources and the fact that the funds do not use standard scoring sheets, one of the most common concerns raised by survey respondents was around the transparency of grant-making. OCHA's resource allocation mechanisms allow for adaptation in different and evolving contexts. OCHA has a "Lifecycle of Operations" mechanism that is highlighted in its Programme Budget in 2018/2019. The mechanism aims to ensure that its field operations are correctly configured relative to available resources and the situation on the ground. The analysis compares factors relevant to the operation, including the scope of humanitarian needs, the presence of operational partners and the OCHA office configuration. The cost of each field operation is compared with the others and against standard costs for large and small offices and compositions at the capital and sub-office level.	10, 11, 14, 19, 28, 34, 54, 56, 66, 98, 135-138

Adaptability is inherent in the higher-level decision-making in relation to CERF's Rapid Response and CBPF's standard and reserve allocations in particular, but less so once grants have been issued. Both OCHA-managed pooled funding systems succeed in allocating resources rapidly to the global COVID-19 response. Not all organisational policies and statements are regularly reviewed and updated. The 2017 CBPF handbook will be reviewed in 2021, providing an opportunity to review the CBPF templates. CERF does not have a regular cycle for reviewing its policies, but reviews do happen occasionally (e.g. CERF's life-saving criteria from 2010 were revised in 2020).	10, 11, 14, 19, 28, 34, 54, 56, 66, 98, 135-138
MI 4.1 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 4.2: Allocated resources disbursed as planned	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.75**
Element 1: The institution sets clear targets for disbursement to partners	4
Element 2: Financial information indicates that planned disbursements were met within institutionally agreed margins	3
Element 3: Clear explanations, including changes in context, are available for any variances against plans	2
Element 4: Variances relate to external factors rather than to internal procedural blockages	2
MI 4.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
The OCHA-managed pooled funds set clear targets for the timeliness of disbursement to partners, defined as the time between final project approval and transfer of funds. CERF's rapid response disbursements should be made within nine working days of the final approval of project proposals and OCHA's results framework has a KPI for this. CBPF first disbursements are meant to be made within ten working days of a proposal's signature and, while OCHA's results framework does not have a KPI for this, there is a KPI for the longer end-to-end pipeline duration, which is 50 working days for standard applications and 30 working days for reserve applications. Appropriately, OCHA does not set targets for the volume of disbursements, which need to remain flexible. **Information from annual reports indicates that planned disbursements were generally made within the target time periods**. In 2019, for example, 291 of 300 CERF rapid response projects were disbursed within 9 working days of final approval of project proposals, and the average time to disbursement was much shorter, at 2.6 days. All CBPF annual reports include a section on "timeliness" (which is the CBPFs' third principle), in which they indicate the average time "from signature to first payment". Results are often but not always within targets (e.g. in 2019 it took an average of 4 working days in Ethiopia but 16 in the Central African Republic). As mentioned above, CERF and CBPFs do not set targets for disbursements, but they do anticipate how much funding is going to be available and strive to stay within that limit. **OCHA does not systematically provide explanations to explain variances against plans**. CBPF reports do note generic reasons why there might be deviation from disbursement plans. **OCHA's reports do not explicitly state variances between plans and delivery, but do sometimes highlight external constraints or the lack of them.** This assessment found no references to procedural blockages, other than in a May 2020 review of OCHA's Organisational Development Unit that concluded that some of the pooled funds' processes were unnecessarily time-consuming. This review made recommendations that OCHA is currently following up on.	4, 19, 25, 34, 50, 56, 139
MI 4.2 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 4.3: Principles of results-based budgeting applied	Score
Overall MI rating	**Highly unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**0.75**
Element 1: The most recent organisational budget clearly aligns financial resources with strategic objectives/intended results of the current strategic plan	1
Element 2: A budget document is available that provides clear costs for the achievement of each management result	1
Element 3: Systems are available and used to track costs from activity to result (outcome)	1
Element 4: There is evidence of improved costing of management and development results in budget documents reviewed over time (evidence of building a better system)	0
MI 4.3 Analysis	**Source documents**
The most recent organisational budget does not clearly align financial resources with strategic objectives as set out in the Strategic Plan. During the review period, OCHA established a Planning, Budget and Finance Committee to link income, finance and budget to strategy through a results-based budget model. The committee was dismantled in 2020 without having fulfilled this commitment. OCHA's budgets in the review period are disaggregated by division, unit and country, but they do not clearly align financial resources with OCHA's strategic objectives. A document for the OCHA Donor Support Group that provides background on OCHA's 2018-19 budget states that the budget is grounded in OCHA's Strategic Plan, but does not substantiate this statement. It is not possible to use staffing tables as a proxy for the alignment of OCHA's budget with its strategic objectives, because OCHA pursues a cross-functional approach whereby, according to the current Strategic Plan, "all of OCHA, at headquarters and in the field, is responsible for contributing to each of the strategic and management objectives". **There is no budget document that provides clear costs for the achievement of each management result.** **For its own operations, OCHA does not have a system to track costs from activity to results, but the OCHA-managed pooled funds require implementing partners to do so.** OCHA-managed pooled funds use report templates that require implementing partners to track costs from activity to results, using the common sequence of activities – outputs – outcomes – results. These results are often aligned with, but not explicitly linked to, OCHA's strategic objectives. **The costing of management and development results in budget documents did not improve in the course of the review period.** This may change in the near future, as OCHA has started integrating the budget and planning functions (which follows up on a commitment made in 2017).	2, 4, 19, 37, 140
MI 4.3 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 4.4: External audit or other external reviews certify that international standards are met at all levels, including with respect to internal audit	Score
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**4.00**
Element 1: External audit conducted which complies with international standards	4
Element 2: Most recent external audit confirms compliance with international standards across functions	4

Element 3: Management response is available to external audit	4
Element 4: Management response provides clear action plan for addressing any gaps or weaknesses identified by external audit	4
MI 4.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
External audits for the UN Secretariat are conducted by the Board of Auditors, which conducts its audits in conformity with the International Standards on Auditing, and in accordance with the additional terms of reference set out in the annex to the Financial Regulation and Rules of the United Nations. **OCHA's most recent external audit confirmed compliance with international standards across functions.** Chapter I of the Financial Report and Audited Statements for the UN Board of Auditors Report 2019 includes a number of recommendations to OCHA and its pooled funds, but none of them relate to compliance with international standards. For the UN in its entirety, the report concludes that "in our opinion, the transactions of the operations of the United Nations as reported in volume I that have come to our notice or that we have tested as part of our audit have, in all significant respects, been in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and legislative authority." **OCHA's provides a management response to all its external audits.** OCHA's document titled Response to the Board of Auditors' Management Letter issued on 4 June 2020 on the Audit of the OCHA Headquarters of the Financial Year 2019 includes a table that references the exact text from the auditors' report and provides OCHA's comments, including acceptance and follow-up commitments. **OCHA's internal audits are conducted by OIOS, which complies with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing promulgated by the Institute of Internal Auditors.**	96, 97, 141, 163
MI 4.4 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 4.5: Issues or concerns raised by internal control mechanisms (operational and financial risk management, internal audit, safeguards etc.) adequately addressed	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.40**
Element 1: A clear policy or organisational statement exists on how issues identified through internal control mechanisms/reporting channels (including misconduct such as fraud, sexual misconduct) will be addressed	4
Element 2: Management guidelines or rules provide clear guidance on the procedures for addressing any identified issues and include timelines	3
Element 3: Clear guidelines are available for staff on reporting any issues identified	3
Element 4: A tracking system is available that records responses and actions taken to address any identified issues	4
Element 5: Governing body or management documents indicate that relevant procedures have been followed/action taken in response to identified issues, including recommendations from audits (internal and external) with clear timelines for action	3

MI 4.5 Analysis	Source documents
There is a suite of policies clearly setting out how OCHA will response to issues identified through internal control mechanisms. These include OCHA's Internal Control Framework, a document on reporting of suspected misconduct, OCHA Standard Operating Procedures on Sexual Misconduct, the Secretary-General Bulletin on the Protection against Retaliation for Reporting Misconduct and for Cooperating with Duly Authorized Audits or Investigations, and the antifraud and anticorruption framework of the UN Secretariat. **Documents setting out how OCHA addresses issues identified through internal control mechanisms include clear management guidelines**. These documents do not consistently provide timelines but there are occasional references of the need to take action "immediately, without delay" and "in real time". **Clear guidelines on reporting any issues identified are available to staff**. When staff do report on any such issues, they are explicitly protected against retaliation. In this context, OCHA follows the Secretary-General's 2017 bulletin on protection against retaliation. **OCHA tracks its response to internal audit report recommendations, as well as any to internal allegations of fraud or sexual misconduct**. An internal dashboard notes whether or not the issue has been addressed, and the time taken to complete the follow-up actions. Externally, OCHA is part of the UN Secretariat's reporting on misconduct. **Management documents cover follow-up in response to identified issues, including recommendations from internal and external audits, with clear timelines for action**. OCHA's top management considers OCHA's follow-up on the basis of periodic briefings that are informed by its Recommendation Tracking System.	2, 95, 99, 142-148, 162
MI 4.5 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 4.6: Policies and procedures effectively prevent, detect, investigate and sanction cases of fraud, corruption and other financial irregularities	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.33**
Element 1: A clear policy/guidelines on fraud, corruption and any other financial irregularities is available and made public	4
Element 2: The policy/guidelines clearly define/s the roles management and staff roles in implementing/complying with them	4
Element 3: Staff training/awareness-raising has been conducted on policy/guidelines	3
Element 4: There is evidence of policy/guidelines implementation, e.g. through regular monitoring and reporting to the governing body	3
Element 5: There are channels/mechanisms in place for reporting suspicion of misuse of funds (e.g. anonymous reporting channels and "whistle-blower" protection policy)	3
Element 6: Annual reporting on cases of fraud, corruption and other irregularities, including actions taken, and ensures that they are made public	3

MI 4.6 Analysis	Source documents
OCHA is part of the UN Secretariat and therefore the publicly available Anti-fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework of the United Nations Secretariat applies. **The Anti-fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework of the United Nations Secretariat clearly define the roles of management and staff in implementing and complying with the framework**. The 2017 bulletin on the protection against retaliation also outlines duties and protective measures. **Staff members are expected to complete mandatory online anti-fraud training, and there was 72% compliance as of January 2021**. Information related to the prevention of fraudulent acts is also readily accessible. **There is evidence of the implementation of relevant policies, including through regular monitoring and reporting to the UN Secretariat.** The UN Secretariat maintains and publishes an anonymised compendium of disciplinary processes and measures in the form of a spreadsheet with case descriptions and actions taken. **OCHA and its pooled funds have channels and mechanisms for reporting suspicions of misuse of funds, which are set out in their antifraud and anticorruption frameworks**. OCHA follows the 2017 bulletin on protection against retaliation. **There is no publicly available OCHA-specific annual reporting on cases of fraud, corruption and other irregularities, other than the UN Secretariat's anonymised compendium mentioned above.**	99, 145, 149
MI 4.6 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 4.7: Prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.63**
Element 1: Organisation-specific dedicated policy statement(s), action plan and/or code of conduct that address SEA are available, aligned to international standards, and applicable to all categories of personnel	3
Element 2: Mechanisms are in place to regularly track the status of implementation of the SEA policy at HQ and at field levels	2
Element 3: Dedicated resources and structures are in place to support implementation of policy and/or action plan at HQ and in programmes (covering safe reporting channels, and procedures for access to sexual and gender-based violence services)	2
Element 4: Quality training of personnel / awareness-raising on SEA policies is conducted with adequate frequency	3
Element 5: The organisation has clear standards and due diligence processes in place to ensure that implementing partners prevent and respond to SEA	2
Element 6: The organisation can demonstrate its contribution to inter-agency efforts to prevent and respond to SEA at field level, and SEA policy/best practice co-ordination fora at HQ	4
Element 7: Actions taken on SEA allegations are timely and their number related to basic information and actions taken / reported publicly	3
Element 8: The MO adopts a victim-centred approach to SEA and has a victim support function in place (stand-alone or part of existing structures) in line with its exposure/risk of SEA	2

MI 4.7 Analysis	Source documents
OCHA has a set of policies and procedures on SEA that are aligned to international standards and cover all categories of personnel. As part of the UN Secretariat, OCHA is subject to the UN's long-standing zero-tolerance policy statement for SEA (Secretary-General's 2003 Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse). It states: "Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse violate universally recognized international legal norms and standards and have always been unacceptable behaviour and prohibited conduct for United Nations staff", warranting disciplinary action, including dismissal. OCHA has also elaborated organisation-specific policies and procedures on SEA, including a 2020 SEA Action Plan and a Standard Operating Procedure on Sexual Misconduct (August 2020 – hereafter the PSEA/SH SOP, or SOP on Sexual Misconduct), which was field tested in 2020. OCHA's Critical Incident Guidelines also cover sexual assault, rape and other forms of sexual violence. These policy and procedures apply to all categories of personnel, with differing responsibilities and separate sets of SEA-related instructions for heads of departments, offices and missions. The documents clearly state that the prevention of SEA is an overarching priority for OCHA. In interviews, OCHA staff described ongoing work to improve the SOP and grant agreements for pooled funds.	
OCHA documents set out various mechanisms to track the implementation of SEA policy and actions at headquarters and field level, but there is no documentary evidence that they are active. Under the PSEA Action Plan 2020, the IASC Senior Coordinator for PSEA and Sexual Harassment serves as the global focal point for PSEA, monitoring compliance and implementation of organisational commitments and co-ordinates a whole-of-OCHA approach to preventing, protecting from and responding to PSEA. The Senior Coordinator chairs a Cross Functional Task Force on PSEA. OCHA provided a statement for this assessment setting out examples of PSEA-related monitoring, stated that it had conducted a 2020 survey of PSEA focal points and held webinars with Heads of Offices and OAD Section Chiefs in November 2020 to collect feedback on the field testing of the PSEA/SH SOPs. SEA and SH are included as key strategic risks in OCHA's corporate risk register, but this risk register is not in active use.	4, 34, 37, 50, 52, 54, 57, 143, 147, 151-157, 190
OCHA's documents state that, at the field level, Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs) are responsible for ensuring that systems are in place for preventing and monitoring SEA, with OCHA's support. These responsibilities for PSEA are included in their annual compacts, and they are required to report regularly to the USG on actions taken. The topic is also a standing item at the HC annual retreat.	
The CERF 2020 annual results report highlights action taken by CERF partners to comply with IASC standards on SEA. The CBPF Oversight and Compliance Unit is responsible for monitoring action on SEA, but according to an internal review, lacks the capacity to fulfil this function, alongside "an increasingly heavy regular workload of managing the CBPF SEA allegations themselves".	
While these reporting mechanisms exist on paper, the assessment has not obtained any documentary evidence that they are active.	
OCHA currently has insufficient resources to support full implementation of its SEA policies and processes, with no dedicated PSEA support capacity in-country. OCHA's Senior Coordinator for PSEA and Sexual Harassment is the only full-time staff member responsible for implementing PSEA policy, with a broad range of responsibilities, both internally (leading OCHA's cross-functional PSEA task force and undertaking training) and externally, as an inter-agency focal point. She is supported by consultants, but interviewees stated that the function is significantly under-resourced. OCHA has PSEA focal points in-country, but they are not specialists in the subject and depend on technical support from the Senior Coordinator.	

As a non-implementing agency, OCHA does not operate its own case reporting mechanisms or support services – these are provided by other agencies. Its role is inter-agency co-ordination, often through national PSEA networks. In 2019-20, 12 of 28 humanitarian operations (43%) had full-time, inter-agency PSEA co-ordinators supporting and facilitating the network and in-country PSEA implementation. The remaining operations are either in the process of recruiting a PSEA co-ordinator or use existing staff to fill this role. Twelve of 28 operations (43%) reported having an inter-agency, community-based complaints mechanism for handling SEA complaints by humanitarian workers. OCHA plays a meaningful role in these networks, and a peer review of OCHA's operations in Mozambique concluded that PSEA measures had been initiated early in the response and had been jointly led by OCHA and UNICEF.	
OCHA provides training and regular awareness-raising on its SEA policies. PSEA-related training and awareness-raising materials are available for OCHA's staff and implementing partners, and by December 2020, OCHA's mandatory PSEA course had been completed by 77% of OCHA full- and part-time permanent staff. PSEA is also integrated into OCHA's foundation training for all professional staff at P3 level and above, and for national officers. OCHA also claimed to be in the process of incorporating PSEA into its external training programmes.	
Awareness-raising on SEA policies is conducted with adequate frequency. OCHA is planning to make its mandatory training an annual requirement, for all categories of personnel, to align itself with the UN-wide requirement for annual recertification. It operates an intranet site to give staff ready access to policies, guidance and good practice. A targeted learning activity on PSEA is included within OCHA's Learning Exchange Webinar Series for staff.	
OCHA is developing standards and due diligence processes to ensure that implementing partners under its pooled funds prevent and respond to SEA. OCHA's Grant Agreement Template with NGO implementing partners reflect the USG Bulletin and the UN Protocol on Allegations of SEA Involving Implementing Partners (UN IP Protocol), and require partners to implement the UN's zero tolerance approach and notify OCHA immediately of any SEA allegations, with the option of terminating the grant agreement if allegations are proven.	4, 34, 37, 50, 52, 54, 57, 143, 147, 151-157, 190
OCHA's PSEA/SH SOPs state that, before being awarded grants under CBPFs, NGOs must undergo a due diligence and capacity assessment of their PSEA policies and documents. This assessment has not seen evidence of the frequency or depth of the assessments undertaken. CERF grant-making criteria state that it expects measures to prevent SEA "to be mainstreamed throughout entire humanitarian programmes by United Nations agencies and their partners."	
OCHA's PSEA/SH SOPs state that OCHA personnel should inform implementing partners that they are expected to abide by UN SEA policies and that inaction on SEA allegations may be grounds for termination of the Grant Agreement. Implementing partners are required to ensure that all their staff are familiar with the UN IP Protocol. To facilitate this, OCHA makes training, awareness-raising material and resources available to implementing partners. Nonetheless, in interviews, some OCHA staff expressed the view that pooled fund grant agreements need to be further strengthened, and that this is underway. OCHA has also developed an SOP for CBPF implementing partners on responding to SEA cases, and its introduction has been supported by training.	
OCHA has demonstrated a long-standing contribution to inter-agency efforts to prevent and respond to SEA at field level, and to SEA policy and best practice co-ordination forums at headquarters level.	
At the headquarters level, as chair of IASC, the USG works to raise the profile of PSEA across the humanitarian system. Following agreement among IASC principals, in June 2018 a Chair's	

Statement outlined IASC's collective commitments and proposed actions to eradicate SEA and respond to incidents, including a commitment to "collective, sector-wide action" by IASC members, particularly in the areas of sector-wide referencing and strengthening investigations capacity, for which inter-agency task forces have been established. In 2018, OCHA established the SEA/SH Investigations Fund to provide rapid grants to IASC organisations and affiliated partners to help ensure appropriate investigation of SEA/SH allegations. OCHA chairs the IASC Technical Experts Group on PSEA, led by OCHA's Senior Coordinator for PSEA and Sexual Harassment. The Senior Coordinator is also on the advisory board of the Inter-Agency Misconduct Disclosure Scheme, and contributes to global inter-agency work on SEA policy and on best practice co-ordination forums. OCHA included information on SEA in the 2019 Global Humanitarian Overview and has contributed to other inter-agency knowledge products, including a technical note, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse during the COVID-19 response. It integrated PSEA into the Humanitarian Programme Cycle through the inclusion of specific questions on PSEA in multi-sector needs assessments, and worked with UNICEF and other IASC members to develop an IASC PSEA Country-Level Framework template with results-based indicators for adoption at country level. At the country level, inter-agency ProCap and GenCap advisers contribute to promoting PSEA as part of wider agendas on protection and gender equality. This includes ensuring its inclusion as a standing agenda point in Humanitarian Country Team meetings, providing technical expertise to other agencies and partners, supporting PSEA networks and community-based complaint mechanisms, and hosting skills- and awareness-raising workshops. According to OCHA documents, OCHA field offices work to raise awareness of the rights of affected populations, the fact that humanitarian assistance is never conditional on sexual favours, expected and appropriate behaviour of personnel, and of the various ways complaints can be submitted in the OCHA area of operation. However, many survey respondents from OCHA's partner organisations were unaware of OCHA's work in this field. **Actions taken on SEA allegations are timely (though a few cases have dragged on for years) and their number, related basic information and actions taken in response are reported publicly.** As part of the UN Secretariat, OCHA participates in the UN's centralised PSEA reporting system that maintains a publicly accessible summary database of allegations, the status and timelines of the process for each allegation, and, once the process has been finalised, the action taken. As a participating member of this reporting system, OCHA uses the iReport SEA Tracker to report to the Secretary-General in real time. It has reported five cases to date, which were investigated by OIOS (as OCHA does not have internal investigative capacity). These cases took from between less than two months to over four years to resolve (at the time of this review, one case was "open" and four were closed and judged to be "unsubstantiated"). As investigations are conducted by OIOS and not OCHA, and thus the timeliness of the response is beyond OCHA's control, this aspect was not included in the judgment here. **OCHA's PSEA/SH SOPs take a victim/survivor-centred approach, and have started operationalising the principle that the safety and dignity of the victim is and remains a priority at all times.** The SOPs require all OCHA PSEA focal points to be aware of GA Resolution 62/214 on support to victims of SEA and to give due consideration to victim assistance, with special consideration for cases involving children (including consultation with UNICEF). In most countries where OCHA works, there is a functioning PSEA network that maintains a PSEA victim assistance/referral protocol, but the quality of PSEA referral services tends to depend on the quality of the country's wider GBV services.	4, 34, 37, 50, 52, 54, 57, 143, 147, 151-157, 190

The assessment did not find evidence of how active OCHA staff in the field are in ensuring support for survivors. According to interviewees, within OCHA and across the humanitarian sector, the immediate organisational response to PSEA allegations is often still focused on potential adverse effects on public relations and media relations. This causes a risk that the focus is on sanctioning and accountability, rather than on the victim and the support that can be provided.	4, 34, 37, 50, 52, 54, 57, 143, 147, 151-157, 190
MI 4.7 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 4.8: Prevention of and response to sexual harassment (SH)	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.00**
Element 1: Organisation-specific dedicated policy statements and/or codes of conduct that address SH available, aligned to international standards and applicable to all categories of personnel	3
Element 2: Mechanisms are in place to regularly track the status of implementation of the policy on SH at HQ and at field levels	3
Element 3: The MO has clearly identifiable roles, structures and resources in place for implementing its policy/guidelines on SH at HQ and in the field: support channel for victims, a body co-ordinating the response, and clear responsibilities for following up with victims	2
Element 4: All managers have undergone training on preventing and responding to SH, and all staff have been trained to set behavioural expectations (including with respect to SH)	4
Element 5: Multiple mechanisms can be accessed to seek advice, pursue informal resolution or formally report SH allegations	3
Element 6: The organisation ensures that it acts in a timely manner on formal complaints of SH allegations	3
Element 7: The organisation transparently reports the number and nature of actions taken in response to SH in annual reporting and feeds into inter-agency HR mechanisms	3
MI 4.8 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA has a dedicated policy statement and SOP that address sexual harassment (SH). OCHA's People Strategy says that "we will ensure an environment that is respectful, caring, and free of harassment and discrimination". OCHA has made the prevention of SH an overarching priority, and subscribes to the 1992 UN Secretariat's policy on the equal treatment of men and women in the Secretariat and prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace, and to a UN System-wide code of conduct to prevent harassment, including sexual harassment, at UN System events. OCHA has a Standard Operating Procedure pertaining to Sexual Harassment in Section 4 of the OCHA SOP on Sexual Misconduct of August 2020. This incorporates the UN System model policy on sexual harassment of 2018. OCHA briefly covers SH in its Duty of Care Framework of March 2019. **OCHA tracks staff compliance in relation to mandatory training, including training on SH.** Attendance at mandatory training is assessed as part of staff appraisals, and these also record instances of prohibited conduct under the SOPs on Sexual Misconduct. OCHA tracks cases of misconduct, including SH cases, and progress on investigations, and reports them to the Secretary-General in real time. The assessment did not find evidence of OCHA reporting on the implementation of its SH policies to the Executive Board. The Secretary-General reports annually on sexual abuse, which mentions sexual harassment.	4, 61, 89, 143, 159-161

After a negative evaluation in 2018, OCHA has revised its SH-related structures and processes, but there is no evidence as yet as to whether this has addressed cultural issues or restored the confidence of staff in grievance mechanisms.

A 2018 evaluation found that OCHA had inadequate structures and processes for implementing its guidelines on sexual harassment, especially in the field, and made recommendations on strengthening mechanisms for addressing and mitigating abuse. The evaluation findings were based on surveys and interviews with staff, which found a widespread view that mechanisms for addressing SH were insufficient, especially with respect to induction, guidance and accountability processes. Most respondents reported knowing the mechanisms for reporting harassment, but many expressed a lack of confidence in being protected from retaliation if they did report a grievance, or that appropriate action would be taken as a result. In response to recommendations from the evaluation, OCHA updated its SOP and expanded its training for staff on both PSEA and SH. However, it has not yet conducted new research to assess to what extent staff confidence in the mechanisms has improved.

The sexual harassment section of the Sexual Misconduct SOPs sets out identifiable roles, structures and resources for the implementation of its policy on sexual harassment at headquarters and in the field, under the overall responsibility of the USG. In addition, OCHA has adopted the UN Secretariat's undated Guide for Managers: Prevention of, and Response to, Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. OCHA's managers (including heads of offices, sections and branches) hold responsibility for duty of care for personnel under their management, as well as for creating a safe working environment. They are required to take prompt action in response to any reports of SH. OCHA's Human Resource Section must respond to any allegations by advising on options, processes and resources. OCHA has appointed two dedicated focal points at HQ level who can provide advice to managers and personnel on policies and response mechanisms. The People Strategy Management Committee has overall responsibility for duty of care, including SH, and meets twice a year to review policies and critical incidents.

4, 61, 89, 143, 159-161

The Sexual Misconduct SOPs also cover referral of survivors to support channels, outline the body co-ordinating the response, and allocate responsibilities for following up with victims.

OCHA staff are required to undergo training on the prevention of sexual harassment and abuse. OCHA maintains an intranet site to facilitate access to curated policies, guidance and good practice. It uses a variety of communication mechanisms to regularly share information on reporting mechanisms and support options available, and regularly covers SH in meetings and retreats. More generally, OCHA's current leadership training aims to foster a kind of leadership that is less hierarchical and commands less control, and is more consultative and collaborative, so as to reduce SH risks.

OCHA staff can access various mechanisms to seek advice, pursue informal resolution or formally report SH allegations, although most are general to the UN Secretariat rather than specific to OCHA. These mechanisms are as follows:

For confidential guidance or advice, staff members may consult the UN Secretariat Office of the Ombudsman or the Office of the Staff Counsellor, which are bound by strict rules of confidentiality under their terms of reference. Internal to OCHA, guidance on available options, policies and procedures can be sought from OCHA Human Resources.

The SOPs on Sexual Misconduct set out voluntary informal resolution processes. These do not preclude the possibility of pursuing a formal complaint, if unsuccessful. The Office of Ombudsman and Mediation Service, the Staff Counsellor, the Speak-up Hotline, and OCHA's Human Resources Section can assist and advise staff wishing to pursue informal resolution.

A written complaint may be submitted by email to the USG/OCHA, with a copy to the UN Office for Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), or to OIOS directly. There is 24-hour helpline for UN personnel to speak confidentially with an impartial and trained individual for information on protection, support and reporting mechanisms. The helpline can be reached via phone or through email. **OCHA's SOPs set out a process for responding to formal SH complaints, but without a timeline**. Upon receipt of an official complaint, the USG should refer the matter to OIOS, which will assess the complaint and determine whether to launch an investigation. If there are sufficient grounds, OIOS will initiate an investigation. No timelines are included and, as OIOS is external to OCHA, the timeline is not under its control. According to interviews, investigations can be protracted. **Internally, the Executive Office informs OCHA's Senior Management Team of PSEA and SH allegations and cases on a monthly basis. Externally, OCHA's PSEA/SH SOP stipulates that OCHA reports to the Secretary-General.** OCHA does this through OIOS. OIOS produces annual reports that cover the number and nature of actions taken, but these reports cover the entire UN System and do not specify OCHA's part of it. According to the SOP on Sexual Misconduct, OCHA participates in the UN ClearCheck, a system-wide centralised screening database, in order to ensure that former UN staff members or UN related personnel against whom allegations of SEA or sexual harassment were substantiated, or who resigned during a pending SEA investigation, are not re-employed within the UN system. It also provides that OCHA will provide information about ongoing investigation and/or disciplinary processes concerning a staff member to a non-UN system entity or prospective employer, upon request, provided the written consent of the staff member to the disclosure of such information has been obtained by the entity or prospective employer and a copy of such consent provided to OCHA.	4, 61, 89, 143, 159-161
MI 4.8 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Engaging in inclusive partnerships to support relevance, leverage effective solutions and maximise results

KPI 5: Operational planning and intervention design tools support relevance and agility within partnerships	**KPI score**
Satisfactory	**2.71**

OCHA's planning and design tools support the relevance and agility of its humanitarian response and partnerships. OCHA has made significant progress over the review period at streamlining its process to increase the speed and agility of its response, including through the streamlining of procurement. The value of these reforms was clearly demonstrated in OCHA's agile response in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there are notable gaps in its risk management and mitigation systems, and in its efforts to build national capacity to support resilience and localisation remain at an early stage.

At the global and national levels, OCHA's own work and its co-ordination of the humanitarian sector are well adapted to evolving humanitarian contexts. To ensure accurate and up-to-date analysis of each context, OCHA and its partners developed and are maintaining and applying appropriate tools and approaches for situation analysis and needs assessment. In the survey, OCHA received very positive ratings from partners on its responsiveness to the needs of beneficiaries. OCHA works to ensure that the priorities of affected populations are systematically captured and integrated into needs assessments. This includes the priorities of sub-groups and marginalised groups. Although some survey respondents criticised OCHA for not adequately prioritising the

"leave no one behind" principle, there are clear examples of OCHA undertaking effective advocacy and leadership in this field. It has various tools to ensure that due attention is paid to cross-cutting issues, although there are discrepancies in which cross-cutting issues are prioritised in different channels (i.e., for OCHA as a whole, CERF and CBPFs).

OCHA contributes meaningfully to sector-wide risk management. It promotes use of the Index for Risk Management tool (INFORM) and, in October 2020, issued enhanced risk analysis guidance for Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs) and Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs). In high-risk environments, it helps to produce jointly owned contingency plans. However, OCHA's own corporate risk-management processes are fragmented and of mixed quality. It has strong processes for managing risks to pooled funds and to staff safety (although its provision of psychosocial support to staff, particularly those deployed to sudden-onset and complex disasters, is insufficient). Despite explicit commitments in its Strategic Plan, OCHA has not updated its corporate risk register at any point in the review period. Country-specific risk registers are updated annually, but these are generally too basic to serve as effective risk management and mitigation tools. OCHA works in highly sensitive contexts and OCHA staff demonstrate a good understanding of political risks, but OCHA rarely documents its approach to or learning from political risk management. Acknowledging the limits to its current political risk capabilities, OCHA has recently sought support from the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. It has a range of processes for managing reputational risk – its private-sector partners and CBPF implementing partners are subject to due diligence processes and OCHA has processes in place for the rapid rebuttal of false news reports – but it lacks an overarching approach to reputational risk.

As a humanitarian actor, there are necessarily limits to the extent to which OCHA can align with the strategies and priorities of national authorities, particularly in conflict settings where there may be tensions between government priorities and the needs of affected people. In many instances, humanitarian principles must take precedence. However, OCHA lacks an explicit approach to alignment with national government priorities in non-conflict settings, given governments' primary responsibility under UN Resolution 46/182 for their citizens in times of crisis. While OCHA responds to requests from national authorities for capacity-building support on disaster preparedness and response, it does not have a systematic approaching to analysing and supporting national capacity for the purpose of pursuing the localisation agenda and the humanitarian-development nexus.

MI 5.1: Interventions/strategies aligned with needs of beneficiaries and regional/ country priorities and intended national/regional results	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.75**
Element 1: The organisation's country or regional strategies refer to national/regional body strategies or objectives	3
Element 2: Reviewed interventions/strategies refer to the needs of beneficiaries, including vulnerable populations	4
Element 3: The organisation's country strategies or regional strategies link targeted results to national or regional goals	2
Element 4: Structures and incentives in place for technical staff that allow them to invest time and effort in alignment process	2
MI 5.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
Under UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182, UN member states are responsible for their own citizens in times of crisis. In many humanitarian contexts, OCHA is therefore under an obligation to align with national priorities. In conflict-affected setting, however, which include many of the countries in which OCHA has a presence, the humanitarian principle of neutrality takes precedence. The assessment of OCHA's performance under this micro-indicator takes into account the need to balance these competing principles.	2-4, 22-23, 29, 34, 38-46, 85, 115-119, 134

OCHA does not have country or regional strategies but workplans, the template for which does not include references to strategies or objectives set by national or regional authorities. In conflict settings, such references may not be appropriate, given possible tensions between the needs of beneficiaries and the priorities of country and regional authorities. In such cases, humanitarian principles take precedence. In such contexts, OCHA engages with official and *de facto* authorities, but with the aim of avoiding or overcoming obstacles to humanitarian access, rather than aligning with national objectives. OCHA is often required to strike a delicate balance between meeting conditions imposed by authorities and maintaining its neutrality and impartiality. Some survey respondents in four countries expressed the view that OCHA does not get this balance right, and aligns too closely to the agenda of the host governments. In non-conflict settings, states have responsibility for their own citizens in times of crises. In its workplans for these countries, OCHA does not systematically identify opportunities to align with national priorities or to invest in influencing national priorities for disaster preparedness and response. **The needs of affected populations are the cornerstone of OCHA's work, and relevant strategies and work plans refer in detail to these needs.** Through its co-ordination, advocacy and thought leadership, OCHA is a strong advocate for a humanitarian system in which people's own expression of their priority needs is captured through a range of channels and integrated in needs assessments; and for a system in which the voices from sub-groups, including marginalised groups, are heard. In its Grand Bargain Annual Self-Report for 2018, OCHA notes that the humanitarian sector overall is making slow progress towards a fully needs-based humanitarian response. A small number of survey respondents criticised OCHA for not adequately prioritising the "leave no one behind" principle, but this assessment noted evidence of OCHA's effective advocacy, support and leadership in this field, spanning the local, national and global levels, and all stages of the humanitarian response. OCHA applies the "leave no one behind" principle to its management of pooled funds, having regard to gender, age, disability status and other social markers. The survey statement "OCHA's work responds to the needs of beneficiaries, including the most vulnerable" received a very high rate of positive responses, with the sole exception of respondents operating in Venezuela. **OCHA misses some opportunities to link its results targets to national or regional goals.** In conflict-affected settings, such alignment would not usually be appropriate. In non-conflict settings, OCHA does not systematically link results targets in OCHA-facilitated HNOs and HRPs, or in OCHA's regional and national workplans, to national or regional goals. There are also missed opportunities to align work plans with national capacity-building needs, particularly on disaster preparedness and response, where requests for support are received from national governments. **OCHA lacks structures and incentives to encourage staff to invest time and effort in alignment.** The exception to this is HATs: those interviewed for this assessment reported receiving both encouragement and technical support to advocate for a stronger humanitarian response by the national authorities, and to help these authorities improve their capacity for humanitarian response.	2-4, 22-23, 29, 34, 38-46, 85, 115-119, 134
	High confidence

MI 5.2: Contextual/situational analysis (shared where possible) applied to shape intervention designs and implementation	Score
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**4.00**
Element 1: Intervention designs contain a clear statement positioning the intervention within the operating context	4
Element 2: Reflection points with partners take note of any significant changes in context	4
MI 5.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
Encouraging humanitarian response based on situational analysis and needs assessment are central to OCHA's work, at both global and national levels. OCHA promotes responsiveness to operating contexts at the global level (in the form of the annual Global Humanitarian Needs Overviews), the national levels (in the form of the HNOs) and in the form of the OCHA regional, national and HAT workplans, each of which have a section on the "operational setting". It invests significant resources in the development and maintenance of the tools needed for situation analysis, and in their roll out and use. The links between these various types of situational analysis and OCHA's choices are generally clear. **A wide range of inter-agency forums and working groups provide regular opportunities for reflection on changes in context, at the global, regional, national and, where OCHA has a presence, local levels.** At country level, HNOs and HRPs indicate how changing contexts are monitored, and at the start of this review period OCHA and its partners piloted a set of processes and products related to the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) that further strengthened monitoring and ongoing analysis of situational changes and needs, as well as progress towards outcomes. OCHA documents recognise the need for ongoing monitoring, in view of the challenges of predicting even short-term impacts of conflict on population displacement and humanitarian needs, and because of the complex range of evidence that has to be collated to support informed decision making.	1, 4, 36, 59, 106, 115, 120, 121, 125, 164-169
MI 5.2 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 5.3: Capacity analysis informing intervention design and implementation, and strategies to address any weakness found are employed	Score
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.20**
Element 1: Intervention designs contain a clear statement of capacities of key national implementing partners	2
Element 2: Capacity analysis, from the perspective of using and building country systems, considers resourcing, staffing, monitoring and operating structure	2
Element 3: Capacity analysis statement has been jointly developed with country partners and shared with development partners	2
Element 4: Capacity analysis statement includes clear strategies for addressing any weaknesses, with a view to sustainability, where applicable developed jointly with development partners	3
Element 5: Reflection points with partners take note of any significant changes in capacity	2

MI 5.3 Analysis	Source documents
Given the need to prioritise neutrality over use of country systems in many humanitarian contexts, capacity analysis is usually peripheral to OCHA's work. However, this micro-indicator is relevant in the areas of building disaster preparedness and response capacity and as a step towards implementing the localisation agenda. **OCHA's interventions are rarely based on a clear analysis of the capacity of national partners.** OCHA sometimes facilitates capacity assessments conducted by the UNDP-led Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative and by the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG). However, OCHA does not have a clear and explicit concept of what "capacity" means, in the context of country partners, or methods for assessing capacity. Given its objective of increasing the diversity of humanitarian actors, this is a significant omission. CBPFs require potential implementing partners (including national and local partners) to undergo an eligibility and due diligence process that includes a basic Internal Capacity Assessment. However, there is no process for assessing overall national capacity in the humanitarian sector to determine the degree of localisation that is feasible in any given national context. **OCHA does not undertake routine capacity analysis of national or local partners, unless they are grantees of its pooled funds.** While use of country systems is not prominent in the humanitarian sector, capacity analysis could help inform OCHA's efforts to promote localisation and build resilience. **OCHA does not develop strategies for building national capacity, unless requested to do in the context of efforts to build disaster preparedness and response capacity.** Its efforts to support localisation are ad hoc and not supported by systematic capacity analysis. **OCHA does not have systematic reflection points with partners to jointly take note of significant changes in capacity.** However, HATs tend to work closely with their government counterparts, and sometimes they incorporate informal reflection points into their engagement.	1, 2, 98, 121, 123, 124
MI 5.3 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 5.4: Detailed risk (strategic, political, reputational, operational) management strategies ensure the identification, mitigation, monitoring and reporting of risks	Score
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.00**
Element 1: Intervention designs include detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for operational risk	3
Element 2: Intervention designs include detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for strategic risk	1
Element 3: Intervention designs include detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for political risk	2
Element 4: Intervention designs include detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for reputational risk	2
Element 5: Intervention design is based on contextual analysis including of potential risks of sexual abuse and other misconduct with respect to host populations	2

MI 5.4 Analysis	Source documents
OCHA supports the wider humanitarian sector to develop and maintain common risk analyses but its own plans do not include detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for operational risk. At national and subnational levels, OCHA supports the humanitarian sector to develop and maintain common risk analyses, using the Index for Risk Management tool (INFORM, a collaborative effort of IASC and the European Commission). In some contexts, this work assumes a high priority, and one of OCHA's KPIs is the percentage of countries that have such a common risk analysis (47% in 2018 and 55% in 2019, for countries with an OCHA country office). Operational risks are also captured in OCHA-facilitated HNOs and HRPs, and in October 2020 OCHA issued an addendum to HNO and HRP guidance that covered, among other things, the issue of "analysing risks". In high-risk environments, OCHA helps produce jointly owned contingency plans. For OCHA-managed pooled funds, risks are identified and managed at three levels: at fund level; at the level of implementing NGOs (which are vetted, which is a form of risk mitigation); and at project level, as each funding decision considers the existence, mitigation of and residual operational risks. Proposal templates reflect this, and distinguish between strategic, programmatic, governance, management, financial, internal, co-ordination and hazard risks. Once pooled funds have allocated funding, partnerships may be terminated in cases where implementing partners prove to be unnecessarily high-risk partners. Internally, OCHA has a department for safety and security that implements measures to ensure staff safety (though it does not fill the long-standing gap in providing psychosocial support to staff, particularly to those deployed to sudden-onset and complex disasters), but in other fields OCHA's risk identification, mitigation and management is largely informal. In interviews, OCHA staff show an understanding of various types of risks and of possibilities for the mitigation and management of these risks, and they say risks are monitored on an ongoing basis. However, this understanding and monitoring activity is not captured in a systematic and regularly maintained risk register. The only formal risk registers are the ones that feature in all regional, national and HAT workplans, which are updated annually. These risk overviews are very basic, do not disaggregate different risk types and lack any type of scoring or residual risk statement. OCHA's practice in this regard did not improve after a 2018 regional OIOS audit recommended that OCHA should "develop a formal risk register and monitor and update risk mitigation strategies". **OCHA's plans do not include detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for strategic risk, and its corporate risk register is not maintained.** The Strategic Plan says that the corporate risk register "will be monitored throughout the year to review and update risk mitigation strategies". However, as of January 2021, the most recent (and only) corporate risk register was dated July 2018. Interviews indicated that OCHA's top management team informally discusses key risks every three or four months. There have been requests from senior staff to place the risk register on the agenda of EMC meetings, in order to update it, but this was not taken up. Some risks included in the country-level risk registers are strategic in nature, but they are not identified as such. **OCHA's plans do not include detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for political risk.** OCHA's management is clearly aware of political risks and actively mitigates these risks in particular country contexts, but its political risk identification, mitigation and management processes are informal and undocumented. Some interviewees suggested that OCHA avoided documenting its political risk management processes because of the acute political sensitivities involved. However, such sensitivities could be managed by keeping the risk management process internal. OCHA is aware of its shortcomings in this area, and is seeking capacity-building support from the UN	2, 4, 6, 18, 20, 24, 38-47, 98, 115, 123, 125-128, 148, 170-172

Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. Some risks included in the country-level risk registers are political in nature, but they are not identified as such. **OCHA's plans do not include detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for reputational risk.** OCHA's corporate risk register includes types of risks with reputational dimensions, but OCHA has not updated this register since July 2018. OCHA does have some global guidance on reputational risk management, including rules on vetting of the private-sector entities it works with. OCHA's global communications and public advocacy strategy covers the need for rapid rebuttal of false reporting. Country and regional risk registers are updated annually, and some of the country workplans reviewed for this assessment included one or more risks of a reputational nature, though these were not identified as such. The pooled funds consider reputational risks at fund level, and CBPFs undertake due diligence processes (which have a reputational dimension) for implementing partners. **OCHA's own plans do not systematically include analysis of and mitigation strategies for potential risks of sexual abuse and other misconduct with respect to host populations.** One of the seven headline risks in OCHA's overall risk register is SEA, but other risks of misconduct with respect to host populations are not covered, and the risk register is not in active use. SEA-related planning, policy and guidance documents cover SEA-related risk management and mitigation, but interviews with field staff emphasise that achieving progress is slow and difficult in complex contexts. SEA-related issues are not systematically addressed in OCHA's country or regional workplans.	2, 4, 6, 18, 20, 24, 38-47, 98, 115, 123, 125-128, 148, 170-172
MI 5.4 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 5.5: Intervention designs include the analysis of cross-cutting issues (as defined in KPI 2)	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.50**
Element 1: Approval procedures require an assessment of the extent to which cross-cutting issues have been integrated in the design	3
Element 2: Plans for intervention monitoring and evaluation include attention to cross-cutting issues	2
MI 5.5 Analysis	**Source documents**
Under this micro-indicator, the assessment considers OCHA's incorporation of cross-cutting commitments, particularly gender, the environment, human rights and the corporate objective of promoting a diversity of humanitarian actors, which corresponds broadly to the Grand Bargain localisation commitment (see micro-indicator 2.4). **Pooled funds approval procedures require an assessment of the extent to which cross-cutting issues have been integrated in the design of proposed projects.** CERF applicants are asked to state how their projects will support accountability to affected people, protection from PSEA, women and girls, people with disabilities, the centrality of protection, gender and age, and protection. CBPF project proposals are reviewed for their inclusion of cross-cutting issues, including gender, the environment and "other" [unspecified] issues. There are very limited requirements around integrating climate and environmental considerations into projects, although environment-related activities (e.g., disaster waste management) are eligible for support. Localisation is not specifically addressed in grant-making criteria, but CBPFs award additional points to applications from national NGOs, to increase their access to funding.	2-4, 17, 19, 106, 129, 130-131, 173

OCHA's 2010 evaluation policy covers some cross-cutting issues, including 1) gender equality and women's empowerment; 2) environmental sustainability and climate change; and 3) human rights and the upholding of humanitarian law and principles. OCHA does not have plans, or an evaluation policy requirement, for monitoring and evaluation related to the value of the diversity of actors within humanitarian co-ordination processes. There are plans to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of the performance of the humanitarian system with respect to persons with disabilities and mental health and psychosocial support. Within pooled funds, monitoring and evaluation plans include attention to the cross-cutting issues of disability, gender, age and accountability to affected people, but not the cross-cutting issue of environment, and the issue of PSEA receives insufficient attention.	2-4, 17, 19, 106, 129, 130-131, 173
MI 5.5 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 5.6: Intervention designs include detailed, realistic measures to ensure sustainability (as defined in KPI 12)	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.25**
Element 1: Intervention designs include statement of critical aspects of sustainability, including institutional framework, resources and human capacity, social behaviour, technical developments and trade, as appropriate	3
Element 2: Intervention design defines key elements of the enabling policy and legal environment required to sustain the expected benefits of successful implementation	2
Element 3: The critical assumptions that underpin sustainability form part of the approved monitoring and evaluation plan	2
Element 4: Where shifts in policy and legislation will be required for sustainability, the intervention plan directly addresses these reforms and processes in a time-sensitive manner	2
MI 5.6 Analysis	**Source documents**
"Sustainability" is not included in General Assembly Resolution 46/182 as a criterion for humanitarian action and is not directly applicable to much of OCHA's work. For this assessment, it was interpreted as being applicable in three areas: OCHA's efforts to encourage its pooled fund implementing partners to adopt more sustainable approaches to humanitarian support; its provision of capacity building to national authorities on disaster preparedness and response; and its promotion of the humanitarian-development nexus. The latter two areas contribute to long-term reductions in humanitarian need. **The short duration of grants from OCHA-managed pooled funds (often 6-9 months) inhibits implementing partners from taking more sustainable approaches to the delivery of humanitarian support.** The evidence supports some positive exceptions, such as Somalia, where partners were encourage to adopt more sustainable approaches, such as prioritising boreholes over water trucking. However, while both CERF and CBPFs have been experimenting with funding beyond a single year, short-term grants are still the norm. **OCHA's Strategic Plan says that the organisation will support reform proposals aimed at unlocking greater development investment in fragile contexts and strengthening partnerships across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.** One manifestation of this support is OCHA's contribution to the "light guidance on collective outcomes" developed by the IASC Results Group 4 on Humanitarian-Development Collaboration and the Joint Steering	24, 33, 48, 50, 52, 53, 64, 106, 107, 118, 119, 123, 125, 174, 244

Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration. OCHA is also participating in inter-agency pilots on the humanitarian-development nexus in eight African countries, through contributions to UN-wide analysis (UN Common Country Analysis) and planning (Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework). The USG co-chairs the Joint Steering Committee (JSC), a critical mechanism to promote greater coherence of humanitarian and development action in crises and transitions to long-term sustainable development. The JSC empowers and supports Resident Coordinators (RCs) and UN country teams in addressing the humanitarian-development nexus through closer collaboration, integrated approaches, including the New Way of Working, and through joint missions to the field. Despite these efforts, in interviews, some OCHA staff expressed the view that, in many contexts, the humanitarian principle of neutrality worked against the nexus approach. In the survey a substantial number of respondents from partners at both global and country levels criticised OCHA for a lacklustre approach to the humanitarian-development nexus. There have been positive developments at the field level. OCHA adapted its annual guidance package to field offices, to encourage them to collect and use information from development partners, and to capitalise on opportunities to strengthen the humanitarian-development nexus. OCHA's focus on the nexus and related issues has led to intervention designs that include statements on critical dimensions of sustainability. For example, the Ethiopia HRP covers disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness; national system strengthening and recovery; and the humanitarian-development nexus. The Yemen HRP outlines plans to intensify co-ordination with development partners, and strengthen resilience and self-reliance of affected people while the Venezuela HRP outlines work to be done to increase the resilience of the population and the capacity of duty bearers. A transition from one-year to multi-year HRPs also helps longer-term planning, which gives OCHA greater ability to co-ordinate with development actors. Overall, however, stakeholders agree that these are modest, early steps and that implementing the humanitarian-development nexus will require significant changes in OCHA's working patterns. **OCHA contributes to building the policy and legal environment for disaster preparedness and response in partner countries when requested to do so by government counterparts.** However, there is no evidence of OCHA proactively and systematically analysing or addressing gaps in such policy or legal environments. **OCHA does not explore the conditions required for sustainability in its monitoring plans or evaluation work, and it has not evaluated its contribution to the humanitarian-development nexus.** A planned IAHE evaluation of the humanitarian-development nexus was replaced by an IAHE evaluation of the humanitarian response to COVID-19. In April 2021, IAHE published a "light review" of gender integration in the Triple Nexus. The Joint Steering Committee also conducted a review of the eight African nexus pilot countries, in which the collective outcomes approach was applied. **When requested, OCHA provides capacity building on policy and legislative reform for national governments to promote disaster resilience.** It does not otherwise promote reforms to advance localisation or resilience.	24, 33, 48, 50, 52, 53, 64, 106, 107, 118, 119, 123, 125, 174, 244
MI 5.6 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 5.7: Institutional procedures (including systems for hiring staff, procuring project inputs, disbursing payment, logistical arrangements etc.) positively support speed of implementation and adaptability in line with local contexts and needs	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.25**
Element 1: The organisation has internal standards set to track implementation speed	4
Element 2: Institutional procedures are adaptable to local contexts and needs	3
Element 3: The organisation's benchmarks (internally and externally) its performance on implementation speed across different operating contexts	3
Element 4: Evidence that procedural delays have not hindered speed of implementation across interventions reviewed	3
MI 5.7 Analysis	**Source documents**
Over the review period, OCHA has made progress at streamlining its institutional procedures to improve speed of implementation and adaptability to volatile local contexts and needs. OCHA uses the UN's 2016 standing administrative measures for crisis and emergency situations. Upon certification of an emergency, measures are applied on a six-month renewable basis to enable managers to respond quickly and accountably through a consistent and predictable set of standing measures, which comply with UN rules and regulations. Moreover, OCHA swiftly utilised the Secretary-General's Delegations of Authority to Heads of Entities at the start of 2019. OCHA used this Delegations of Authority to first pilot and then roll out a decentralised procurement system. This has both lowered costs significantly and accelerated procurement (to an average of 74 days to conduct the full "Procure to Pay" business process, against OCHA's target of 120 days). This additional agility proved particularly important in the early response to COVID-19. OCHA also has a Response Support Branch that operates outside of UN Secretariat or OCHA procedures, other than a requirement to meet security standards, and is able to deploy within 48 hours. OCHA's external communication function also aims to deploy people within 48 hours. In the survey, OCHA received very positive ratings from partners on its adaptability to context changes – with more than three fifths of the respondents (67%, or 356 of 532 respondents) strongly agreeing or agreeing with the survey statement 'OCHA adapts its work as the context changes'. Respondents highlighted COVID-19 as a prime example of where OCHA had adapted their institutional procedures positively to support the implementation and adaptability in line with the changing contexts and needs throughout the pandemic. **OCHA tracks the speed of implementation of a number of institutional processes against a set of internal standards and targets.** It has internal standards for speed of procurement (the full "Procure to Pay" business process should be <120 days), emergency response services (lapse of time between requests and provision of services should be <10 days), CERF (disbursement of funds after receipt of final project proposals should be <9 days), and CBPFs (time to process applications should <30 or <50 days, depending on the type of application). **Institutional procedures are adaptable to local contexts and needs.** OCHA develops tools, systems, mechanisms and procedures that strike an appropriate balance between global coherence and local adaptability. **OCHA's internal standards serve as its benchmarks, and some of them are captured in OCHA's overall KPIs. OCHA does not use external benchmarks and does not make systematic cross-country comparisons.**	1-3, 52, 64, 89, 106, 107, 123, 125

In response to a 2019 survey, NGOs respondents noted some instances of procedural delays hampering the speed of humanitarian response, but these complaints were made against the background of a significant acceleration in OCHA's processes over the review period. An internal review of CERF's systems and processes by OCHA's Organisational Development Unit found that CERF's offline application and clearance procedures were unnecessarily cumbersome, detailed and duplicative, leading to unnecessary delays – in particular, an average of five weeks for a Rapid Response grant process, and three months for an Underfunded Emergency process. The drawn-out nature of the latter process is of particular concern to OCHA field staff interviewed for this assessment. At the end of the review period, OCHA was redesigning these application and clearance procedures.	1-3, 52, 64, 89, 106, 107, 123, 125
MI 5.7 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

KPI 6: Working in coherent partnerships directed at leveraging and catalysing the use of resources	**KPI score**
Satisfactory	**3.12**

Developing and fostering partnerships are at the core of OCHA's mandate. By and large, it is highly effective at promoting collaboration on humanitarian action and enhancing the effectiveness of humanitarian operations through co-ordination, information management and financing tools.

OCHA plays an important role in IASC, and its work has contributed to key sector-wide change processes such as the Grand Bargain. It maintains a wide range of partnerships, and is generally clear on their scope and function and on the roles and contributions of its partners. OCHA pursues its role as co-ordinator for the sector through its knowledge management, policy development, thought leadership and humanitarian advocacy functions, as well as its management of pooled funds. These functions are well reflected in OCHA's organisational structure, operating model, resource allocation and staffing.

Overlaps between OCHA's co-ordination mandate and the functions of other UN agencies can on occasion give rise to tensions, and there was some critical feedback from stakeholders, but overall OCHA manages a complex balancing act well.

At country level, OCHA plays an important role in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC), which promote a common approach to needs analysis, planning, programming, monitoring and evaluation. One of OCHA's KPIs relates to uptake of the HPC. In some cases, OCHA also promotes joint approaches to resolving risks and challenges. In some cases, there was feedback from external partners that OCHA uses inter-agency platforms to inform them of decisions, rather than to consult. In some contexts, OCHA is sometimes perceived as marginalising NGOs by focusing its co-ordination work mainly UN agencies. Some implementing partners gave feedback that OCHA's planning processes have grown too heavy, at the cost of effective partnership, and there is some evidence of this over the review period. There is, however, ample evidence of OCHA taking a collaborative, engaging and responsive approach towards its partners, through informal networks and formal platforms, as well as through Reliefweb, CERF and CBPFs. The consensus among external stakeholders interviewed for this assessment was that OCHA has successfully shaped and guided a long-term trend towards a more coherent and efficient humanitarian response.

OCHA balances its engagement with national and *de facto* authorities with the need to maintain neutrality and impartiality. In general, OCHA makes defensible choices about its engagement, although in some non-conflict settings there is scope to provide more capacity building for national preparedness and resilience.

OCHA's Strategic Plan emphasises the need for co-ordination mechanisms to adapt to new contexts and challenges. Under Strategic Objective 3, OCHA aims for flexible financing that meets the needs of crisis-affected people, by making it easier for funding to reach the best-placed responders at the right time and by ensuring that pooled funds adapt to evolving contexts. OCHA's People Strategy outlines its plans to ensure a flexible and mobile workforce, to adapt staffing to changes in the wider sector's demand for its services, and to improve OCHA's surge capabilities. Over the review period, OCHA and its pooled funds achieved progress in each of these fields, although with scope for further improvement. Overall, OCHA strikes an appropriate balance between promoting global coherence through normative frameworks and standardised tools and approaches, and the need to enable flexibility and adaptability to context.

OCHA recognises the importance of the efficient dissemination of data and knowledge, to support humanitarian partnerships. It has made good progress in improving its own transparency, and now rates as "good" on the Aid Transparency Index. OCHA also supports transparency of humanitarian data across the sector, by receiving, managing and circulating data from other agencies. Its Financial Tracking Service and the more recently established Centre for Humanitarian Data also support sharing of data.

OCHA produces a wide range of knowledge products, both on its own and jointly with partners, at both global and county levels. In the survey, OCHA's knowledge and information products were rated as "useful for my work" by a large majority of respondents. However, a common complaint is that OCHA produces *too many* products, or iterations of products, and that they are sometimes more complex than they need to be.

Many of OCHA's knowledge products support its advocacy efforts at country, regional and global levels. OCHA's advocacy goals and messages are generally clear, and its products well-tailored to target audiences. However, a recent internal analysis suggested that OCHA was generating too many products: "we need to produce less [and] more in line with our advocacy priorities".

While OCHA does not work directly with individuals, it has played a strong advocacy role for Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP). OCHA's policy statements, technical work, advocacy and training work have shaped and strengthened ownership of AAP principles, standards and procedures across the sector. OCHA encourages engagement with affected people in HNO and HRP exercises, and its quality assessment processes take this into account. OCHA's pooled funds require grantees to incorporate AAP elements (such as accessible and functioning community feedback and/or complaint mechanisms) into their projects, and monitors their progress.

OCHA uses an annual partnership survey to monitor its own partnership performance and the assessment identified examples of it adapting to the feedback it received. It also undertakes occasional surveys of challenges facing its partners. A recent example collected feedback on the challenges they faced in implementing the Enhanced Humanitarian Programme Cycle.

MI 6.1: Planning, programming and approval procedures make partnerships more agile when conditions change	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.33**
Element 1: Procedures in place to encourage joint planning and programming	4
Element 2: Mechanisms, including budgetary, in place to allow programmatic changes and adjustments when conditions change	3
Element 3: Institutional procedures for revisions permit changes to be made at the appropriate level to ensure efficiency	3
MI 6.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA's core functions involve building partnerships across the humanitarian sector to support more effective, agile and joined-up humanitarian responses. It has strong procedures in place to encourage, lead on and facilitate joint planning and programming. At the global level, OCHA plays a key role in IASC, where dialogue and collaborative working have contributed to change processes across the humanitarian sector over the last few years that have significantly improved collaborative working. At country level, HNOs and HRPs, and the overall HCT architecture, all contribute to joint humanitarian planning and programming, and this is formalised in the IASC Standard Terms of Reference for Humanitarian Country Teams. OCHA is a key player in this field, and has a dedicated KPI for this, which captures the "percentage of Humanitarian Programme Cycle countries with high-quality joint response planning" (KPI 1.6). In the best cases, joint planning and programming	2, 21-22, 56, 98, 102, 106, 107, 125, 135, 175-177

also encompasses joint approaches to resolving persistent risks and challenges. In Yemen, for example, key stakeholders developed a collective approach to reducing the collective risks to the humanitarian response. Procedures for collaboration are in place and regularly reviewed and adjusted.

OCHA's pooled funds are designed to complement other funding channels; increase the visibility of underfunded disasters, regions and themes; and, in the case of the rapid response window, to kick-start the humanitarian response. There is considerable cross-fertilisation across OCHA's pooled funds, which will gain strength as OCHA moves to a single grant management system for both CERF and the CBPFs. OCHA-managed pooled funds also work closely with other co-ordination platforms. In Afghanistan, for example, inter-agency technical working groups, such as those on AAP and Cash and Vouchers, are supporting OCHA to review CERF proposals, to help improve the quality of the applications before they are finalised and submitted to the CERF Secretariat for review.

In two areas, collaboration remains at an early stage. First, OCHA has begun to explore joint planning with development partners in support of the humanitarian-development nexus, but survey respondents frequently criticised the limited scope of these efforts. Second, efforts to establish joint programming with the private sector was happening in only 2 of 12 countries in the sample considered for this assessment (Madagascar and the Philippines).

OCHA's budgetary and other mechanisms are designed around the ability to adjust in response to changing humanitarian needs and contexts. Under its Strategic Objective 1, OCHA aims to ensure that co-ordination mechanisms adapt to new contexts and challenges. Under Strategic Objective 3, OCHA aims to ensure flexible financing that meets the needs of crisis-affected people, by making it easier for funding to reach the best placed responders at the right time and by ensuring that pooled funds operate in a flexible manner. OCHA's Strategic Plan and People Strategy also outline its plans to ensure a flexible and mobile workforce, to adapt staffing to changes to the demand for its services or the availability of financial resources, and to improve OCHA's surge capabilities. Though further progress is possible, there is evidence that, over the review period, OCHA and its pooled funds made progress in each of these fields.

2, 21-22, 56, 98, 102, 106, 107, 125, 135, 175-177

OCHA's rapid and thorough response to COVID-19 illustrates the organisation's ability to adjust budgets and programming when conditions change. Internally, OCHA added to its HR and Duty of Care capacity, and refocused it to include COVID-19-related measures such as repatriation, quarantining and isolating staff, personal protective equipment, and mental health and well-being support. To support a global response, OCHA developed a COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan in a matter of a few weeks, and then modified the plans to account for feedback from a wider group of stakeholders, to include additional countries (bringing the total to 63) and to capture the results of more rigorous bottom-up planning processes with humanitarian partners, with a stronger evidence-based focus on the most vulnerable people. OCHA also facilitated the development and dissemination of IASC's COVID-19-related operational guidance on issues such as response operations in camps, health in poor sanitary settings and the prevention of PSEA. OCHA added clarity and visibility through webinars for implementing agencies, and external interviewees confirmed the guidance and OCHA's contributions to it as relevant and useful.

Institutional procedures allow changes to be made at the appropriate level to ensure efficiency. Internally, OCHA has increased the delegated authority for its field offices to approve travel and make changes to budgets. This proved helpful in ensuring that OCHA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic was fast and locally driven. Regarding CERF, an internal review concluded

that the pre-contracting stage could benefit from decentralisation, and stakeholders pointed to inefficiencies caused by the imposition of new requirements onto country proposals, midway through an application process. However, once grant agreements have been signed, OCHA's pooled funds have clear and reasonable rules about the extent of budgetary revisions that can be made without amendments to grant agreements. These rules strike a reasonable balance between flexibility and oversight, even if not everybody agrees with that balance. For example, a 2019 survey of NGOs concluded that CBPFs' implementing partners felt that the need for prior approval to create new budget lines was time-consuming and hindered the effective use of funding in changing operational contexts.	2, 21-22, 56, 98, 102, 106, 107, 125, 135, 175-177
MI 6.1 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 6.2: Partnerships are based on an explicit statement of comparative or collaborative advantage i.e. technical knowledge, convening power/partnerships, policy dialogue/ advocacy	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.50**
Element 1: Corporate documentation contains clear and explicit statement on the comparative advantage that the organisation is intending to bring to a given partnership	4
Element 2: Corporate documentation contains a clear and explicit statement on the collaborative advantage that the organisation intends to realise through a given partnership	3
Element 3: Resources/competencies needed for intervention area(s) are aligned to the perceived comparative or collaborative advantage	3
Element 4: Comparative or collaborative advantage is reflected in the resources (people, information, knowledge, physical resources, networks) that each partner commits (and is willing) to bring to the partnership	4
Element 5: [UN] Guidance on implementing the Management and Accountability Framework exists and is being applied	N/A
MI 6.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA's corporate documentation contains clear and explicit statements on the collaborative advantages that OCHA intends to realise through its various partnerships. OCHA engages in a wide range of partnerships, from the global IASC to local inter-agency working groups, with different levels of formality. In some cases, such as within IASC and in-country HNOs and HRPs, OCHA plays a leading role in promoting collaboration. In other cases, such as in the field of Common Country Analysis (CCA) and issues related to the humanitarian-development nexus, OCHA is a participant. In all cases, it is clear and explicit about the collaborative advantage of the various partnerships, and about the respective roles of their various stakeholders. **OCHA's statements of its comparative advantage with its partnerships are linked to evidence of organisational capacities and competencies.** OCHA is clear and explicit about its comparative advantage, which derives from its mandate and is expressed through its unique and multi-faceted co-ordination role. It includes the provision of information management (tools and products), policy development, thought leadership and humanitarian advocacy and the management of pooled funds (CERF and CBPFs), one remit of which is to bolster in-country co-ordination and collective action. OCHA is also clear and explicit about its comparative advantage in various inter-agency networks, working groups and partnerships, and is generally clear about its own role and those of other stakeholders. In most cases, these are linked to each agency's mandate and sectoral expertise.	1, 2, 38-47, 62, 75, 84-85, 178

Other agencies hold similar views of OCHA's mandate and comparative advantage, as stated in their documents and in response to the survey and interviews conducted for this assessment. The survey revealed mixed views on OCHA's contribution to civil-military co-ordination, with some respondents taking the view that OCHA has deprioritised this part of its role. Tensions in partnerships do occur, however, where OCHA's comparative advantage in co-ordination is perceived to stray into an operational agency's mandated role, or where OCHA is perceived to overstep its co-ordination role and attempt to direct the response in ways that run counter to the priorities identified by operational agencies. According to stakeholders interviewed and survey responses, this can occur where OCHA's country strategy for CBPFs is seen as "top-down", rather than developed consultatively with cluster leads. OCHA's role in co-ordination of cash-based assistance also creates tensions, in the absence of a clear mandate from IASC. In some instances, OCHA is perceived as advocating for cash-based programming against the advice of operational agencies. Tensions with the cluster co-ordination system can also occur when OCHA is seen to be overly focused on UN agencies, rather than the wider group of humanitarian stakeholders. **OCHA's structure, new operating model, staffing table and policy documents are aligned with its role as a co-ordinator, fund manager and thought leader.** OCHA staff's competency requirements and development investments emphasise leadership competencies, as well as competencies in cross-cutting fields that are important to all humanitarian work. Some survey respondents pointed out that OCHA tends to be less capable in cases of new crises, where OCHA does not yet have the presence required to use its comparative advantage as a co-ordinator to the full. **The collaborative advantages of OCHA's partnerships are clearly illustrated through the resources that both OCHA and its partners devote to them.** From OCHA's side, its bring strengths in co-ordination and information management, which are clearly reflected in the human and other resources that it invests in its partnerships. When developing policies, products and tools, OCHA often seeks input from its partners. In recent years, OCHA has started providing feedback on this. Interviews confirm that partners agree this additional investment of time helps create goodwill and willingness to invest in further engagement. OCHA's partners also invest considerable time and effort in these relationships, as evidenced by their participation in a wide range of inter-agency networks and working groups, their contribution to core products such as HNOs and HRPs, and to niche products such as environmental tools and INSARAG assessments (to mention two of many such products). In some cases, the commitment to the partnership is formalised in form of memoranda of understanding, such as the one between OCHA and the IFRC, where both parties agree to carry out joint activities, engage in knowledge sharing and develop joint advocacy approaches.	1, 2, 38-47, 62, 75, 84-85, 178
MI 6.2 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 6.3 Demonstrated commitment to furthering development partnerships for countries (i.e. support for South-South collaboration, triangular arrangements and use of country systems)	Score
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.33**
Element 1: Clear statement on how the organisation will support principles of collaboration with countries on their development agenda (Nairobi Principles, 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda)	3
Element 2: Clear statement/guidelines for how the organisation will support development partnerships between countries	N/A
Element 3: Clear statement/guidelines for how the organisation will use country systems	2
Element 4: Internal structures and incentives supportive of collaboration/co-operation with countries, and use of country systems where appropriate	2
MI 6.3 Analysis	**Source documents**
Considering its humanitarian remit, OCHA's statements on the ways in which the organisation supports collaboration with countries on their development agenda is reasonably clear and appropriately modest. In its Strategic Plan, OCHA confirmed its support for the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Secretary-General's vision on how the UN Development System could contribute to this. In interviews, senior OCHA staff argued that, in practical terms, OCHA's humanitarian analysis and planning aligns with the UN Common Country Analysis and UN SDCF at country level, and that this means OCHA's work broadly aligns with government priorities. While this a very light form of alignment, it is defensible given OCHA's mandate. **Element 2 of this indicator was not scored.** South-South collaboration and triangular co-operation play a limited role in humanitarian action and are not prioritised by OCHA. OCHA has no formal policy or guidelines on the subject. **In its Strategic Plan, OCHA clearly stated its aim of utilising country systems and supporting their emergency response preparedness, but it has not in practice intensified its modest efforts in this field over the review period.** CERF formally encourages its grantees "to maximize the interaction and collaboration with governments", but has not operationalised this requirement in a meaningful manner. **OCHA's internal structures and incentives are not always sufficiently supportive of collaboration/co-operation with countries or use of country systems, even where this is appropriate given the context.** The Strategic Plan states that OCHA "understands the importance of engaging… governments at the local and regional levels" and that "in working with governments of affected and fragile countries, OCHA works to supplement national humanitarian efforts, strengthen national response capacities, and advocate for affected people and the respect for humanitarian principles and law." Although country offices do engage with national and *de facto* authorities, the New Operating Model does not build in internal structures or incentives to support collaboration/co-operation with countries or the use of country systems where appropriate. Instead, engagement with national and local authorities is generally only focused on the last of the three stated aims (i.e. advocacy for affected people and humanitarian principles) and on overcoming obstacles governments impose on humanitarian actors. In many humanitarian contexts, this is an appropriate approach.	2, 28, 63, 75, 120, 179, 180

However, in non-conflict contexts, where OCHA's HATs are often established (or country offices are converted into HATs, as in the Philippines), OCHA has explicit objectives to collaborate with national partners and strengthen country systems for disaster preparedness and response. There is scope to intensify this work and extend it to more countries.	2, 28, 63, 75, 120, 179 , 180
MI 6.3 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 6.4: Strategies or designs identify and address synergies with development partners, to encourage leverage/catalytic use of resources and avoid fragmentation in relation to 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda implementation	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.00**
Element 1: Strategies or designs clearly identify possible synergies with development partners and leverage of resources/catalytic use of resources and results	3
Element 2: Strategies or designs clearly articulate responsibilities and scope of the partnership	3
Element 3: Strategies or designs are based on a clear assessment of external coherence	3
Element 4: Strategies or designs contain a clear statement of how leverage will be ensured	3
MI 6.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA has an appropriate approach to achieving synergies within the humanitarian response, and leveraging resources from partners for humanitarian action. The humanitarian sector's primary tool to achieve synergies are the OCHA-led HRPs. The share of humanitarian funding allocated within HRPs has gradually increased, from 42% in 2011 to 69% in 2020. There is evidence (e.g. from Chad and Madagascar) that CERF leverages other donor funding by raising the visibility of underfunded emergencies and of sudden-onset and deteriorating emergencies. When it comes to development partners, the Strategic Plan states that OCHA will continue to encourage development actors to scale up flexible and risk-tolerant interventions in protracted crises and conflict areas, and to foster synergies between humanitarian and development action. OCHA has provided advice to Humanitarian Country Teams on the pros and cons of multi-year HRPs, the decision about which is decided at field level, and there is continuing debate on the merits of this approach. **OCHA clearly articulates the scope of its partnerships and the responsibilities therein.** Within the humanitarian sector, the scope of and responsibilities within partnerships tend to be fairly well articulated – in no small part because of OCHA's longstanding work in this field. Globally, the purpose of the cluster system and agencies roles within it are generally clear, and when new initiatives arise (such as the Inter-Agency Group on Mixed Migration Flows led by UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration, OCHA works to avoid duplication of effort. In country, OCHA creates and maintains "mutual accountability frameworks" for HCTs. These frameworks define roles and responsibilities for the HCT members, within a given context, and agree on how the members will collectively deliver results. The accountability framework is typically part of the Terms of Reference or an HCT Compact, and their existence is captured in OCHA's Results Framework: "Percentage of Humanitarian Country Teams that develop and/or use an agreed country-specific mutual accountability framework" (KPI 1.2; 60% in 2018 and 48% in 2019, against a 2019 target of 50%).	1-4, 29, 56, 125, 175, 181-185

Partnerships with development agencies in accordance with the humanitarian-development nexus principle are more difficult to build, and it is therefore harder to clearly articulate responsibilities and scope of partnerships. The February 2019 OECD DAC Recommendations on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (which OCHA contributed to as co-chair of the Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration, but is not directly applicable to OCHA's own operations) helpfully outlines a normative imperative to align funding towards collective outcomes. However, the funding structures for the two sectors are remains separated, and there is little development funding available in some of OCHA's countries of operation. Progress on progressing the nexus therefore remains challenging and at an early stage, and some survey respondents took the view that OCHA was not giving the issue sufficient focus. **OCHA's core functions, strategies and interventions are intended to promote coherence across the humanitarian sector, through joint action within a coherent normative framework aligned with international humanitarian principles.** Interviews and documents provided ample evidence that OCHA's work in this field is grounded in knowledge of the evolution of the humanitarian sector, its current shape, normative underpinnings and operating contexts. In the review period, OCHA undertook multiple activities designed to promote coherence across the sector. These included developing the JIAF and its contribution to the Enhanced Humanitarian Programme Cycle approach, launched in 2020, which aims to strengthen linkages between needs and responses, based on context-sensitive needs assessment. **Appropriately, OCHA's direct work is primarily designed to achieve synergies rather than leverage, and its CBPFs are primarily designed to complement rather than leverage other humanitarian funding sources. For CERF, leveraging other funding is a more prominently stated objective.** OCHA's role in HNOs, HRPs and other parts of the humanitarian response is not primarily meant to achieve leverage and instead primarily helps to identify and fill gaps, avoid a duplication of effort, and increase the overall standard of the response. Over the past decade, the share of humanitarian funding allocated within HRPs has gradually increased, due in part to OCHA's advocacy and its efforts to improve the quality of HRPs. OCHA's pooled funds are primarily designed to complement rather than leverage other humanitarian funding sources, such as other donor funding, existing agency funding and government response efforts. In parallel, CERF in particular aims to trigger leveraging or even catalytic effects by increasing the visibility of emergencies.	1-4, 29, 56, 125, 175, 181-185
MI 6.4 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 6.5: Key business practices (planning, design, implementation, monitoring and reporting) co-ordinated with relevant partners	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.67**
Element 1: Active engagement in joint exercises/mechanisms (planning, co-ordination, monitoring evaluation) to support external coherence	3
Element 2: Participating in joint monitoring and reporting processes with key partners	2
Element 3: Identifying shared information or efficiency gaps with partners and developing strategies to address them	3

MI 6.5 Analysis	Source documents
OCHA has actively developed and used joint exercises and mechanisms for the planning, co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian action, which has made a significant contribution to promoting coherence across the sector. OCHA's Strategic Plan explains OCHA's role in joint exercises and mechanisms, and its results framework monitors OCHA's performance in this field (KPIs 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6). OCHA is actively engaged in, and frequently leads, joint exercises to support external coherence. It actively contributes to, and often leads, the conceptualisation, development, piloting, rollout and maintenance of a wide range of operational tools and mechanisms for humanitarian funding, needs assessments, analysis, preparedness, planning, co-ordination and monitoring. OCHA's convening, co-ordinating and thought leadership roles in this field have significantly shaped global humanitarian action. OCHA initiatives before the review period, such as the introduction of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle in 2013, proved transformative for the sector. OCHA has undertaken many other initiatives during the review period, such as introducing a focus on collective outcomes and, most recently, developing a Global Humanitarian Response Plan for, and guidance on a coherent global response to, the COVID-19 pandemic. External stakeholders acknowledge the importance of OCHA's role in these fields, often speaking highly of OCHA's overall performance. Through ongoing conversations on a wide range of platforms, as well as through an annual partnership survey, OCHA monitors the quality of its partnerships and, where necessary, adapts its approach. However, OCHA's performance is not always equally strong. It is unfortunate that OCHA, with its mandated focus on co-operation and sector-wide efficiencies, is not engaged in the UN Partner Portal and that its pooled funds do not yet use the September 2020 United Nations Implementing Partner PSEA Capacity Assessment Tool, even though OCHA promoted the tool at IASC. Communication on this tool within OCHA had been poor and slow. Many of the external partners that responded to the survey were appreciative of OCHA's co-ordination role. They highlighted OCHA's efforts to support the work of the HC and the HCT, ensure gap-filling and to avoid duplication of effort in the humanitarian response, resolve sector-wide challenges (with host governments, for example), and advocate for humanitarian principles (in countries and globally). Its civil-military co-ordination received particular praise from respondents in almost all contexts. However, the survey also elicited a significant volume of critical comment, including that OCHA uses its co-ordination platforms to inform partners of decisions in a top-down way, rather than for consultation; that its co-ordination focuses on UN agencies at the expense of NGOs; and its failure to work with other co-ordination platforms (especially in Latin America). Some field-based respondents also complained that OCHA's planning processes have grown too heavy. **OCHA helps to develop, and participates in, joint monitoring and reporting processes for the humanitarian sector, but monitoring remains an area of relative weaknesses across the sector.** OCHA's Strategic Plan states that OCHA "will continue to strengthen accountability for humanitarian responses through improved monitoring and joint evaluations". Its Strategic Objective 2c is to arrange "enhanced tools that better support the analysis and monitoring of the humanitarian situation, needs and response, including joined-up analysis", and one of OCHA's KPIs is the "percentage of countries where OCHA is chairing the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group or Inter-Sector Coordination Group that has undertaken a collective performance monitoring exercise." As part of its work in this field, OCHA co-developed and tested an Inter-Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring Tool, which includes elements relevant to the humanitarian-development nexus. Roll-out started in 2020, but stalled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.	1-4, 21, 29, 115, 116, 125, 134, 187-194

Notwithstanding these commitments, internal and external interviews suggest that monitoring and reporting remain among of the weaker components of the HPC, and that OCHA's performance in this field lags behind its performance in assessments, planning and co-ordination. **Over the review period, OCHA identified gaps in information sharing and co-ordination with partners and made some progress in addressing them.** OCHA regularly encourages partners to overcome common data gaps in relation to specific sub-groups that tend to be less visible in data collection processes in a crisis, such as people with disabilities. In general and appropriately, OCHA prefers to address such information gaps by adjusting existing monitoring mechanisms, rather than by introducing new mechanisms. However, a key innovation in the review period is the introduction of the Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework (JIAF), a multi-partner initiative that aims to move from sector- or mandate-based needs analysis to one based on vulnerabilities and capacities, with a cross-sectoral focus. The JIAF is designed to include all groups in country-level needs assessments and analysis, with the aim of understanding vulnerabilities across groups. Perceived data deficits are not necessarily gaps that require filling. In this context, OCHA advocates for a level of realism in relation to data collection to donors, who may add to their requirements without appreciating the full costs and complexities involved in meeting these requirements, especially in the immediate aftermath of an emergency.	1-4, 21, 29, 115, 116, 125, 134, 187-194
MI 6.5 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 6.6: Key information (analysis, budgeting, management, results etc.) shared with strategic/implementation partners on an on-going basis	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.00**
Element 1: Clear corporate statement on transparency of information is aligned to the International Aid Transparency Initiative	3
Element 2: Information is available on analysis, budgeting, management in line with the guidance provided by the International Aid Transparency Initiative	3
Element 3: Responses to partner queries on analysis, budgeting, management and results are of good quality and responded to in a timely fashion	3
MI 6.6 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA signed up to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) in August 2017. Its Strategic Plan says that "We are committed to becoming a more … transparent … organization." **OCHA has progressed from "poor" to "good" performance in the Aid Transparency Index over the period, while helping to promote transparency across the sector.** OCHA is required to abide by UN Secretariat regulations in relation to information security concerns, and therefore somewhat restricted in its ability to share data. Nonetheless, Publish What You Fund concluded that OCHA moved from "poor" performance in relation to the Aid Transparency Index at the start of the review period to "good" performance at the end of it. According to their analysis, the remaining areas where OCHA could improve transparency are: tenders and contracts, organisational planning and commitments, publishing all internal reviews and evaluations, and sub-national data. It should be noted that some of this information, such as evaluations, is available outside IATI reporting. In addition, OCHA plays a key role in promoting the transparency of humanitarian data in the wider sector. As part of its co-ordination role, OCHA is responsible for ensuring receipt and management of data from other agencies, and for circulating these secondary data as widely as possible. OCHA's	120, 125, 195-199

Financial Tracking Service_platform (FTS, a well-established, voluntary information platform that records international humanitarian contributions) precedes OCHA's IATI sign-up but aligns and strongly supports the IATI agenda, and so does the work of OCHA's more recently established Centre for Humanitarian Data. In addition, OCHA plays a key role in promoting the transparency of humanitarian data in the wider sector. As part of its co-ordination role, OCHA is responsible for ensuring receipt and management of data from other agencies, and for circulating these secondary data as widely as possible. OCHA's Financial Tracking Service_platform (FTS, a well-established, voluntary information platform that records international humanitarian contributions) precedes OCHA's IATI sign-up but aligns and strongly supports the IATI agenda, and so does the work of OCHA's more recently established Centre for Humanitarian Data. **OCHA has a range of formal and informal mechanisms for managing partner queries and is generally considered responsive by partners.** OCHA has formal tracking systems embedded in Reliefweb and FTS (for uploading requests), as well as in the communication systems of CERF and CBPFs (queries with a ticketing system). Most engagement with partners takes the form of two-way communication during physical and virtual meetings, and external stakeholders generally find their OCHA counterparts to be open and responsive. In addition, some external respondents mentioned that OCHA recently started to provide substantive written responses to policy contributions and feedback OCHA receives during partner consultations, which was appreciated. OCHA partner feedback on OCHA's communication is predominantly positive. Where criticisms are made, OCHA takes note and considers options for follow-up.	120, 125, 195-199
MI 6.6 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 6.7: Clear standards and procedures for accountability to beneficiaries implemented	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.60**
Element 1: Explicit statement available on standards and procedures for accountability to beneficiary populations i.e. Accountability to Affected Populations	4
Element 2: Staff guidance is available on the implementation of the procedures for accountability to beneficiaries	4
Element 3: Training has been conducted on the implementation of procedures for accountability to beneficiaries	3
Element 4: Programming tools explicitly contain the requirement to implement procedures for accountability to beneficiaries	3
Element 5: Approval mechanisms explicitly include the requirement to assess the extent to which procedures for accountability to beneficiaries will be addressed in the intervention	4
MI 6.7 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA does not work directly with affected populations, but works actively to promote Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) as a standard for the sector. When OCHA lists its "primary partners", affected people are the first group mentioned, and the Strategic Plan says that "OCHA promotes humanitarian action that is accountable to affected people". OCHA has long played a sector-wide leadership role in this field, directly and through IASC, which has declared AAP to be one of four mandatory responsibilities for all HCTs. OCHA's policy statements, technical work and advocacy in this field have shaped and strengthened ownership of AAP principles, standards and procedures	1-4, 19, 34, 59, 115, 116, 129, 154, 189, 200-202

in the wider humanitarian sector. OCHA encourages engagement with affected populations in the HNO and HRP exercises, and provides policy and operational guidance to implementing agencies. OCHA has developed a range of guidance for staff on the implementation of the procedures for accountability to affected populations. These include the IASC Collective AAP Framework (developed in the review period by a group of HCs and OCHA Heads of Office), and a range of other templates and guidance documents. OCHA provides AAP training to its own staff as well as to implementing partners. It does so directly, through its pooled funds and through supporting inter-agency AAP training events. OCHA's HNO and HRP templates explicitly require procedures for AAP, but evaluation evidence suggests that this is only partially implemented. OCHA's HNO and HRP templates explicitly require AAP procedures, and the HNO and HRP 2020 scoring tools to determine their quality include questions about this. However, OCHA recognises that the operationalisation of these requirements is a work in progress, and in March 2020 IASC concluded that no more than half of global humanitarian operations had an AAP framework to ensure engagement and communication with affected people. Supply-driven humanitarian assistance therefore continues to be widespread. For OCHA, AAP is a key feature of its work in some countries – such as in the case of Syria, where OCHA conducts large-scale surveys (with quality assurance and triangulation features, and with attention to feedback on services delivered) and, since 2020, uses a network of key informants to elicit feedback. In other countries the importance of AAP is recognised and the AAP mantras are oft-repeated, but the issue is not yet well-operationalised. OCHA-managed pooled funds require all grantees to incorporate AAP elements (such as accessible and functioning community feedback and/or complaint mechanisms) into their projects, and monitor progress in this field. CERF and CBPF country-specific documentation confirms that a wide range of AAP elements are being implemented.	1-4, 19, 34, 59, 115, 116, 129, 154, 189, 200-202
MI 6.7 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 6.8: Participation with national and other partners in mutual assessments of progress in implementing agreed commitments	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.33**
Element 1: Participation in joint performance reviews of interventions, e.g. joint assessments	3
Element 2: Participation in multi-stakeholder dialogue around joint sectoral or normative commitments	4
Element 3: Use of surveys or other methods to understand how partners are experiencing working together on implementing mutually agreed commitments	3
MI 6.8 Analysis	**Source documents**
In the review period, OCHA facilitated a number of Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations and participated in lighter-touch inter-agency peer review processes. These evaluations covered the response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique (2020); the drought response in Ethiopia (2020); and the issue of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (2020). OCHA also contributed to inter-agency peer-to-peer reviews, which are light, brief, collaborative and forward-looking processes help determine whether adjustments need to be made to the collective humanitarian response.	1-4, 37, 109, 120, 125, 181, 204-206

OCHA is a key actor within the Inter-Agency Steering Committee and a wide range of dialogue platforms across the humanitarian sector. OCHA facilitates the work of IASC, which is the highest-level forum for strategic and normative discussion and guidance development within the international humanitarian system. Within this setting, OCHA co-ordinated the development of the initial and updated versions of the Global HRP for COVID-19, for example. OCHA is also active, and sometimes plays a lead role, in other multi-stakeholder platforms around joint normative commitments, such as: the May 2019 Ending Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Humanitarian Crises conference in Oslo, which OCHA co-hosted; and an October 2019 conference on mental health and psychosocial support, in Amsterdam, where OCHA's USG added visibility to the Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings. OCHA also co-chairs the IASC Gender Reference Group, which brings together gender experts from across IASC members to inform and guide gender responsive humanitarian action. **OCHA uses surveys to assess progress on mutually agreed commitments and the quality of its partnerships.** In 2020, it conducted a survey to understand the challenges implementing partners faced in the context of the Enhanced Humanitarian Programme Cycle. OCHA conducts annual partner surveys that cover its strategic objectives and its own performance. These surveys have response rates of 19-25% and a few thousand respondents, which is significant and likely to generate robust data. Interview evidence suggests that some – but not all – country offices use the results to strengthen their performance with respect to their partners.	1-4, 37, 109, 120, 125, 181, 204-206
MI 6.8 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 6.9: Use of knowledge base to support policy dialogue and/or advocacy	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.33**
Element 1: Statement in corporate documentation explicitly recognises the organisation's role in knowledge production	4
Element 2: Knowledge products produced and utilised by partners to inform action	4
Element 3: Knowledge products generated and applied to inform advocacy, where relevant, at country, regional, or global level	4
Element 4: Knowledge products generated are timely/perceived as timely by partners	3
Element 5: Knowledge products are perceived as high quality by partners	3
Element 6: Knowledge products are produced in a format that supports their utility to partners	3

MI 6.9 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA's corporate documents explicitly recognise its role in generating knowledge and data for the humanitarian sector. OCHA's 2014-2017 Strategic Plan states that OCHA sits at the centre of multiple information flows coming from a range of sources that include response partners, clusters, donor and recipient governments, affected people, the media, and academia. It argues that OCHA helps decision makers better understand the contexts in which they work and take well-informed decisions because of its work to collect, help to analyse and make these data widely available. OCHA's 2018-21 Strategic Plan aims to build on achievements under the previous strategy, and commits to continue investments "in tools to access, share and utilize data and information underpinning coordination, decision-making and advocacy." It states that it intends to share its knowledge widely – and that it will pay extra attention to accessibility to national authorities and	1-5, 29, 45, 53, 120, 123, 125, 128, 174

affected communities. OCHA's aim is for this work to be used, also by partners, and Output 2 of OCHA's KPIs on Information Management is the "annual growth rate of readership of OCHA's core information products".

OCHA generates and contributes to a wide range of knowledge products, which are widely recognised as useful resources for humanitarian actors. OCHA developed, maintains and contributes to:

- global humanitarian knowledge and data platforms such as Reliefweb, Humanitarian Insights, the Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX), the Financial Tracking Service (FTS) and the Humanitarian Kiosk
- global knowledge products such as policy guidelines, thought pieces, handbooks and tools that focus on issues ranging from IDPs and civil-military co-operation to women's empowerment and environmental assessments; as well as the HPC tools database, the Pooled Funds Data Hub, and various annual reports (including the annual reports for OCHA and CERF and the Global Humanitarian Overview)
- knowledge and data products for every country in which it works, such as HNOs, HRPs, situational reports, snapshots, maps, a humanitarian notification system, the CBPF annual reports and a range of other products. Some OCHA products – and specifically ones that are produced for national governments to use as their own – are unbranded.

Some are inter-agency products, others are OCHA-specific. Partners use some products more than others, depending on their usefulness, timeliness, quality and user-friendliness (all covered in the rows below). The survey statement that "OCHA's knowledge and information products are useful for my work" received one of the most enthusiastic responses in the survey. Respondents from donors and governing body representatives were particularly positive.

1-5, 29, 45, 53, 120, 123, 125, 128, 174

OCHA generates and uses a wide range of knowledge products to inform its advocacy for the humanitarian sector, targeting multiple audiences. OCHA's Strategic Plan states that OCHA's advocacy work is rooted in information and knowledge products, and its global communications and public advocacy strategy elaborates on this principle. Many of the knowledge products that OCHA produces (itself, through IASC or in other partnerships) are indeed verifiably used to bolster advocacy efforts at country, regional, or global level. Moreover, OCHA manuals, policy briefs and think pieces tend to be advocacy products in their own right. Two examples are *Staying on Course: Delivering the Ambition of the World Humanitarian Summit*, which advocates for increasing efforts to ensure that the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are achieved, and *The Cost of Doing Nothing: The Price of Inaction in Response to the COVID-19 Crisis*, which advocates for all actors to work collectively to respond to the pandemic crises.

Generally, OCHA's advocacy targets and messages are clear, and they are tailored to the various audiences. They include high-level statements on urgent priorities targeted at the Security Council; evidence-based policy products for use within IASC; advocacy material for donors emphasising the need for generous, stable and predictable financing; technical and tool-focused advocacy messages for partners; and human-interest stories to engage the wider public.

OCHA has a strong focus on generating real-time data on humanitarian emergencies, and a majority of the stakeholders consulted confirmed their timeliness, with some concerns around distribution delays. OCHA seeks to provide real-time data where needed (and in some crisis situations this requires daily updates) and timely guidelines (the importance of which was illustrated by the urgent need for guidance related to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, for which IASC's normal processes were bypassed for the sake of expedience). However, OCHA's ability to distribute timely data and guidance depends in part on its partners' timely provision of source data,

and OCHA often has to find an uneasy balance between speed and data quality. The first version of the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan illustrates this point: it was produced very rapidly and published just a few weeks after WHO had declared the pandemic, but it was also criticised for the top-down nature of its development process. **OCHA has a strong focus on generating real-time data on humanitarian emergencies, and a majority of the stakeholders consulted confirmed their timeliness, with some concerns around distribution delays.** OCHA seeks to provide real-time data where needed (and in some crisis situations this requires daily updates) and timely guidelines (the importance of which was illustrated by the urgent need for guidance related to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, for which IASC's normal processes were bypassed for the sake of expedience). However, OCHA's ability to distribute timely data and guidance depends in part on its partners' timely provision of source data, and OCHA often has to find an uneasy balance between speed and data quality. The first version of the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan illustrates this point: it was produced very rapidly and published just a few weeks after WHO had declared the pandemic, but it was also criticised for the top-down nature of its development process. Some partners are critical of OCHA's work in this area. From the survey, only 62% of the respondents, or 267 of 432 people, agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that "OCHA's knowledge and information products are up-to-date and timely". There was a range of critical commentary, divided equally between global and in-country respondents. Concerns were raised that delays in the production of OCHA's reports reduces their value as decision-making inputs. In particular, information distributed by OCHA's headquarters is sometimes passed on by OCHA's field structure with a delay, with the result that implementing partners receive contradictory information from different OCHA sources. Most recently, this was the case with guidance on the development of the 2021 HRPs. **A high proportion of the stakeholders consulted for this assessment were positive about the quality of OCHA knowledge products.** For many of OCHA's partners, the global IASC policies and guidelines and the national HNOs and HRPs stand out as the most highly valued products, and they are a key part of the humanitarian architecture. External informants and OCHA's annual survey respondents also mentioned the usefulness and quality of a range of other knowledge and data products. In the survey, only 7% of respondents disagreed with the statement that "OCHA's knowledge and information products are useful for my work". Comments by survey respondents ranged from strongly positive (OCHA is the "best source of immediately-available information") to negative, with a few donor respondents complaining that OCHA's knowledge products were mutually inconsistent and based on poor-quality data. Some partners stated said that many of OCHA's products lacked a clear audience and were based on OCHA's evolving interests more than on the humanitarian sector's needs. Given that a diversity of views is to be expected, the balance is reasonably positive. **Feedback suggests that simpler and more targeted knowledge products would be more useful to partners.** In interviews, OCHA staff emphasised the need to for user-friendly formats, and OCHA monitors usage of its products with the aim of increasing their reach and impact. However, sometimes OCHA produces more and lengthier guidance than its partners can absorb (HPC tools are seen as particularly and unnecessarily elaborate), and even key cluster stakeholders are not always aware of OCHA's core knowledge products and their various iterations. Similarly, partners pointed out that OCHA's communication products exceed the limits of their audience's absorption capacity, and a recent piece of internal analytics concluded that "we need to produce less [and] more in line with our advocacy priorities". OCHA lacks clear criteria for deciding which products should be translated into national languages (some in-country stakeholders raised concerns about this), or when localised versions should be produced to maximise their usefulness.	1-5, 29, 45, 53, 120, 123, 125, 128, 174
MI 6.9 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Systems geared to managing and accounting for development and humanitarian results and the use of performance information, including evaluation and lesson-learning

KPI 7: The focus on results is strong, transparent and explicitly geared towards function	KPI score
Unsatisfactory	**1.95**

In its Strategic Plan, OCHA identified the need to introduce a comprehensive approach to results-based management (RBM), but did not proceed with this commitment. In addition to a high-level results framework, the Strategic Plan included a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan that was intended "to systematically track OCHA's performance… and support evidence-based decision-making". The document anticipated an "Implementation Plan" for each of OCHA's strategic objectives, with problem analyses, results chains, benchmarks, timelines, risks and mitigating actions. It also anticipates the development of other monitoring tools, including analytical reports on areas that needed improvement, quarterly progress reports, mid-year reviews, mid-year workplan updates (where needed) and annual reports. Most of these tools have not been operationalised. Annual reports are produced, but do not fully qualify as a performance-tracking tool as they are public-facing documents that lack critical analysis. Proposals to incorporate RBM tools into OCHA's Anaplan and Umoja budgeting and planning systems and to procure monitoring software were not approved.

OCHA's Strategic Plan includes a results framework with high-level key performance indicators linked to OCHA's core functions and strategic objectives. Several of these KPIs aggregate progress from project level (e.g., the proportion of timely allocations from pooled funds) or from country level (e.g., the percentage of countries where partners are satisfied with the performance of the Humanitarian Country Team). OCHA reports annually against its results framework, with commentary by KPI, noting any need for course correction. These updates are compiled from reports produced by departments and country offices, and form the basis for OCHA's annual reports and reporting to donors. However, in most cases no explicit causal pathway has been specified from activities through to the achievement of KPIs. Country workplans align their activities to corporate strategic objectives, but without identifying explicitly how they contribute or setting out intermediate results for monitoring.

In contrast, the results frameworks used by the pooled fund interventions are generally clear, following the conventional structure of inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact. OCHA's pooled funds do have performance and accountability frameworks. Those used for CBPFs are the best developed. They combine a Common Performance Framework with outcome-level indicators and a Grant Management System that monitors the speed and the quality of grant-management processes, including allocations, disbursement, monitoring, reporting and audit. Result targets are grant-specific and set based on proposals from implementing partners. They generally fall within the targets set out in HRPs, which themselves are based on HNOs, which are developed through a process that includes consultation with affected populations.

In the absence of comprehensive RBM system, OCHA monitors its performance through a range of separate reporting processes. OCHA's functional leads report to the Executive Management Committee on progress towards strategic objectives, although these reports are verbal and not supported by a defined methodology. The Organisational Development Unit identifies functions and mechanisms that are likely to face challenges because of suboptimal design or evolving realities, reviews them, and proposes options that could improve their performance. GenCap developed a monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework, introduced in 2020; efforts are underway to establish a single data hub to support the consolidation and analysis of data across pooled funds; and the assessment identified a number of initiatives by individual country offices (including Ethiopia and Nigeria) to strengthen the quality of results data.

Overall, however, the lack of an integrated results architecture leaves OCHA poorly placed to identify and address underperformance. Of all the performance areas covered by the survey, OCHA's ability to identify and deal with underperformance received the fewest positive responses.

MI 7.1: Leadership ensures application of an organisation-wide RBM approach	Score
Overall MI rating	**Highly unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**1.17**
Element 1: Corporate commitment to a results culture is made clear in strategic planning documents	3
Element 2: Clear requirements/incentives in place for the use of an RBM approach in planning and programming	1
Element 3: Guidance for setting results targets and developing indicators is clear and accessible to all staff	1
Element 4: Tools and methods for measuring and managing results are available	2
Element 5: Adequate resources are allocated to the RBM system	0
Element 6: All relevant staff are trained in RBM approaches and method	0
MI 7.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA's Strategic Plan sets out a broad commitment to developing a results culture, but the commitment is not widely shared across the organisation. OCHA's corporate commitment to a results culture is implied by its Strategic Plan, which says that "at the strategic level, monitoring will focus on tracking progress towards achieving the Strategic Plan objectives through periodic follow up of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as well as the Implementation Plans' benchmarks." OCHA's 2010 evaluation policy says that "evaluations shall be used to reinforce and complement OCHA's results-oriented planning, monitoring and reporting framework through the provision of in-depth independent analysis about how and why results have or have not been achieved." OCHA's New Operating Model notes "a real desire for a new approach which sees HQ and Field working together as a global team to achieve results." **OCHA has not followed through with the development of results-based management (RBM) tools and processes and, as a result, some basic elements of an RBM approach are not yet in place.** OCHA has a results framework for its Strategic Plan, in the form of a set of KPIs for measuring progress against its strategic objectives, against which it reports annually. In their end-of-year reports, country offices and some units provide data that aggregates into these KPIs. However, OCHA has not set out the activities and outputs required to achieve those KPIs, so as to integrate the achievement of results across the organisation, so their practical value for results management is limited. The Strategic Plan outlined plans to do so, in the form of implementation plans for each KPI, to include problem analyses, results chains, benchmarks, timelines, the section of OCHA responsible for delivering the results, and risks and mitigating actions. These implementation plans were produced but never used or refreshed. As a result, at the time of this review, no requirement or incentive for the use of an RBM approach in planning and programming is in place, and there are no plans to introduce such an approach. Interviews suggest a lack of widespread awareness of the minimum ingredients of an RBM approach and a lack of buy-in among senior management and many staff. **OCHA has produced no organisation-wide guidance on results targets and indicator development.** In respect of CBPFs, OCHA has produced guidance for setting results targets and developing indicators in the form of a "performance index tool" that is used to score the performance of CBPF projects from submission to closeout.	2, 3, 19, 33, 98, 123, 148, 197, 211-213

At the corporate level, OCHA has a high-level results measurement tool, in the form of organisational KPIs and annual report, but many other tools anticipated in its Strategic Plan have never been produced. OCHA's Strategic Plan lists several other performance tracking tools in its Monitoring and Evaluation plan, and says that "The purpose of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan is to systematically track OCHA's performance against its 2018-21 Strategic Plan and support evidence-based decision-making in the organization". Of these tools, most were never produced or were soon discontinued, including implementation plans, progress reports, and analytical reports on areas in need of improvement, quarterly progress reports and mid-year reviews. OCHA does produce an annual report, including KPI results, but this is a public-facing document rather than a performance-tracking tool. Its corporate risk register has not been updated since mid-2018. A 2018 OIOS audit of OCHA's operations in West and Central Asia revealed a similar paucity of tools and methods for measuring and managing results. **There are a range of tools for measuring and managing results for CERF and CBPFs.** CERF and the CBPFs both have results frameworks, with those for the CBPFs the best developed. They combine a Common Performance Framework with a set of management and outcome indicators, organised under the CBPFs' five principles of inclusiveness, flexibility, timeliness, efficiency, and accountability and risk management; together with a Grant Management System that monitors the speed and the quality of grant-management processes, including allocations, disbursement, monitoring, reporting and audit. Result targets are grant-specific and set by proposals from implementing partners. They generally fall within the targets set out in HRPs, which themselves are based on HNOs, which are developed through a process that includes consultation with affected populations. OCHA is currently developing a tool that collectively analyses CERF and CBPF data. **Notwithstanding its formal corporate commitment to a results culture, OCHA does not allocate any resources to RBM, or to any alternative system that would allow management decisions to be taken on the basis of measured results.** Proposals to incorporate RBM tools into OCHA's Anaplan and Umoja budgeting and planning systems were not approved. **OCHA does not train its staff in RBM approaches and methods.**	2, 3, 19, 33, 98, 123, 148, 197, 211-213
MI 7.1 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 7.2: Corporate strategies, including country strategies, based on a sound RBM focus and logic	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.60**
Element 1: Organisation-wide plans and strategies include results frameworks	3
Element 2: Clear linkages exist between the different layers of the results framework, from project to country and corporate level	2
Element 3: An annual report on performance is discussed with the governing bodies	3
Element 4: Corporate strategies are updated regularly	2
Element 5: The annual corporate reports show progress over time and notes areas of strong Element 5: The annual corporate reports show progress over time and notes areas of strong performance as well as deviations between planned and actual results	3

MI 7.2 Analysis	Source documents
OCHA's Strategic Plan sets out the organisation's strategic objectives, which are incorporated into its corporate results framework in the form of KPIs. **Several of OCHA's corporate KPIs measure aggregate results from different levels of the organisation.** These are generally measures of corporate performance, aggregated up from country offices (e.g., "percentage of countries with an OCHA country office where partners are satisfied with the HCT's performance") or, for pooled funds, from the project level (e.g., "Percentage of OCHA-managed pooled funds allocations made within required timeline"). Country workplans are organised under OCHA's strategic objectives, and are therefore aligned with the Strategic Plan. However, in most cases they do not identify a results chain from activities and outputs at the country level through to corporate objectives, to support monitoring of progress. **Annual reports are produced but lack critical reflection on the organisation's performance and are not discussed with governing bodies.** OCHA's annual report outlines humanitarian needs and emergency crisis events, and the work OCHA has done to respond to these. This is not a performance report, and OCHA does not discuss it or any other performance report with its governing body, the UN General Assembly. In the past, OCHA also produced annual synthesis reports that covered trends, achievements and gaps in advancing the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit and the Agenda for Humanity transformations, but discontinued these after the 2019 report. OCHA-managed pooled funds do produce annual results reports, which include both qualitative performance data and qualitative information. They are discussed with the respective advisory groups (see Box 1), which bring together donors, NGOs and UN agencies. For CERF, a dedicated meeting was held with the CERF Advisory Group in 2021 to discuss opportunities to further improve the results report. **There has been no formal review or update of OCHA's Strategic Plan 2018-21 since its adoption.** A mid-term review was begun in 2019 but terminated before producing tangible results. OCHA did produce a new Global Communications and Public Advocacy Strategy in 2019, and a pandemic-related Strategic Direction and Adaptation document in June 2020. **The Strategic Plan's KPI Results Tables show progress and regression over time by providing results for each year; and provide commentary on each KPI reported.**	2, 5, 10-11, 33, 34, 98, 125, 215
MI 7.2 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 7.3: Results targets set on a foundation of sound evidence base and logic	Score
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.00**
Element 1: Targets and indicators are adequate to capture causal pathways between interventions and the outcomes that contribute to higher order objectives	2
Element 2: Indicators are relevant to expected results to enable the measurement of the degree of goal achievement	2
Element 3: Development of baselines are mandatory for new interventions	1
Element 4: Results targets are regularly reviewed and adjusted when needed	2
Element 5: Results targets are set through a process that includes consultation with beneficiaries	3

MI 7.3 Analysis	Source documents
OCHA corporate KPIs do not include explicit causal pathways and intermediate results, which would support the monitoring of progress, but its pooled funds have stronger results systems based on clear causal logic. OCHA has a high-level results framework through its corporate KPIs. The KPIs themselves link logically to (parts of) OCHA's core functions and strategic objectives. However, OCHA has not documented how its country-based activities will contribute to achieving these KPIs. OCHA's national and regional workplans are aligned with the strategic objectives, but the causal pathways between planned activities (e.g. production of public products that include advocacy messages on key priorities) and the objectives (e.g. mobilised international attention and action through strategic, coherent public and private advocacy for access to people affected by crisis) are not self-evident. The workplans do not specify intermediate steps such as outputs, outcomes, national objectives, benchmarks, baselines or targets to enable progress to be monitored. The pooled funds measure both immediate results against targets (such as the planned and actual number of people assisted) and, more qualitatively, their strategic added value. The causal pathways of interventions are clear and follow the conventional structure of inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact. The higher order objective is the aggregation of people reached (i.e. OCHA's overall KPI 3.5: Percentage of people targeted by OCHA-managed pooled funds reached). **Indicators are relevant to expected results, but do not collectively measure the degree of goal achievement.** For example, one of OCHA's core functions is "policy", and the Strategic Plan says that this part of OCHA's work aims to, among other things, help set the agenda for humanitarian sector reform and effectiveness in response to a shifting global landscape, new global frameworks, and increased capacities of national governments and local actors. In OCHA's results framework, only two indicators cover this core function: the "percentage of countries with an OCHA country office where humanitarian and development actors have defined collective outcomes" and the "percentage of humanitarian response plans that articulate strategies to meet the special needs of internally displaced persons". Both indicators are relevant, but they do not jointly give a meaningful indication of the extent to which OCHA has achieved its policy aims. **The OCHA-managed pooled funds use programmatic indicators that are relevant to expected results, which are linked to higher-level objectives.** **Beyond the most strategic KPI-related baselines, OCHA does not use formal baselines, other than descriptive ones that cannot easily be used to assess progress (e.g. "weak assessments").** The word "baseline" does not appear in the country, regional and HAT workplan template or instructions for that template. **OCHA does not have results targets, but its high-level KPIs are occasionally reviewed and adjusted.** This is a technical rather than a substantive exercise, undertaken by Strategic Planning, Evaluation and Guidance Section (SPEGS). **OCHA's KPIs were set through a strategic planning process that included consultation with a range of humanitarian stakeholders.** They are rooted in OCHA's core functions. Each core function has an associated strategic objective, which is defined in OCHA's Strategic Plan, the development of which included a process of consultations with a range of humanitarian stakeholders – which are, in the most direct sense, OCHA's beneficiaries. The results targets of pooled funds allocations are set by proposals from implementing partners, and generally fall within the targets set by HRPs, which themselves are based on HNOs, which are developed through a process that includes consultations with affected populations.	2, 125, 129, 214
MI 7.3 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 7.4: Monitoring systems generate high-quality, useful performance data in response to strategic priorities	Score
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**1.75**
Element 1: The corporate monitoring system is adequately resourced	1
Element 2: Monitoring systems generate data at output and outcome levels of the results chain	2
Element 3: Reporting processes ensure data is available for key corporate reporting and planning, including for internal change processes	2
Element 4: A system for ensuring data quality exists	2
MI 7.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA does not allocate significant resources to corporate monitoring. Over the review period, OCHA has divested from its monitoring tools, and the only more or less systematic monitoring tool that remains is a system of end-of-year reports. A plan to improve OCHA's monitoring system, which included the procurement of monitoring software, was not funded or otherwise followed up on. Critical assessments of OCHA's performance are limited to 1) reviews conducted by the Organisational Development Unit (which are useful but based on ad hoc data gathering rather than systematic performance monitoring); and 2) executive management committee meetings in which functional leads report on progress on strategic management objectives (these reports are verbal and not framed by any type of methodological protocol). GenCap is an exception: its results were not traditionally monitored or evaluated in a systematic manner, but it developed an MEL framework in 2019 and started to roll it out in 2020. **OCHA's pooled funds have monitoring systems that generate data at output and outcome levels, but this is not the case for its corporate results system.** OCHA's national and regional workplans list planned activities under the relevant strategic objective. End-of-year reports for field offices, units and divisions cover contributions to OCHA's KPIs. These include some output-level and some outcome-level information, without distinguishing clearly between them. The pooled fund templates cover activity-, output-, outcome- and objective-level indicators. CERF's Performance and Accountability Framework states that OCHA will not have the capacity to monitor the implementation of CERF-funded projects, but CBPFs have two systems to identify poorly performing interventions: a performance module in their Grant Management Systems and a Performance Index tool. **OCHA has some elements of a corporate reporting system that supports planning and internal change management in place.** For internal planning, OCHA uses annual workplans. For internal reporting, it uses a template for end-of-year reports that provide inputs for OCHA's overall annual report, reporting on OCHA-wide KPIs (for which there is also a separate template), the USG's Compact with the Secretary-General, and donor reporting such as to ECHO and DFID (now FCDO). OCHA does not have an integrated IT system for capturing and processing these data in real time, and instead end-of-year reports are submitted in PDF format. OCHA does not have a formalised and systematic reporting system that covers internal change processes, but OCHA's Organisational Development Unit has informal methods of monitoring progress and evolving challenges. **OCHA does not have a fully functioning system for ensuring data quality, but did make some investments into data quality control.** OCHA checks its internal end-of-year reports for consistency and obvious errors, but does not otherwise have a system of internal data quality assurance. Most of the data OCHA manages are external. OCHA's Assessment Planning and	50, 84, 98, 123, 125, 155, 216-219

Monitoring Branch makes sure that these data add up and are consistent, but does not have a system to quality assure the quality of the data OCHA receives. The Assessment Planning and Monitoring Branch also helps equip staff working at field level to scrutinise the data they receive from OCHA's partners, and a few country offices (such as the ones in Ethiopia and Nigeria) invest in data quality-enhancing mechanisms. However, OCHA does not have the authority to verify information provided by implementing partners and must instead rely on honesty and coherent data when they ask organisations to report to them. OCHA-managed pooled funds do have a monitoring system that includes occasional field visits and systematic quality scoring of reports. There are plans to enhance CERF-CBPF collaboration on data and information management by building a single data hub to enable the consolidation and analysis of data.	50, 84, 98, 123, 125, 155, 216-219
MI 7.4 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 7.5: Performance data transparently applied in planning and decision-making	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.25**
Element 1: Planning documents are clearly based on performance data	2
Element 2: Proposed adjustments to interventions are clearly informed by performance data	1
Element 3: At corporate level, management regularly reviews corporate performance data and makes adjustments as appropriate	3
Element 4: Performance data support dialogue in partnerships at global, regional and country levels	3
MI 7.5 Analysis	**Source documents**
As a humanitarian organisation, OCHA's planning documents are generally based on humanitarian need, rather than performance data. OCHA's national, regional and HAT workplans, and the sector-wide HRPs, are primarily shaped by situation analyses, not past performance. OCHA collected feedback from partners on the strengths and weaknesses of past operations, which informs its planning, but the processes are informal and implicit, which means that planning documents are neither clearly nor systematically based on past performance data. **Adjustments to operational plans are informed by performance data, but this is *ad hoc* rather than systematic.** Proposed adjustments to OCHA's work are clearly informed by performance data that are gathered on an ad hoc basis, in the course of reviews of OCHA's Organisational Development Unit and some of the OCHA-related evaluative work (see KPI 8). The annual monitoring of progress in relation to OCHA's high-level KPIs also informs course corrections. However, OCHA has not operationalised any of the other, more granular, ongoing and systematic monitoring tools envisioned in its Strategic Plan, and therefore does not have the data required for a system through which systematic performance monitoring leads to proposed adjustments to OCHA's work. **For the duration of its 2018-21 Strategic Plan, OCHA annually measures a range of KPIs against their 2017 benchmarks, and reflects on progress or lack thereof, and on implications for action.** **OCHA's corporate performance data support its dialogue with partners at the global level. At the regional and country levels, feedback to OCHA's partner survey was strongly positive and, perhaps as a result, dialogue is based on situation analysis and forward planning**	2, 125

rather than performance. In *OCHA's* partner survey, the satisfaction rates for OCHA's support to the HCT/UNCT in humanitarian emergencies were high across nearly all the field offices and partner types. This was confirmed by survey respondents' comments, which highlighted OCHA's strong leadership and management; engagement with diverse stakeholders; provision of effective support; useful updates to the HCT on new challenges and issues, as well as OCHA's Information Management tools and products.	2, 125
MI 7.5 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

KPI 8: The MO applies evidence-based planning and programming	**KPI score**
Unsatisfactory	**2.27**

OCHA lacks a functionally independent and adequately funded evaluation function to inform evidence-based planning and programming. Its planning is based on analysis of humanitarian needs, rather than the systematic collection of evidence on past performance or on what works.

OCHA's evaluation function is not independent, either managerially or financially. The head of the evaluation unit does not report to a governing body or the highest authority within OCHA, but to the Executive Officer and the ASG. The evaluation unit is not at liberty to select evaluation topics; these are chosen by the Emergency Relief Coordinator, in part in reaction to donor priorities. The organisation lacks an up-to-date evaluation policy aligned with the UN Secretariat's 2019 draft self-evaluation policy, and does not attempt to achieve systematic coverage of OCHA's strategic and management objectives.

OCHA's evaluation policy stipulates that at least 1% of the total annual budget will be dedicated to its central evaluation function. This principle is not applied. Instead, the Strategic Plan says that OCHA's evaluation plans are "subject to availability of resources", and only core staff costs are covered by OCHA's assessed contributions. At the end of the review period, this consisted of only a single position (at the P5 level). Over the review period funding was insufficient for OCHA to achieve the evaluation targets in its Strategic Plan. The largest evaluative expense – for a series of CBPF evaluations – was covered by earmarked donor funding and conducted following donor pressure. OCHA lacked sufficient staff capacity in its evaluation unit to manage the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) programme of work agreed by IASC Evaluation Directors, and therefore also received earmarked financial support for managing one of the IAHE evaluations. In 2018, OCHA did not allocate any resources for evaluation activities, and in 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic led it to suspend all evaluation work in the first three quarters of the year. OCHA's underspending on evaluation is longstanding (first highlighted in a 2007 OIOS assessment) and does not align with the UN Secretariat's draft self-evaluation policy, which stipulates that all its entities are required to ensure funding to deliver their annual self-evaluation plan.

OCHA's centrally commissioned evaluations – including IAHEs, which are commissioned under the auspices of IASC – are methodologically strong and come to credible and balanced findings and recommendations. They are subject to a quality assurance protocol that is fit for purpose. Decentralised reviews and country studies are methodologically lighter and not subject to this protocol or to any other form of centralised quality assurance, and over the review period have been variable in quality.

OCHA publishes its evaluation reports and management responses, which include an action plan with commitments against each recommendation (often but not always with associated timelines). These commitments are also captured in its Recommendations Tracking System, which monitors follow-up, notes delays and closes recommendations once they are judged to have been adequately addressed. OCHA reports on its follow-up to recommendations to the General Assembly in a published document. Its results framework includes a KPI on the timeliness of this follow-up, achieving results of 51% of recommendations implemented by the due date in 2017, 66% in 2018, 49% in 2019 and 70% in 2020, against a target of 80%. The Recommendations Tracking System is in active use, although in some cases it can take a year before the first updates on management actions are provided, even for recommendations that are categorised as "critical". The system does not include MOPAN reviews, partner surveys, ODU reviews, peer reviews or CERF country studies, but there is evidence that these are also followed up. There is active monitoring of pooled fund projects, for which there is a system of field visits and quality scoring

of reports that feeds into a performance index and risk rating, used to inform subsequent funding rounds. In all cases, it is generally clear which part of OCHA and its pooled funds is responsible for following up.

There is no formal requirement to demonstrate how lessons from past interventions have been taken into account in the design of new ones. However, OCHA's New Operating Model encourages lesson learning, with peer-to-peer learning among Heads of Office and Deputy Heads of Office and the sharing of best practice through the Global Function Teams.

Interviews confirmed that OCHA staff are generally well aware of, and try to apply, lessons learned and established best practice principles, but this learning is individual rather than institutionalised. Staff are strongly incentivised to maintain their status as experts in their respective fields, as OCHA staff often play leadership roles within the humanitarian community and thus require credibility. External interviews confirmed that OCHA staff are indeed generally regarded as having up-to-date expertise. However, in the survey, the response to the statement that "OCHA learns lessons from previous experience, rather than repeating the same mistakes" was among the lowest-scoring ones.

MI 8.1: A corporate independent evaluation function exists	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**1.67**
Element 1: The evaluation function is independent from other management functions (operational and financial independence)	1
Element 2: The head of evaluation reports directly to the governing body of the organisation (structural independence)	2
Element 3: The evaluation office has full discretion in deciding the evaluation programme	0
Element 4: The central evaluation programme is fully funded by core funds	1
Element 5: Evaluations are submitted directly for consideration at the appropriate level of decision making for the subject of evaluation	3
Element 6: Evaluators are able to conduct their work during the evaluation without undue interference by those involved in implementing the unit of analysis being evaluated (behavioural independence)	3

MI 8.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA commissions evaluations that assess OCHA's own performance. In the review period, OCHA published the reports of three such evaluations: a Quadrennial Evaluation Synthesis 2014-2017 (February 2018), an evaluation of OCHA's Duty of Care (June 2018), and an evaluation of the OCHA-managed CBPFs (November 2019). OCHA also facilitates IASC-commissioned Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations (IAHEs), which assess the performance of the humanitarian system as a whole. In the review period, three IAHEs were published (all in 2020), covering gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (including a complementary piece in the form of a "Review of Progress on Mainstreaming Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls (GEEWG) into the Humanitarian, Development and Peace Nexus Agenda"), the humanitarian response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique and to the drought in Ethiopia. In addition to these evaluations, OCHA commissions independent reviews of CERF country programmes, operational peer reviews and, occasionally, decentralised reviews. For the purposes of this micro-indicator, both OCHA-focused evaluations and IAHEs are considered where relevant, but the various other reviews are not, as these do not amount to evaluations. **OCHA's evaluation function was intended to be independent from other management functions, but in practice lacks both operational and financial independence.** The 2010 evaluation policy states that the evaluation functions will operate "independently from the	2, 34, 52, 61, 110, 111, 122, 191, 197, 214, 220, 235-237

concerns of any particular organizational or management function with OCHA". However, this does not encompass the freedom to select evaluation topics, which are triggered by requests from the UN General Assembly, IASC or the USG (with the latter holding decision-making authority). According to OCHA's organogram, the evaluation function reports to the ASG (since June 2021, via OCHA's head of administration, the First Reporting Officer).

Nor is the function financially independent. The evaluation policy stipulates that at least 1% of OCHA's total annual budget will be dedicated to the central evaluation function. In practice, this does not occur, and OCHA's evaluation plans are "subject to availability of resources". The evaluation budget is therefore not ringfenced. Over the review period, OCHA did not achieve the evaluation targets outlined in its Strategic Plan due to lack of resources. This pattern is not new, and was first highlighted as problematic in a 2007 OIOS assessment. It does not align with the UN Secretariat's 2019 draft self-evaluation policy, which stipulates that all its entities are required to ensure funding to deliver their annual self-evaluation plan. Other needs regularly take priority in funding allocation. In 2018, OCHA did not allocate any resources for evaluation activities. The 2019 CBPF evaluation was funded by six CBPF donors rather than by OCHA's evaluation budget. In 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic led OCHA to suspend all evaluation work in the first three quarters of the year.

As a result, OCHA's evaluation policies are not fully implemented, and OCHA violates UN evaluation norms and standards (UN Evaluation Group, Norms and Standards for Evaluation), which state that the evaluation function should be "positioned independently from management functions, carries the responsibility of setting the evaluation agenda and is provided with adequate resources to conduct its work".

The evaluation function reports to the Executive Officer and the ASG, rather than a governing body, although this is considered acceptable under the UN Secretariat's 2019 draft self-evaluation policy. However, since June 2021, this reporting line is via OCHA's head of administration, the First Reporting Officer, which no longer appears to align with the guidance in UN Secretariat's 2019 draft self-evaluation policy.

Evaluation topics are not selected by the evaluation unit. They are formally decided by the USG, in consultation with the Executive Management Committee, and at least in part on the basis of donor priorities.

OCHA is not meeting its commitment to devote 1% of its budget to evaluation, and implementation of the evaluation programme is subject to funding by donors. OCHA's evaluation policy stipulates that "to ensure the availability of adequate resources for the evaluations function, an amount of no less than one percent of OCHA's total annual budget will be dedicated to the central evaluation function, including all staff costs." This principle was not operational in the review period. Instead, both within the review period and as part of a longer trend, OCHA has gradually reduced the staffing table and non-staffing budget for its centralised evaluation function, from 8-9 positions and USD 1.4 million in 2012 to 2.5 positions. Some evaluative work is also covered by core funding, and OCHA contributes to the cost of IAHEs. However, the costs of OCHA's CBPF evaluations, which were the largest evaluative expense in the review period, were covered in their entirety by an earmarked donor contribution. OCHA's decentralised evaluations are generally triggered by donor requests, and also not funded by core funds. Rendering evaluation plans "subject to funding" is not in line with the UN Secretariat's 2019 draft self-evaluation policy, which stipulates that "all entities are required to … ensure funding and capacity to deliver their annual self-evaluation plan".

2, 34, 52, 61, 110, 111, 122, 191, 197, 214, 220, 235-237

Evaluations are submitted directly for consideration at the appropriate level of decision making for the subject of evaluation. The OCHA evaluation policy states that the head of the evaluation sections shall "submit directly evaluation reports and findings for consideration at the appropriate level of decision making", and that management responses will be prepared with three months of completion of the evaluation. For example, the follow-up of the Duty of Care evaluation was overseen by the ASG; the CBPF evaluation was presented to the Executive Management Committee, chaired by the USG, and subsequently the Head of Humanitarian Financing & Resource Mobilization Division developed and continues to monitor the management response plan; and IAHEs are submitted directly to the USG, who shares them with the IASC Principals for consideration. **Evaluators are able to conduct their work without undue interference by OCHA management.**	2, 34, 52, 61, 110, 111, 122, 191, 197, 214, 220, 235-237
MI 8.1 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 8.2: Consistent, independent evaluation of results (coverage)	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**1.40**
Element 1: An evaluation policy describes the principles to ensure the coverage, quality and use of findings, including in decentralised evaluations	2
Element 2: The policy/an evaluation manual guides the implementation of the different categories of evaluations, such as strategic, thematic, corporate level evaluations, as well as decentralised evaluations	2
Element 3: A prioritised and funded evaluation plan covering the organisation's planning and budgeting cycle is available	1
Element 4: The annual evaluation plan presents a systematic and periodic coverage of the MO's interventions, reflecting key priorities	1
Element 5: Evidence demonstrates that the evaluation policy is being implemented at country-level	1
MI 8.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA's 2010 evaluation policy describes the principles to ensure the coverage, quality and use of findings, although elements of this policy are dated. The policy's originally scheduled update (to take place in 2012) did not happen, a 2019 version was never endorsed, and work on a 2020 draft version was postponed in April 2020. This is not aligned with the UN Secretariat's 2019 draft self-evaluation policy, which says that "All entities are required to … develop self-evaluation policies and guidelines or adapt existing policies and guidelines within this overarching policy framework." **The evaluation policy contains only limited specification of evaluation by type.** OCHA evaluation policy only distinguishes between two types of evaluations: internally-mandated evaluations and externally-mandated evaluations. The policy outlines the guiding principles for each type of evaluation. There are separate guidelines for the conduct IAHEs. **OCHA's evaluation plan for the 2018-21 period has not been funded or executed.** OCHA's 2018-21 Strategic Plan stipulates that, subject to funding availability, OCHA will initiate two thematic evaluations, one emergency response evaluation, and a mid-term review of the Strategic Plan in the course of the strategy period. This plan was not fully funded nor executed.	2, 34, 61, 191, 197, 221-226, 235-237

OCHA does not allocate sufficient resources to ensure systemic coverage of its areas of operation. The Strategic Plan says that budget constraints mean that OCHA's evaluations during the strategy period will not cover all of OCHA's strategic and management objectives. The Strategic Plan's commitment to select OCHA's evaluation topics annually is not happening in practice. **OCHA conducts a range of decentralised assessments at country level, such as country reviews and peer-to-peer reviews, but these do not explicitly fall under its evaluation policy, and do not have the rigour or status of formal evaluations.**	2, 34, 61, 191, 197, 221-226, 235-237
MI 8.2 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 8.3: Systems applied to ensure the quality of evaluations	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.80**
Element 1: Evaluations are based on design, planning and implementation processes that are inherently quality oriented	2
Element 2: Evaluations use appropriate methodologies for data collection, analysis and interpretation	3
Element 3: Evaluation reports present the evidence, findings, conclusions, and where relevant, recommendations in a complete and balanced way	3
Element 4: The methodology presented incudes the methodological limitations and concerns	3
Element 5: A process exists to ensure the quality of all evaluations, including decentralised evaluations	3
MI 8.3 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA has strong quality-oriented processes for its global and centralised evaluations, but lacks formalised quality controls for other types of assessment. The Evaluation Policy states that the evaluation function must ensure that all evaluations "meet professional quality standards", but does not further specify what those standards are. It further states that the "proper supervision and quality control" must be in place, through the evaluation cycle. In practice, quality assurance processes apply to full global evaluations and IAHEs, and the application of these processes is documented in the evaluation reports. In the sample reviewed for this assessment, the global evaluation of CPBFs demonstrates strong quality control process, including an overall advisory group and in-country reference groups, while the two IAHEs had lighter but sound approaches, including oversight from the Global IAHE Steering Group, validation of results with multiple stakeholder groups and peer review. The quality assurance processes for independent country assessments of CERF allocations are much lighter and the quality of the product is more variable. There is no formalised quality control for OCHA's other types of assessments, such as country reviews and peer-to-peer reviews. **The global CBPF evaluation and the IAHEs use appropriate methodologies for data collection, analysis and interpretation.** The methodologies for the global CBPF evaluation and the IASC's (but OCHA-facilitated) IAHEs were appropriate. The CERF country studies were much lighter touch and are not evaluations so do not provide evaluative judgements. **The evaluation reports were strong in six of the seven cases reviewed, with clear answers to the evaluation questions, supported by evidence and examples, identification of positive and negative lessons learned, and cogent recommendations.**	61, 106, 109, 110, 128, 131, 140, 148, 227- 229, 235-237

IAHEs acknowledge and address methodological limitations. Evaluation reports by OCHA identify limitations and mitigations measures in relation to the quantity and quality of the evidence, but do not indicate limitations to the methods used. **OCHA has a suitable quality assurance protocol for its centralised evaluations, but this is not used for the less formal reviews, such as peer reviews, CERF reviews and occasional decentralised reviews.** The quality assurance protocol for centralised evaluations includes checklists for an evaluation's terms of reference, inception report, data collection instruments, evaluation reports, and the integration of gender considerations; as well as guidelines for the evaluation's inception and final report contents. This protocol was verifiably used for the IAHEs that covered the cyclone response in Mozambique and the drought response in Ethiopia, but OCHA could not document its use for its Duty of Care and CBPF evaluations. OCHA does not use the protocol for its decentralised reviews and assessments. Centralised evaluations have a (non-OCHA) person responsible for quality assurance, and sometimes use peer review as part of the quality assurance process.	61, 106, 109, 110, 128, 131, 140, 148, 227- 229, 235-237
MI 8.3 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 8.4: Mandatory demonstration of the evidence base to design new interventions	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**1.80**
Element 1: A formal requirement exists to demonstrate how lessons from past interventions have been taken into account in the design of new interventions	1
Element 2: Clear feedback loops exist to feed lessons into the design of new interventions	2
Element 3: Lessons from past interventions inform new interventions	2
Element 4: Incentives exist to apply lessons learned to new interventions	2
Element 5: The number/share of new operations designs that draw on lessons from evaluative approaches is made public	2

MI 8.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA presents lessons from past interventions in synthesis documents and sometimes instructs its staff to consider previous lessons learned, but there is no formal requirement to demonstrate how lessons from past interventions have been taken into account in the design of new interventions. OCHA's templates for work plans and the proposal templates for OCHA-managed pooled funds do not include any required to show how lessons from the past have been taken into consideration. **OCHA has a strong system for tracking follow-up to evaluation recommendations, but no explicit system for feeding evaluation lessons into the design of new interventions.** Where recommendations pertain to future interventions, such as was the case for the Duty of Care recommendations and a number of CERF recommendations, this feedback loop exists because OCHA tracks its follow-up on recommendations in its Recommendations Tracking System. There is no such system outside of the immediate subjects of evaluation (e.g. for CERF to learn from CBPF recommendations and vice versa), and there is no systematic tracking process for follow-up on conclusions and recommendations from reviews, assessments and evaluations that are not part of OCHA's Recommendations Tracking System. **OCHA produces lessons learned and best practice publications but does not systematically document the manner in which past lessons informed new interventions.** While OCHA staff are often recognised as leading experts in their fields, learning is individual rather than institutionalised.	2, 56, 61, 98, 106, 153, 159, 215, 228, 230, 231, 235-237

OCHA produces lessons learned and best practice publications but does not systematically document the manner in which past lessons informed new interventions. While OCHA staff are often recognised as leading experts in their fields, learning is individual rather than institutionalised and at risk of being lost through high staff mobility. Interviews with (mostly international and relatively senior) OCHA staff confirmed a high level of expertise in relevant fields, and an awareness of past lessons learned and of the ways in which the humanitarian response evolved over time. In interviews and the survey, partners in a range of countries fed back that learning is largely individual rather than organisational or sectoral, and that good practice is quickly lost because of the high mobility of OCHA staff, leading some to argue that OCHA should invest more in local staff. **OCHA produces lessons learned and best practice publications but does not systematically document the manner in which past lessons informed new interventions.** While OCHA staff are often recognised as leading experts in their fields, learning is individual rather than institutionalised and at risk of being lost through high staff mobility. Interviews with (mostly international and relatively senior) OCHA staff confirmed a high level of expertise in relevant fields, and an awareness of past lessons learned and of the ways in which the humanitarian response evolved over time. In interviews and the survey, partners in a range of countries fed back that learning is largely individual rather than organisational or sectoral, and that good practice is quickly lost because of the high mobility of OCHA staff, leading some to argue that OCHA should invest more in local staff. **While there are no formal incentives to support learning, OCHA staff have a strong external incentive to keep their knowledge current and to play leadership roles in the sector.** Within OCHA, formal incentives to apply lessons learnt do not exist, other than in the form of OCHA's Recommendations Tracking System. However, many OCHA staff have a strong external incentive to maintain their status of up-to-date experts in their respective fields, as OCHA staff often play highly visible roles within the humanitarian community, and their ability to perform crucially depends on the respect they have among their peers. External interviews confirmed that OCHA staff are indeed often up-to-date experts in their respective fields. **OCHA does not publish, and is not aware of, the number or share of the design of new operations that draw on lessons from evaluative approaches.**	2, 56, 61, 98, 106, 153, 159, 215, 228, 230, 231, 235-237
MI 8.4 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 8.5: Poorly performing interventions proactively identified, tracked and addressed	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.00**
Element 1: A system exists to identify poorly performing interventions	2
Element 2: Regular reporting tracks the status and evolution of poorly performing interventions	2
Element 3: A process for addressing poor performance exists, with evidence of its use	2
Element 4: The process clearly delineates the responsibility to take action	2
MI 8.5 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA does not have a comprehensive system to identify poorly performing interventions, but does have some mechanisms that collectively go some way towards that goal. There are several ways in which OCHA's poorly performing interventions are identified, over and beyond its formal evaluations and the data-driven work outlined under KPI 7. These various methods sensibly complement each other and there is no duplication of effort.	2, 31, 51-53, 60, 61, 98, 101, 125, 232, 235-237, 240

- OCHA's Organisational Development Unit (ODU) reviews OCHA's structure, systems and processes, and writes concise and focused reports on the findings. OCHA generally follows up on ODU's recommendations swiftly (also covered under KPI 7).
- OCHA produced the "Four-year Review of OCHA's Progress in Implementing the Strategic Plan", which identified both achievements and challenges and included a section titled "Key observations and issues to consider in 2018-2021". No decision has been made as to whether there will be a similar exercise for the current Strategic Plan.
- At country level, CERF identifies poorly performing interventions through its country-level independent reviews. Over the review period, these have included reviews of CERF activities in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Venezuela, multi-country reviews covering the response to El Niño and to cyclones in Cuba and the Eastern Caribbean, and thematic reviews on small-scale emergencies and underfunded priority areas.
- In countries where OCHA is chairing the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group or Inter Sector Coordination Group, they aim to conduct a collective performance monitoring exercise (with a 35-40% success rate, against a 50% target, in the review period).
- OCHA's annual Partner Survey helps identify areas in need of improvement, and its results are shared with a wide range of stakeholders.
- OCHA is subject to external oversight activities conducted by Board of Auditors, Joint Inspection Unit and Office of Internal Oversight Services, and OCHA's Strategic Plan says that OCHA will prepare periodic "analytical reports" for OCHA's senior management on the areas that need improvement, as identified by these external oversight activities, to help OCHA overcome weaknesses and ensure learning. However, the external scrutiny bodies did not conduct OCHA-related evaluations in the review period (excluding audits, covered in MI 4.4), and these analytical reports were discontinued in 2018.

2, 31, 51-53, 60, 61, 98, 101, 125, 232, 235-237, 240

OCHA has no formal system for tracking underperforming interventions. Its KPIs track organisational underperformance in a few key areas. OCHA-managed pooled funds identify and track the status of poorly performing projects through a monitoring system that includes occasional field visits and systematic quality scoring of reports that feeds into a performance index and risk rating that have a bearing on subsequent funding rounds.

There is no system for tracking poor performance in real time, but OCHA does have a system for tracking action on recommendations from evaluations and audit reports. The Recommendations Tracking System tracks the follow-up on the recommendations of evaluation and audit reports, notes delays in follow-up and closes recommendations once they are judged to be adequately addressed, after which the issue is not revisited. OCHA has a KPI on the "percentage of audit and evaluation recommendations implemented by the due date", with a 2019 target of 80% and actual results of 51% in 2017, 66% in 2018, 49% in 2019 and 70% in 2020. This tracking system does not include follow-up on MOPAN reviews, partner surveys or ODU reviews, although these is evidence are these are in fact followed up in practice. The pooled funds have a process for ruling grantees ineligible for future grants following underperformance.

OCHA does not track poor performance in real time, and therefore does not allocate responsibility to take action. However, its process clearly delineate responsibility for following up on evaluation recommendations. For evaluations that are incorporated in the Recommendations Tracking System, each recommendation has an owner who is responsible for follow-up. ODU

recommendations are for the top management team to consider. CERF country studies sometimes, but not always, identify the target of each evaluation recommendation. Underperforming CBPF partners must improve the quality of their operations to regain their eligibility.	2, 31, 51-53, 60, 61, 98, 101, 125, 232, 235-237, 240
MI 8.5 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 8.6: Clear accountability system ensures responses and follow-up to and use of evaluation recommendations	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.25**
Element 1: Evaluation reports include a management response (or has one attached or associated with it)	4
Element 2: Management responses include an action plan and/ or agreement clearly stating responsibilities and accountabilities	4
Element 3: A timeline for implementation of key recommendations is proposed	3
Element 4: An annual report on the status of use and implementation of evaluation recommendations is made public	2
MI 8.6 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA always issues a management response to evaluations. **OCHA's management responses include an action plan and/or a statement of responsibilities and accountabilities and, if a recommendation is not accepted, an explanation of the rejection of the recommendation.** **OCHA's management responses often, but not always, include timelines for the implementation of key recommendations.** **OCHA tracks and reports annually on its follow-up to evaluation and audit recommendations**. Follow-up reports on audits and reviews by oversight bodies used to be publicly available but this was no longer the case by the end of the review period. Follow-up reports on OCHA-commissioned evaluations are not published. The Recommendations Tracking System tracks progress on its follow-up on evaluation recommendations, and OCHA annually produces an internal Oversights Recommendations Update. This system works but with delays: in some cases it can take a year before the first updates are provided, even on recommendations that are described as "critical". Moreover, not all assessment work is included. For example the tracking system does not include the internal reviews of the Organisational Development Unit, or the CERF country studies. OCHA tracks the extent of timely follow-up on recommendations of its audits and evaluations in its KPIs, achieving results of 51%, 66%, 49% and 70% in the period 2017 to 2020, against a target of 80% in 2019. OCHA reports on the follow-up on its oversight bodies' evaluations (and audits) to the General Assembly, and these reports are available online. OCHA does not issue a public report on the follow-up on recommendations made by internal evaluations, but OCHA's annual reports cover some of OCHA's follow-up work.	2, 31, 61, 125, 197, 233-237, 239
MI 8.6 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 8.7: Uptake of lessons learned and best practices from evaluations	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.00**
Element 1: A complete and current repository of evaluations and their recommendations is available for use	3
Element 2: A mechanism for distilling and disseminating lessons learned internally exists	3
Element 3: A dissemination mechanism to partners, peers and other stakeholders is available and employed	3
Element 4: Evidence is available that lessons learned and best practices are being applied	3
MI 8.7 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA has a repository of OCHA-specific, IAHEs, CBPF and CERF reports, all of which are available on line. There is no centralised repository for peer-to-peer reviews and country reviews, but they are available for internal use. **OCHA has a range of processes for distilling and disseminating lessons learned internally.** These various methods sensibly complement each other and there is no duplication of efforts. • The Quadrennial Evaluation Synthesis report provided a synthesis of evaluation findings and lessons from OCHA-management evaluations 2014-2017. Because of budgetary and human resource constraints, OCHA will not be able to conduct a similar exercise in 2021. • The New Operating Model includes peer-to-peer learning among Heads of Office and Deputy Heads of Office, and the sharing of best practice through the Global Function Teams. Interviews confirmed the usefulness of this peer-to-peer learning mechanism. • The CERF RC/HC narrative reports include a section for describing lessons identified during CERF processes at country level. • The Global Synthesis Report of CBPF evaluations identified overall lessons. • OCHA tasked a consultant to undertake lesson learning on the past three IAHEs. **OCHA has a suitable mechanism for disseminating the results of its evaluations.** OCHA publishes its evaluations (other than internal reviews), as well as synthesis "lessons learned"-type documents, on line; and covers snippets in its annual reports (including references to more critical findings). IAHE's evaluations are also published through IASC (and there is a wider dissemination strategy for each of them). **There is documented evidence of OCHA's application of lessons learned and best practice, both its own operations and from across the wider humanitarian sector.** These lessons and insights come from evaluations, peer-to-peer reviews, country reviews and research literature. Interviews confirmed that OCHA staff are generally aware of, and seek to apply, lessons learned and established best practice principles. In interviews and the survey, external respondents offered examples where OCHA had helped the sector absorb and utilise lessons learned and apply good practice principles. However, in the survey, the statement that "OCHA learns lessons from previous experience, rather than repeating the same mistakes" received the most negative responses of any survey questions.	3, 4, 61, 106, 211, 213, 215, 235-238
MI 8.7 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

RESULTS

Achievement of relevant, inclusive and sustainable contributions to humanitarian and development results in an efficient manner

KPI 9: Development and humanitarian objectives are achieved and results contribute to normative and cross-cutting goals	KPI score
Satisfactory	**3.00**

For the purposes of this KPI, the assessment examines evidence on results achieved through OCHA's core functions against its strategic objectives, including co-ordination, advocacy, policy, humanitarian financing (including through the management of pooled funds at the global and country levels) and information management. It draws on internal reporting by OCHA against its corporate KPIs and reporting from CERF and CBPFs. Being internal, these data are not as robust as independent evaluations. In addition, the assessment draws on a limited number of independent evaluations and reviews. Some of these are specific to OCHA, including evaluations of the CBPFs and OCHA's duty of care, together with four lighter-touch CERF reviews which are more variable in quality. Others evaluations assess the performance of the humanitarian system as a whole, with some reference to OCHA's contribution to those results. The limited availability of evaluation evidence means that the level of confidence in the evidence in this section is lower than in other parts of the assessment.

Overall, OCHA reports a good level of achievement against its result targets and cross-cutting objectives, meeting or exceeding its targets in most areas, including partner satisfaction with its situational analysis, timely allocations from pooled funds and the numbers of people in target groups reached by both CERF and CBPFs. CERF received positive rating in an external review of its hurricane response in Cuba and the eastern Caribbean. CBPFs report results against the areas of inclusiveness, flexibility, timeliness, efficiency, AAP and risk management. In all cases, CBPF reports disaggregate the people it reached by age, gender and disability status. The reported results and evaluation findings are broadly positive, with AAP and attention to cross-cutting issues identified as areas that need strengthening. In the survey, partners said that progress in these fields would be difficult to achieve because of the CBPFs' short project timelines.

OCHA's pooled funds include a strong focus on gender, and have allocated a substantial amount of funding to projects on gender-based violence and humanitarian support tailored to the needs of women. An IAHE evaluation found that there has been progress on mainstreaming gender equality within humanitarian responses, but not to the extent required, with most progress seen in protracted crises, and women continuing to have limited meaningful influence on decision making on humanitarian response

OCHA's work on human rights and humanitarian principles is pursued primarily through its work on protection. OCHA's reports point to a number of countries in which its advocacy worked has increased the attention given to protection within the humanitarian response, and both CERF and CBPF provide substantial resources for protection activities, and are often the only source of funding available.

OCHA recognises the value of a diversity of humanitarian actors, and advances this primarily through its efforts to increase the participation of national and local responders in humanitarian co-ordination and financing. While the humanitarian sector as a whole is making relatively slow progress on localisation, OCHA has made a useful contribution. Its pooled funds serve as a useful intermediary between donors and local responders, and it was assessed in the Grand Bargain 2020 Independent Report as meeting the target of 25% of resources allocated to local responders. Overall, however, OCHA data suggest that less than 5% of humanitarian finance goes directly to national and local actors. Although 78% of HCTs include representation from national NGOs, there little evidence of participation by the private sector or other non-traditional actors.

MI 9.1: Interventions assessed as having achieved their objectives, and results (analysing differential results across target groups, and changes in national development policies and programs or system reforms)	Score
MI rating	**Satisfactory**
MI score	**3**

MI 9.1 Analysis	Source documents
In its annual reports, OCHA assesses its results against KPIs that capture aspects of its achievement through its core functions, including its contribution to humanitarian system reforms. OCHA concluded that its results were mixed over the assessment period, but mostly met or exceeded the targets set. OCHA has five core functions, which are covered by 2-8 indicators each in its results framework. Its results reporting suggests that it exceeded or was on track to achieve its targets in most areas. In particular, OCHA reported good performance on partner satisfaction, rapid deployment of emergency response, timely allocations from pooled funds, satisfaction rates with OCHA situational analysis, and the number of people in target groups reached by both CERF and CPBFs. It reported being below target on the quality rating of joint needs assessments and joint response planning, on the number of countries with collective performance monitoring, systematic implementation of the IASC Emergency Response Preparedness approach, monitoring of humanitarian access, CERF fundraising targets, and the proportion of Humanitarian Response Plans that are sufficiently funded. OCHA does not report on differential results across target groups. The two available Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations suggest a mixed picture on OCHA's contribution to improving targeting in humanitarian operations. While its performance in the response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique was strong, in the Ethiopia drought response support for vulnerable groups was assessed as mixed, with a lack of tailored support for specific needs. CERF reports broadly positive (and sex-disaggregated) results that often exceeded targets at output, outcome and impact level. The review of CERF's hurricane response in Cuba and the eastern Caribbean is the only one from the review period that scored CERF's performance, awarding a combination of 3s and 4s, on a 5-point scale, for both outputs and outcomes. CBPF reports cover the issues of inclusiveness, flexibility, timeliness, efficiency, AAP and risk management. People reached are disaggregated into women, men, girls and boys (all pooled funds only feature binary sex disaggregation), with sub-disaggregation of people with disabilities. CBPF annual results reports and evaluations are broadly positive, with AAP and attention to cross-cutting issues identified as issues that could be strengthened.	4, 19, 33, 34, 66, 110, 111, 125, 131, 227, 237, 241
MI 9.1 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 9.2: Interventions assessed as having helped improve gender equality and women's empowerment	Score
MI rating	**Satisfactory**
MI score	**3**
MI 9.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA-managed pooled funds have allocated substantial resources to interventions to address the needs of women in humanitarian crises. OCHA has helped to improve the focus on women's needs and empowerment in HNOs and HRPs, but overall progress towards more responsive humanitarian action has been relatively slow. OCHA reports on some gender-related KPIs, but they relate solely to internal gender quality issues. It reported some improvement over the assessment period on the proportion of women among its Heads of Office and Humanitarian Coordinator pool members, but fell short of its targets. It does not have gender-related targets in respect of its operations, but its annual reports note that OCHA stepped up its advocacy work in the field of gender equality and women's empowerment, and offer examples of success in disaggregated data collection and needs assessments, and in integrating	4, 34, 25, 29, 62, 106

gender concerns across the humanitarian response (including, for example, in the context of civil-military co-operation and access co-ordination mechanisms). Monitoring data show that 88% of HNOs now include analysis of humanitarian needs by population group, including different groups of women, and most HRPs propose interventions to support those needs. However, the 2020 IAHE on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls (GEEWG) concluded progress on making the humanitarian sector more gender responsive has been relatively slow. There is no clear "home" for GEEWG issues in IASC, and the evaluation suggested that OCHA take on the role of enhancing leadership capacity development in this field. Across the humanitarian system (and therefore not solely attributable to OCHA), the evaluation concluded that: • There has been progress in integrating GEEWG issues into IASC humanitarian responses since 2017, especially in protracted crises, but not to the extent sought in IASC policy. • At the outset of humanitarian operations, nearly all humanitarian responses tend to be gender blind, although this improves over time. • Women's meaningful influence on decision making, especially at the higher levels, remains limited in both protracted and sudden-onset emergency responses. • While there has been observed progress on GEEWG implementation, gaps in country-level gender expertise and co-ordination thwart efforts to support and sustain it. • In order for GEEWG to be sustainably realised, existing accountability mechanisms must be better used and leveraged. • Achieving GEEWG requires adequate funding. OCHA-managed pooled funds had a strong focus on GEEWG. In 2019, they allocated nearly USD 50 million to projects focusing on GBV mitigation and response activities, and many other projects included GBV components. The annual reports highlight a range of achievements, but with scope for improvement. A synthesis report of five CBPF evaluations concluded that "there were weaknesses in the partner capacity to understand the differential effect of humanitarian crises on different groups, particularly women, and the additional challenges that they faced in participating in program design or having access to feedback and complaints mechanisms."	4, 34, 25, 29, 62, 106
MI 9.2 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 9.3: Interventions assessed as having helped improve environmental sustainability/ tackle the effects of climate change	Score
MI rating	**N/E**
MI score	**N/E**
MI 9.3 Analysis	**Source documents**
This indicator was not assessed due to lack of available evidence. OCHA's work has not been independently assessed as to its contribution to improving environmental sustainability or tackling the effects of climate change. As noted above, OCHA has not mainstreamed climate or environmental issues into its operations and does not report on these areas as a cross-cutting issue. The UNEP/OCHA Joint Environment Unit does publish "major activity reports", elements of which are also reported in UNEP's Annual Programme Reports. These activity reports claim significant success in the joint unit's work, but are not independently verified. Environmental sustainability and climate change received little or no attention in OCHA's evaluations.	
MI 9.3 Evidence confidence	**N/E**

MI 9.4: Interventions assessed as having helped improve human rights and the upholding of humanitarian law and principles, including the protection of vulnerable people (those at risk of being left behind)	Score
MI rating	**Satisfactory**
MI score	**3**
MI 9.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA's work has been assessed as having helped improve human rights and uphold humanitarian law and principles – and especially through the protection of vulnerable people and those at risk of being "left behind". There are no KPIs in OCHA's corporate results framework that mention human rights or upholding humanitarian law and principles. The closest proxy KPI is one on the percentage of humanitarian response plans that articulate strategies to meet the special needs of internally displaced persons (with a score of 71% in 2019, against a target of 60%). Concerning its advocacy work and co-ordination role in this area, its annual reports give examples of countries where protection moved higher up the sector's agenda because of OCHA's advocacy work. It also claims one global victory, in its advocacy for the adoption of the first UN Resolution on the protection of persons with disabilities in armed conflict. The OCHA, CERF and CBPF annual reports all mention interventions that led to improvement in human rights and the upholding of international humanitarian law – mostly related to the issue of protection, where OCHA's pooled funds sometimes provided the only funding available. The evaluation reports also nearly all report on protection work, but not on other issues related to human rights and the upholding of humanitarian law. On the whole, the documents show that OCHA has helped meet protection needs, though the CBPF documents show that there is scope for progress.	4, 34, 17, 19, 25, 61, 106, 110, 227, 237
MI 9.4 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 9.5: Interventions assessed as having helped improve the recognition of the value of a diversity of actors within the humanitarian system	Score
MI rating	**Satisfactory**
MI score	**3**
MI 9.5 Analysis	**Source documents**
OCHA's work has been assessed as making an important contribution to increasing the share of humanitarian finance going to national actors. The Grand Bargain Annual Independent Report 2020 finds that 12 of 18 CPBFs in 2019 met the Grand Bargain target of 25% of resources allocated to national and local actors, and credits OCHA as one of only 11 Grand Bargain signatories to have met the localisation target in 2019. OCHA's own data suggest that pooled fund grants for local responders in 2019 reached USD 73 million (14% of the total) for CERF and USD 332 million (33%) for CBPFs, which was an incremental improvement over previous years. The Grand Bargain Annual Independent Report confirms that OCHA-managed pooled funds play an important intermediary role between donors and local organisations by shouldering much of the administrative burden involved in funding national and local actors, but notes that there has not been any systematic investment in building their capacity. Across the sector, progress on localising humanitarian finance has been relatively modest. OCHA's Financial Tracking System, which helpfully collects data on the proportion of total humanitarian finance allocated directly to national and local actors, reports that the current proportion remains below 5%.	15, 34, 209, 228, 243

The evaluation evidence suggests some progress on incorporating local responders into humanitarian co-ordination processes. The 2019 CPBF evaluation found considerable variation in the extent to which CBPFs provided national NGOs with capacity-building support and included them in governance and management structures, and recommended a more systematic approach. A survey of co-ordination structures at country level found that 78% of Humanitarian Country Teams include representation of national NGOs or consortia, and that 55% of cluster or sector co-ordination mechanisms operated in a national or local language (to facilitate localisation). It found no participation of the private sector and only one "non-traditional partner" (the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, in Somalia).	15, 34, 209, 228, 243
MI 9.5 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

KPI 10: Interventions are relevant to the needs and priorities of partner countries and beneficiaries, as the organisation works towards results in areas within its mandate	**KPI score**
Unsatisfactory	**2.00**

OCHA's needs assessment and co-ordination functions have contributed to a global humanitarian system that is more response to humanitarian needs. It has helped to ensure that the majority of HNOs and HRPs are now based on structured consultations with affected populations on their needs and priorities. CBPFs have been evaluated as providing principled support that is well aligned with HRPs and fills gaps in assistance, thereby playing "an essential role in contributing to the alleviation of the most urgent humanitarian needs".

OCHA has also contributed to making the global humanitarian system more agile in response to sudden-onset disasters and evolving humanitarian need. OCHA tracks changing humanitarian needs and conditions in humanitarian theatres, updates needs assessments and Humanitarian Response Plans and helps to co-ordinate the international response across emerging areas of need. CERF often plays a useful trigger role for rapid humanitarian response, and is able to respond quickly to new and deteriorating crises at national and sub-national levels. Its funding for hurricane response in Cuba and the eastern Caribbean was assessed as timely; whether it led to more rapid humanitarian responses depended on whether the UN agencies has existing response capacity in affected areas.

The evaluation evidence suggests that OCHA has had only limited success in ensuring that humanitarian operations are tailored to particular categories of people in need, in accordance with the "leaving no one behind" commitment. OCHA's internal monitoring shows improvement to needs assessment and planning processes: 88% of HNOs now include analysis of humanitarian need by population groups, while 90% of HRP proposed actions to address those needs. However, the evaluation evidence suggests that this has not yet translated into significant improvements in the tailoring of humanitarian response. IAHEs of both the Mozambique flood response and the Ethiopia drought respond found significant weaknesses in the targeting vulnerable groups, while the CBPF found "weaknesses in partner capacity to understand the differential effect of humanitarian crises on different groups, particularly women, and the additional challenges that they faced in participating in program design or having access to feedback and complaints mechanisms".

MI 10.1: Intervention objectives and design assessed as responding to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities (inclusiveness, equality and Leave No One Behind), and continuing to do so where circumstances change	**Score**
MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
MI score	**2**

MI 10.1 Analysis	Source documents
As with KPI 9, the evidence on the relevance of OCHA's interventions to the needs and priorities of partner's countries and target populations is based on a combination of internal reporting against corporate KPIs, reporting by and external reviews of CERF and CBPFs, and IAHEs assessing the performance of the humanitarian system as a whole. OCHA's own monitoring suggests that its core functions of needs assessment and co-ordination help to ensure that international humanitarian action is responsive to the needs of target populations. The majority of HNOs and HRPs now include a co-ordinated approach to engaging with affected populations, to identify their needs and priorities. OCHA's pooled funds are assessed as being well aligned with HRPs, prioritising the most relevant projects and filling gaps in the response. They support humanitarian principles, in particular humanity and neutrality, and provided life-saving assistance, thereby playing "an essential role in contributing to the alleviation of the most urgent humanitarian needs". The 2020 IAHE of the response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique concluded that "OCHA's robust coordination and information role during the response to the cyclone was cited by a wide range of stakeholders as one of the main underlying factors leading to the successful response." Its international advocacy likewise helps to ensure that evolving global needs are reflected in humanitarian system priorities and approaches, particularly through its support for accountability to affected populations. According to the Grand Bargain 2020 Independent Review, of 25 HRPs reviewed, 21 included a co-ordinated approach to engaging with affected populations and ensuring accountability to them. OCHA also contributes to increasing the agility of international humanitarian responses in the face of changing needs. CERF often plays a useful role in triggering an international humanitarian response, and is able to respond quickly to new and deteriorating crises at national and sub-national levels. CERF's funding for the hurricane response in Cuba and the eastern Caribbean was assessed as timely; whether this led to more rapid humanitarian response depended upon whether the grantee UN agencies had existing response capacity in the affected areas. Across humanitarian theatres, OCHA tracks changing humanitarian needs and conditions, co-ordinates updates of HNOs and HRPs, and helps to promote a co-ordinated international response. The evaluation evidence suggests that OCHA has had less success in ensuring that humanitarian operations are tailored to particular categories of people in need, in accordance with the "leaving no one behind" principle. OCHA's internal monitoring data suggest clear improvements in needs assessment and planning processes: 88% of HNOs now include analysis of humanitarian need by population groups, while 90% of HRP proposed actions to address those needs. However, the evaluation evidence suggests that this has not yet translated into significant differences in humanitarian response. The 2020 IAHE of the Response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique found that considerations of gender and age had not significantly influenced the distribution of assistance. A majority of the households surveyed during that response reported that the assistance had not been targeted according to needs. The 2020 IAHE of the drought response in Ethiopia concluded that the credibility and accuracy of the needs assessment data used for collective response planning was highly contested, accountability to affected populations was weak, lessons from past failures had not been learned, support for vulnerable groups was mixed, and there had been a lack of tailored support for specific needs. While OCHA is not accountable for the performance of the humanitarian system as whole, the evaluation evidence suggests that its contribution to the tailoring of support to particular groups is mixed.	109-111, 131, 204, 209, 227, 228

The four CERF reviews suggest that CERF does not always catalyse tailored support for specific population groups, and its focus areas are not always aligned to the needs and priorities of affected populations and the most marginalised groups within them. The CBPF evaluation found that CBPFs had made a key contribution to meeting priority needs by aligning with HRPs and by establishing systems for prioritising and selecting the most relevant projects. Some CBPFs proved able to accommodate changes in humanitarian priorities, and have been responsive to the needs of affected communities by supporting multi-sector or integrated programming, with due attention to cross-cutting issues, in spite of the challenges of a siloed humanitarian system.	109-111, 131, 204, 209, 227, 228
MI 10.1 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

KPI 11: Results are delivered efficiently	**KPI score**
Satisfactory	**3.00**
Over the assessment period, OCHA has implemented organisational reforms designed to enhance the efficiency of its operations, but there is no evidence as to whether this has led to more efficient operations. Evidence on OCHA's contributions to improving efficiency across the wider sector is mixed, suggesting gradual improvements in some operating theatres and missed opportunities in others. OCHA-managed pooled funds are generally managed efficiently, and there are positive examples of grants that have proved efficiency – for example, by promoting common platforms for cash-based assistance through joint CERF grants. Overall, this suggests a modest but positive contribution to efficient humanitarian results, but with a relatively low confidence rating given limited evidence.	
MI 11.1: Interventions/activities assessed as resource-/cost-efficient	**Score**
MI rating	**Satisfactory**
MI score	**3**
MI 11.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
There is insufficient evidence available to reach a conclusion as to whether organisational reforms over the assessment period have increased the efficiency of its operations. There is mixed evidence as to whether OCHA has contributed to improve cost-efficiency in the wider humanitarian sector. The IAHE evaluation of the response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique concluded efficiency and effectiveness were undermined by deficiencies "at multisectoral level", suggesting shortcomings in OCHA's inter-cluster co-ordination. It also concluded that weaknesses in the targeting of vulnerable groups (discussed above) reduced overall cost-efficiency. In contrast, in Yemen, the 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan suggests that humanitarian operations are now better managed and monitored and more efficient than they had been prior to the review period. As regards OCHA-managed pooled funds, the external CERF country studies did not directly assess the efficiency of operations, but the review of CERF's added value in Cuba and the eastern Caribbean concluded, while CERF had provided early access to funding, the impact of this on the efficiency of the humanitarian response depended largely on whether or not grantees had a prior presence on the ground. CERF's own results reporting points to instances in which CERF used joint projects to promote common platforms for cash-based assistance, reducing overheads, improving co-ordination and increasing efficiency. CBPF evaluations come to varied but often positive conclusions, suggesting that the pooled funds are generally efficient and on an improving trajectory.	31, 33, 51, 52, 53, 101, 109, 114, 131, 170, 227, 228, 229
MI 11.1 Evidence confidence	**Low confidence**

MI 11.2: Implementation and results assessed as having been achieved on time (given the context, in the case of humanitarian programming)	Score
MI rating	Satisfactory
MI score	3
MI 11.2 Analysis	Source documents
OCHA disburses funding from its pooled funds in a timely way. OCHA's results framework includes three measures of the timeliness of OCHA's work, relating to its response to requests for emergency response and to CERF and CBPF allocations. In all cases, OCHA met or exceeded its targets, sometimes by a wide margin. One of these indicators is for OCHA's provision of emergency response services within 10 days. OCHA's own Partner Survey found that allocations from OCHA-managed pooled funds are generally made within the required timelines. CERF country studies reached mixed findings on efficiency. CERF's release of funding for the hurricane response in Cuba and the eastern Caribbean was predictable and timely, even though implementation by partners was sometimes delayed. However, funding for the Venezuelan refugee crisis was not. There is limited evaluative evidence as to whether timely disbursement from the pooled funds has translated into more timely humanitarian responses. CERF's rules for sudden-onset disasters enable grants to be used for activities up to six weeks before the date of the grant, which can enhance the speed of response. However, a review of the cyclone response in Cuba and the eastern Caribbean found that the practical value of this depended on the extent to which UN agencies had existing response capacity in the affected areas. CBPFs have a broader range of potential grantees (as they are not restricted to UN agencies) and the synthesis of CBPF evaluations concluded that are usually able to operate quickly and efficiently by ensuring that the best-placed actors are supported to reach those who are most in need. OCHA's Partner Survey also found that allocations from OCHA-managed pooled funds are generally made within the required timelines.	15, 31, 33, 34, 51, 106, 227
MI 11.2 Evidence confidence	Medium confidence

KPI 12: Results are sustainable	KPI score
Unsatisfactory	2.00
Given OCHA's humanitarian mandate and its lack of a direct operational role, most of its work is not intended to generate sustainable results directly. However, there is scope for OCHA to encourage approaches to humanitarian support that achieve more sustainable results, within the norms of humanitarian action. The evidence suggests limited progress in this area. The Mozambique IAHE noted the lack of a transition plan for moving from relief to early recovery and a failure to identify interventions that contribute to both. In Somalia, the CBPF encouraged partners to adopt more sustainable approaches. In general, however, the short project cycles adopted by CBPFs work against sustainability. There is no evidence to reach a conclusion on the sustainability of OCHA's capacity building support for national disaster response capacity or on the extent of its contribution to promoting the nexus approach.	
MI 12.1: Benefits assessed as continuing, or likely to continue after intervention completion (Where applicable, reference to building institutional or community capacity and/or strengthening enabling environment for development, in support of 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda)	Score
MI rating	Unsatisfactory
MI score	2

MI 12.1 Analysis	Source documents
The evidence suggests the OCHA has made only limited progress on encouraging partners to adopt more sustainable approaches to the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The IAHE in Mozambique noted the lack of a transition plan for moving from relief into early recovery, and pointed to a need for "cost efficient interventions that address both humanitarian and early recovery needs". On the other hand, the evaluation of CERF's response to hurricanes in Cuba and the east Caribbean found instances in which CERF projects had helped to kick-start longer-term recovery efforts and more sustainable approaches. There are some positive examples of CBPFs operating in protracted crises encouraging implementing partners to adopt more sustainable approaches to humanitarian assistance. In Somalia, partners were encouraged to adopt more sustainable approaches, such as prioritising boreholes over water trucking. However, the CBPF evaluation found that the short project time frames adopted by many CBPFs (6-9 months) work against more sustainable approaches, particularly when combined with bureaucratic impediments that delay implementation. Both CERF and CBPFs have been experimenting with funding that extends beyond a single year. There is no evaluative evidence on the sustainability of OCHA's work with national governments to strengthen disaster preparedness capacity, which takes place mainly in countries where OCHA has only a Humanitarian Advisory Team (HAT) or is transitioning toward a HAT presence. There are examples of OCHA allocating resources from pooled funds towards resilience building, disaster preparedness and other nexus approaches, within the norms of humanitarian action. OCHA reports that CERF-related inter-agency consultations often help humanitarian and development partners identify synergies and avoid duplication. Pooled funds sometimes serve as a catalyst for other agencies' longer-term programming (such as in Cuba and the eastern Caribbean). However, there is not enough evidence to reach a conclusion on the extent of OCHA's contribution to promoting the nexus approach.	33, 106, 107, 154, 244
MI 12.1 Evidence confidence	**Low confidence**

Annex B. List of documents

No.	Document title
1	OCHA (2014), *Management Plan 2014-2017*, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/OCHA%20SF%202014-2017%20Management%20Plan%20%28July%202014%29.pdf.
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No.	Document title
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No.	Document title
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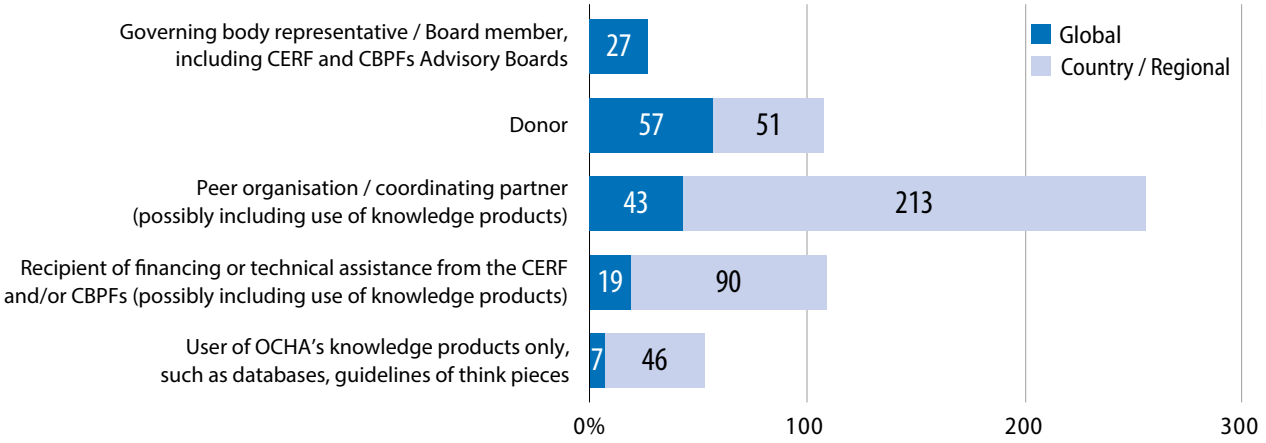
Annex C. Results of the 2020 MOPAN external partner survey

The online survey was administered by MOPAN and was conducted over a period of 7 weeks, starting on 1 December 2020 and closing on 18 January 2021.

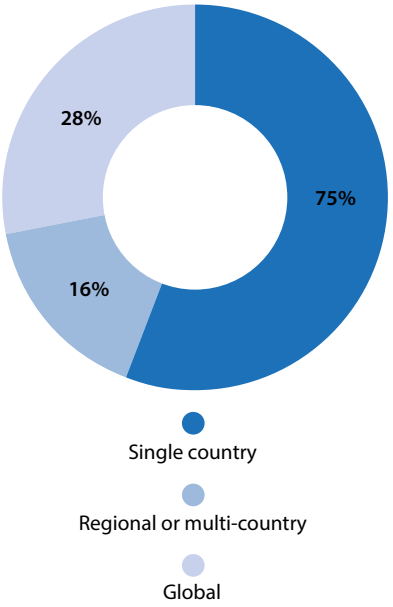
Number of respondents: 553 **Effective sample size:** 3 364 **Survey response rate:** 16%

Respondents profile:

Respondents' primary role with regard to OCHA and geographical focus:



Respondents' geographical focus/ interactions with OCHA:



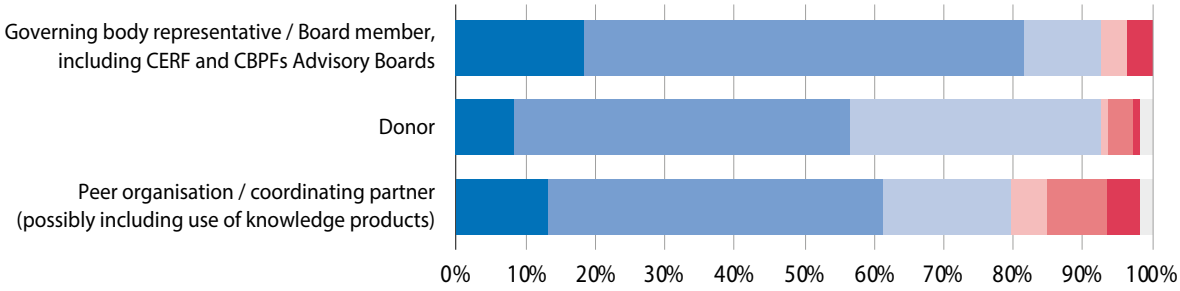
Among those who primarily interact with OCHA at country or regional level, respondents were most familiar with:

Regional offices	82
Regional Office for Southern and Eastern Africa	32
Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean	14
Regional Office for the Syria Crisis	36
Country offices	**247**
Afghanistan	54
Central African Republic	29
Chad	19
Ethiopia	36
Philippines	36
Venezuela	35
Yemen	38
Humanitarian Advisory Teams (HATs)	**82**
Madagascar	14
Peru	0
Tajikistan	16

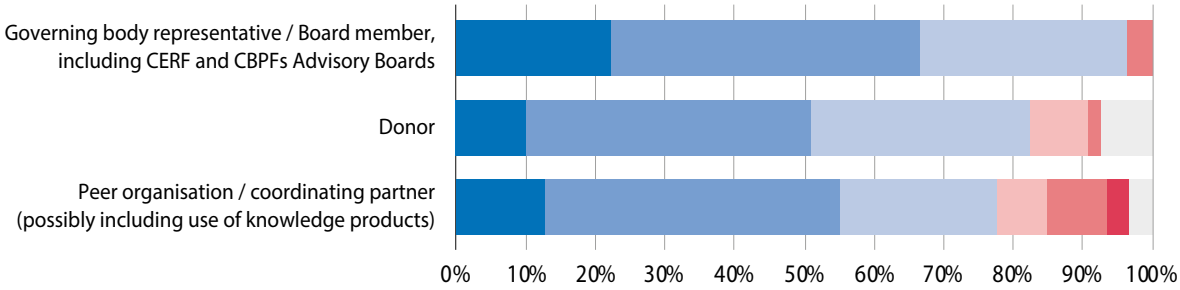
Note: Results displayed only reflect responses to questions that are relevant to specific partner categories. Where partner categories have not been asked a particular question, their category is not listed.

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

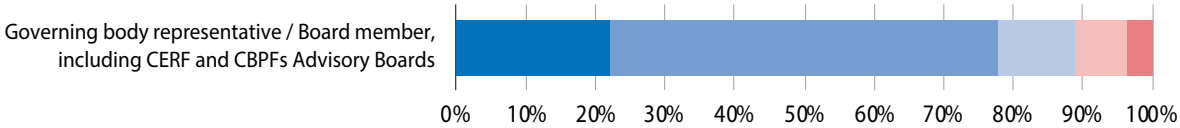
OCHA's strategies and policies demonstrate clarity of vision



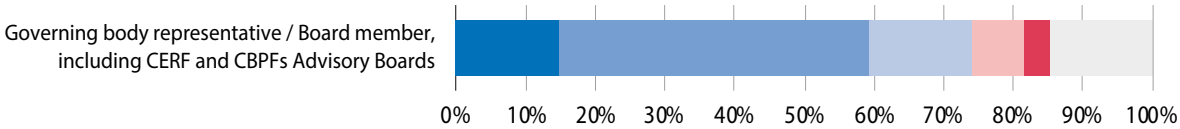
OCHA's strategies and policies demonstrate good understanding of comparative advantage



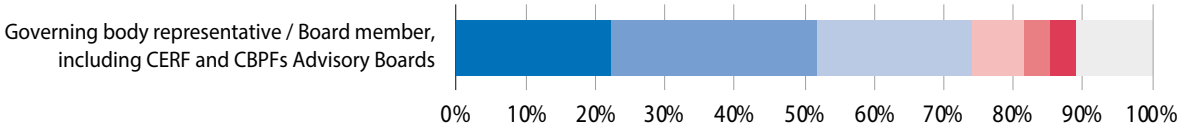
OCHA organises and runs itself in a way that fully supports its vision



OCHA's financial framework supports the effective implementation of the mandate and strategy

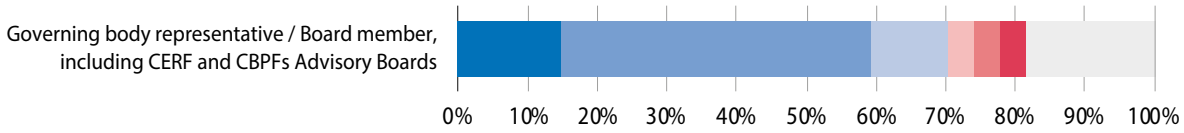


OCHA's strategic allocation of resources is transparent and coherent with agreed strategic priorities

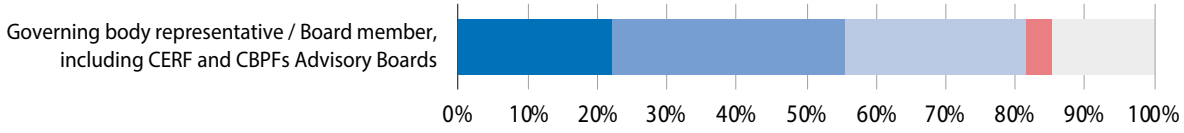


Strongly agree · Agree · Somewhat agree · Somewhat disagree · Disagree · Strongly disagree · Don't know / No opinion

OCHA applies principles of results-based budgeting and reports expenditure according to results

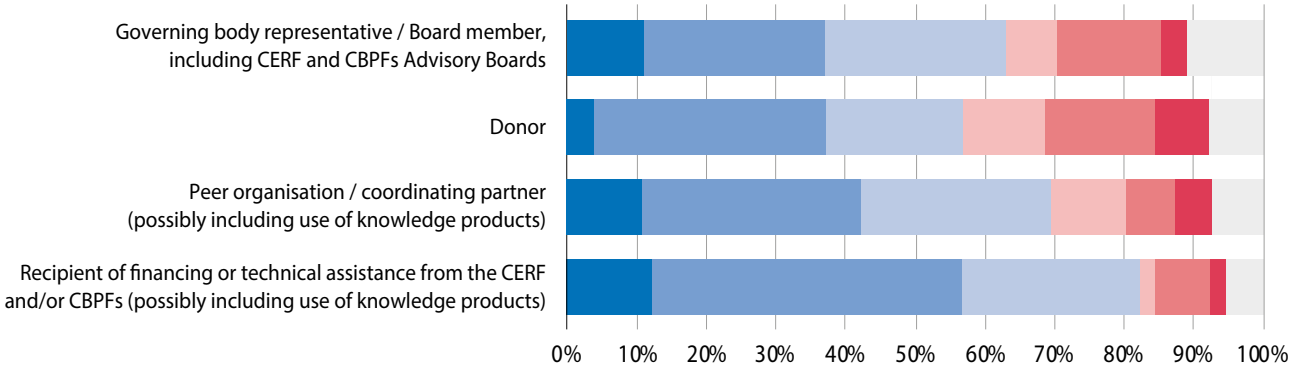


OCHA adequately addresses issues and concerns raised by internal control mechanisms

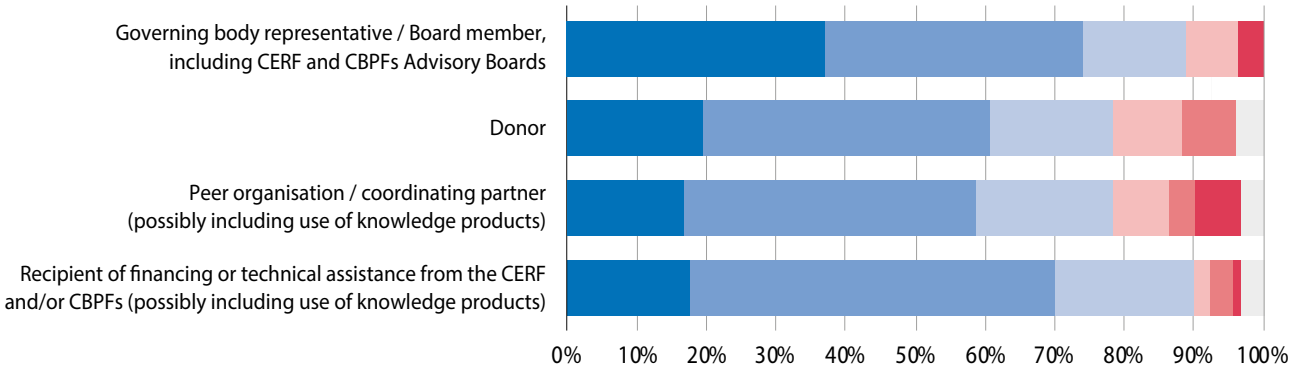


STAFFING

OCHA has a sufficient number of staff either in or accessible to countries where it operates to deliver intended results

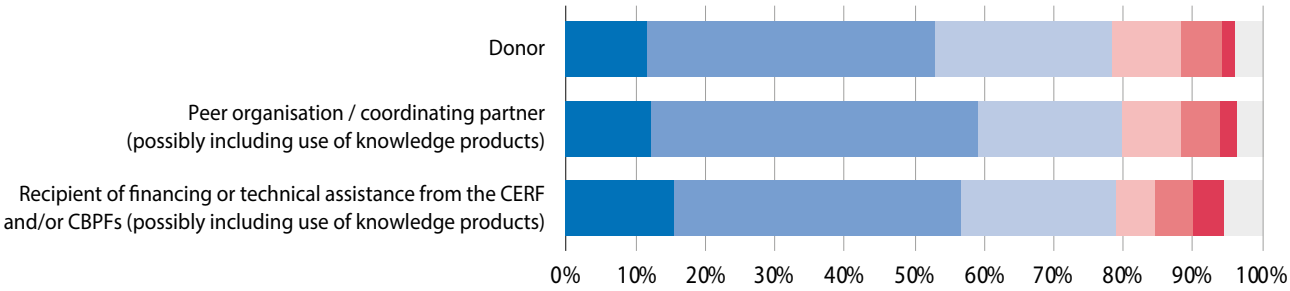


OCHA staff are sufficiently experienced and skilled to work successfully in the different contexts of operation

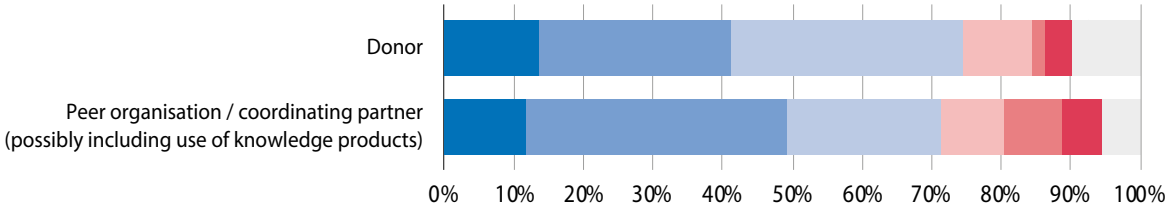


Strongly agree · Agree · Somewhat agree · Somewhat disagree · Disagree · Strongly disagree · Don't know / No opinion

OCHA staff are in country for a long enough time to build the relationships needed

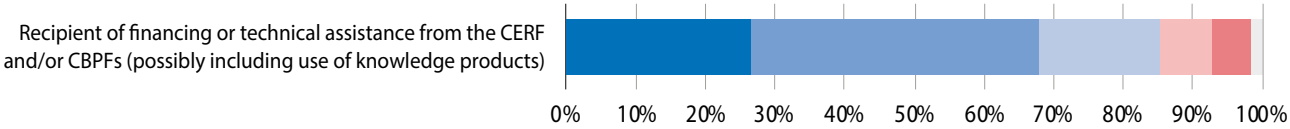


OCHA can make critical strategic or programming decisions locally

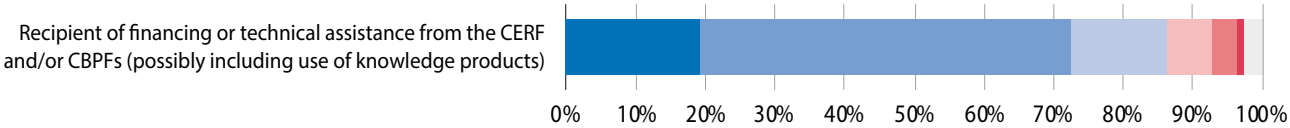


MANAGING FINANCIAL RESOURCES

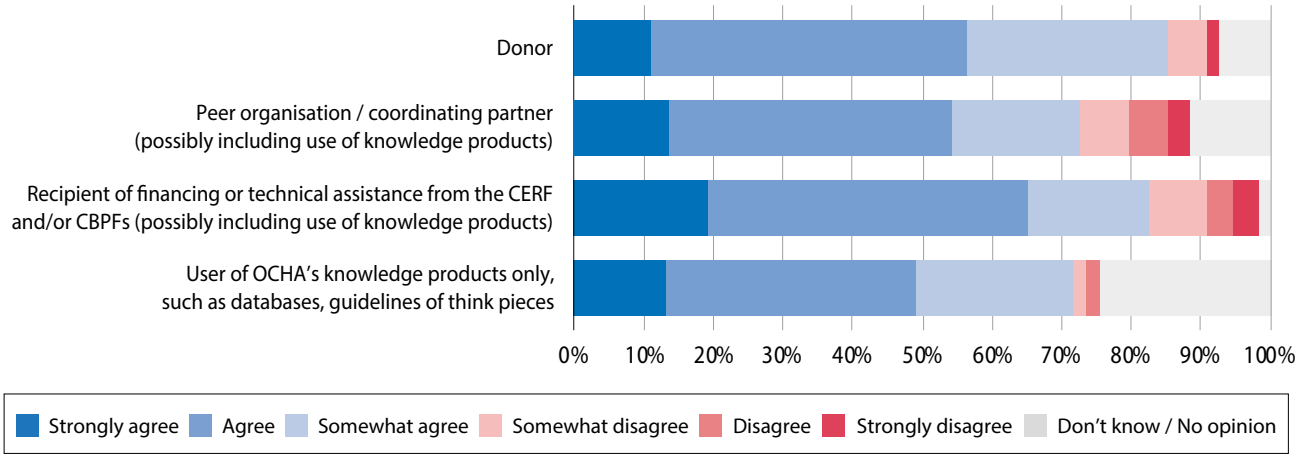
OCHA openly communicates the criteria for allocating financial resources



OCHA provides reliable information on when financial allocations and disbursement will happen, and the respective amounts

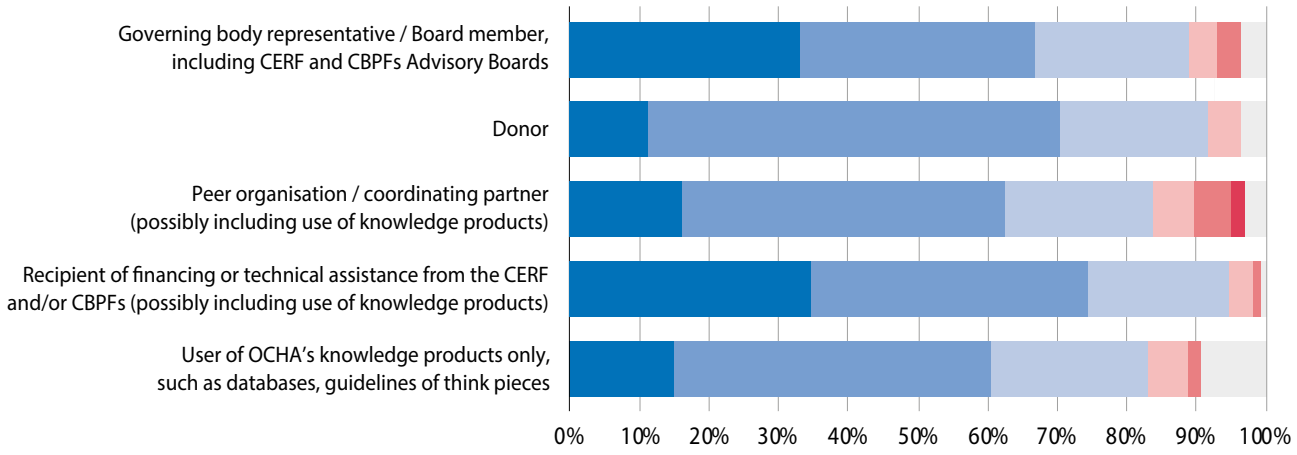


OCHA co-ordinates its financial contributions with partners to ensure coherence and avoid fragmentation/duplication

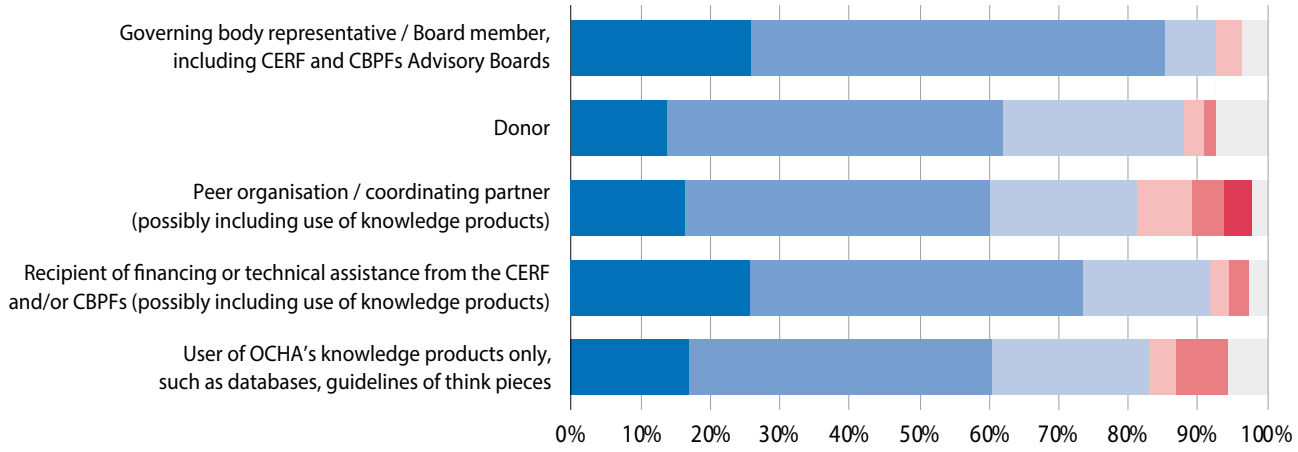


INTERVENTIONS

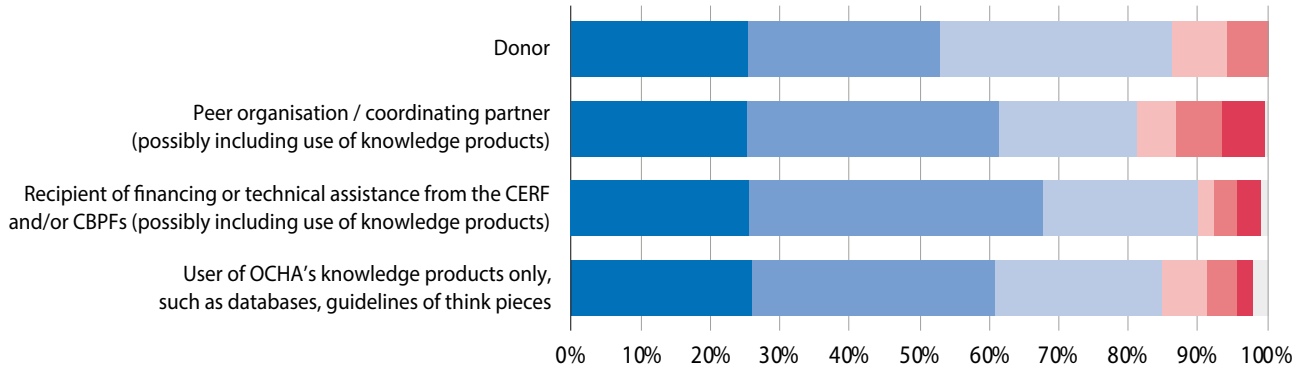
OCHA's work responds to the needs of beneficiaries, including the most vulnerable



OCHA adapts its work as the context changes

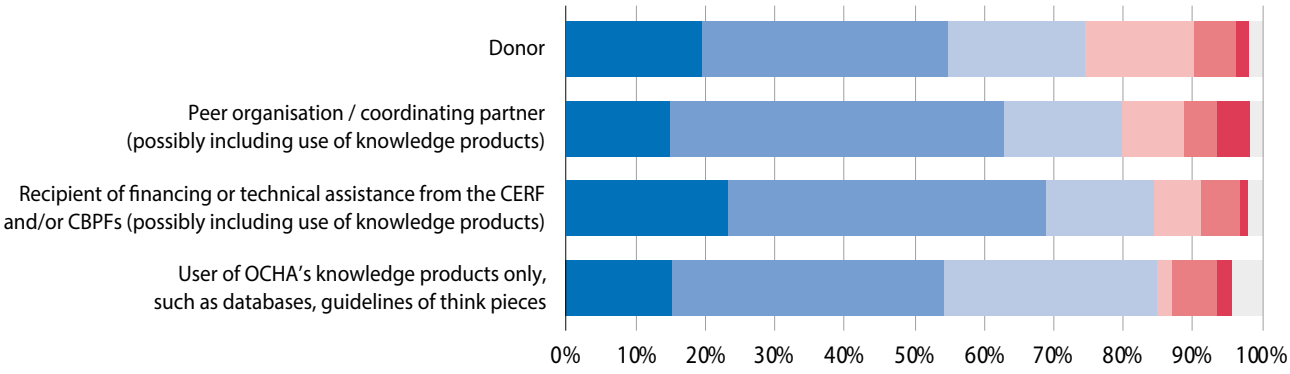


OCHA's work is designed and implemented to fit with national programmes and intended results

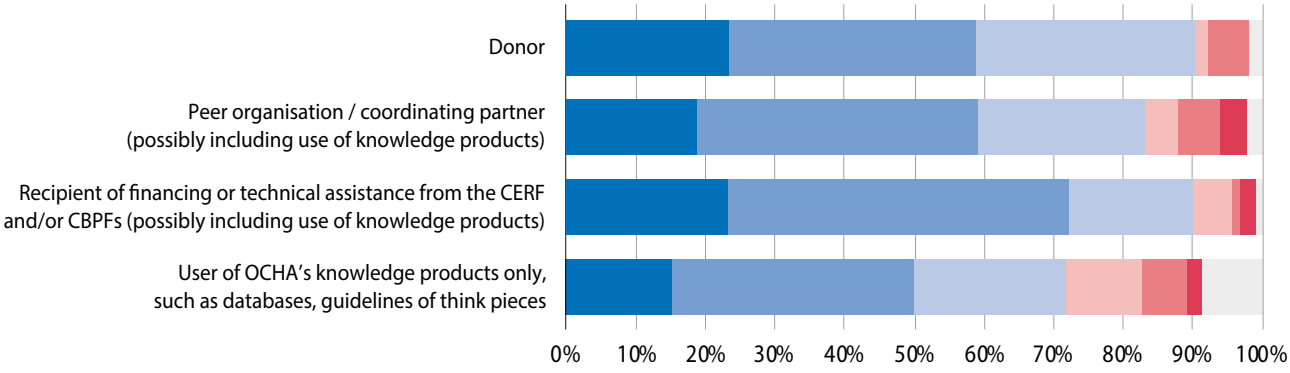


Strongly agree · Agree · Somewhat agree · Somewhat disagree · Disagree · Strongly disagree · Don't know / No opinion

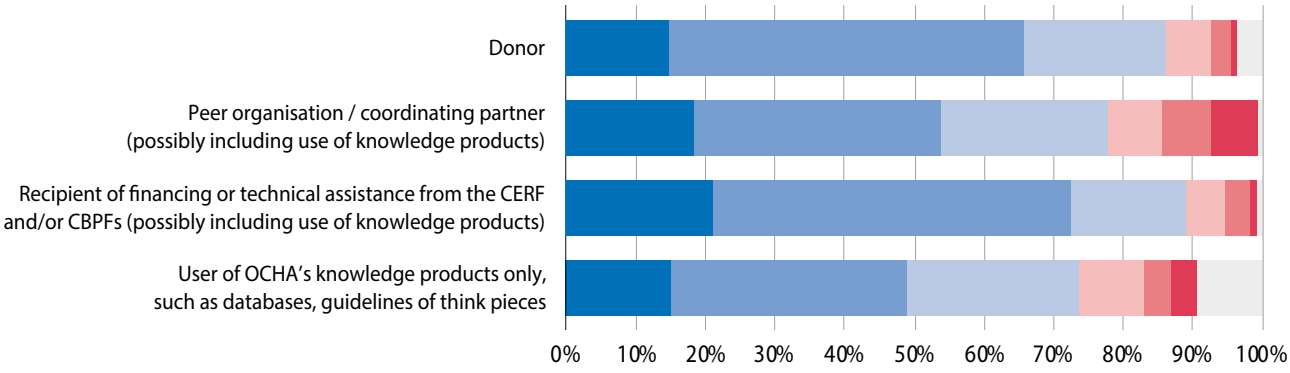
With the support of other stakeholders, OCHA consistently identifies areas of unmet humanitarian need



OCHA's work is tailored to the specific situations and needs in the local context



OCHA's work with partners is based on a clear understanding of why it is best placed to target specific sectoral and/or thematic areas



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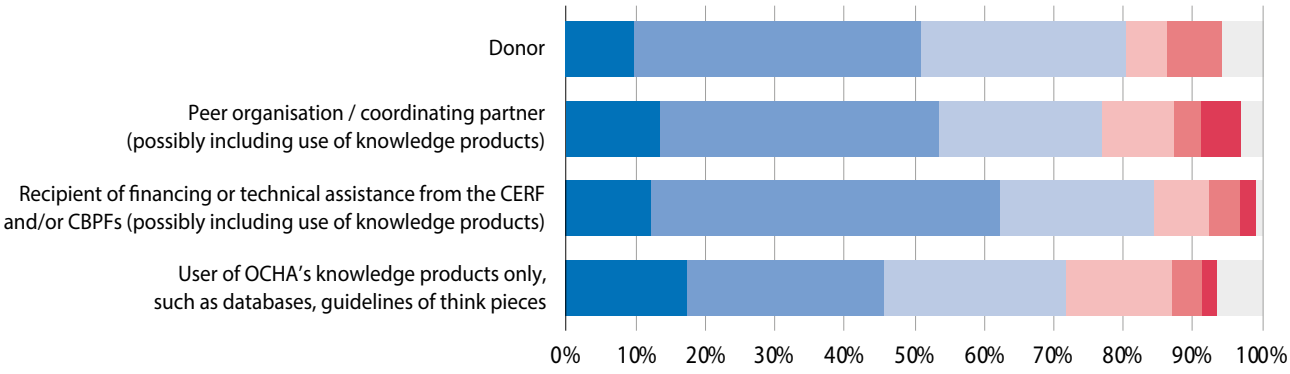
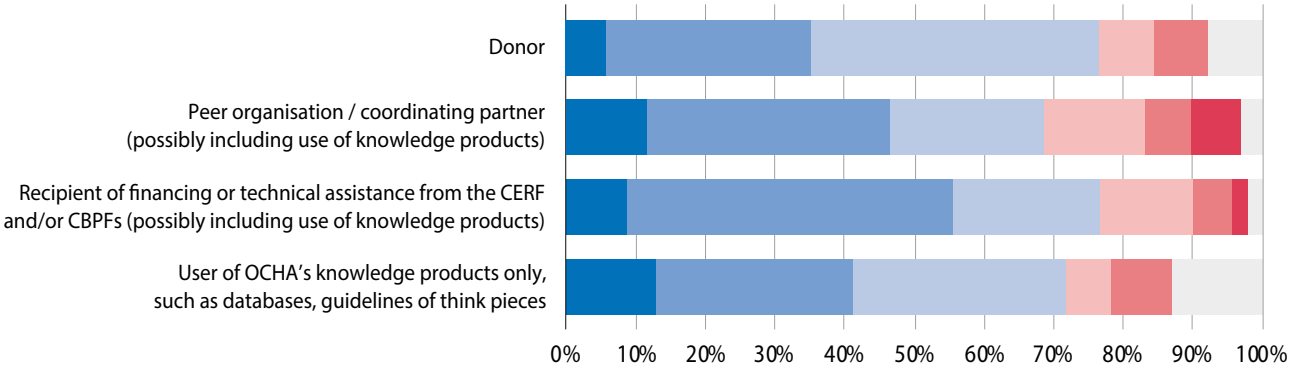
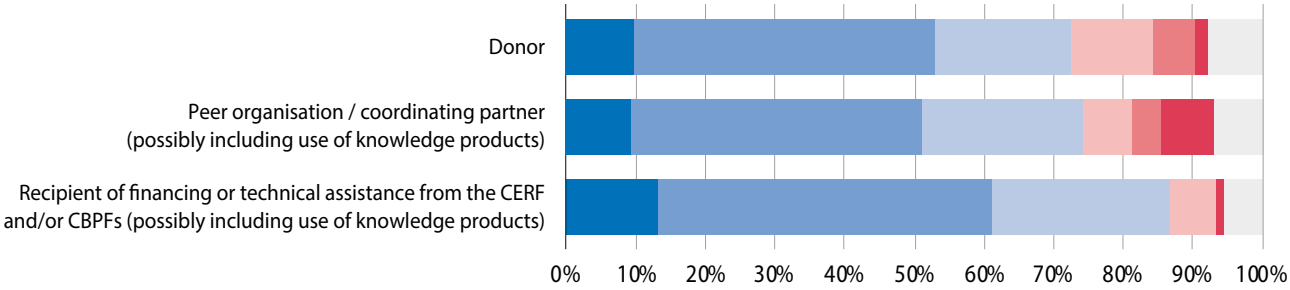
OCHA's work takes into account national / regional capacity, including of government, civil society and other actors



OCHA designs and implements its work in such a way that their effects and impact can be sustained over time



OCHA appropriately manages risk within the context of its work



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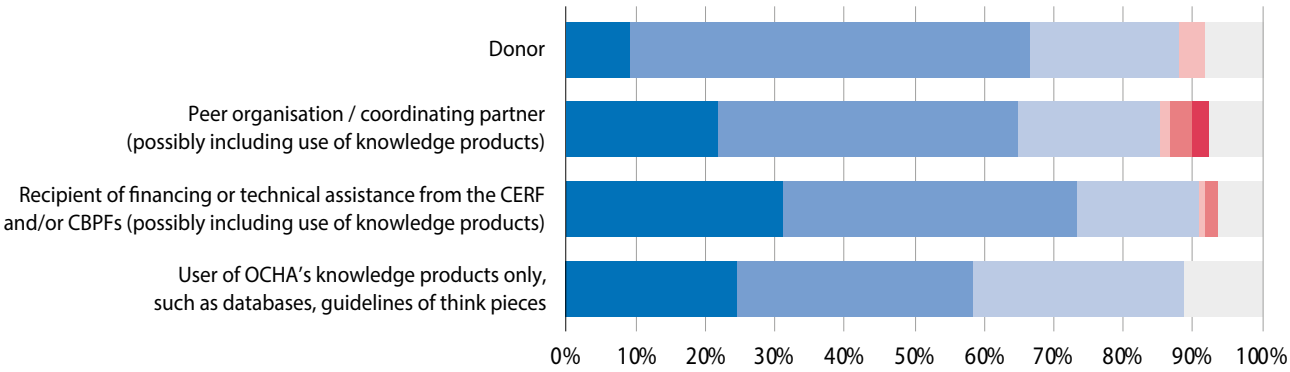
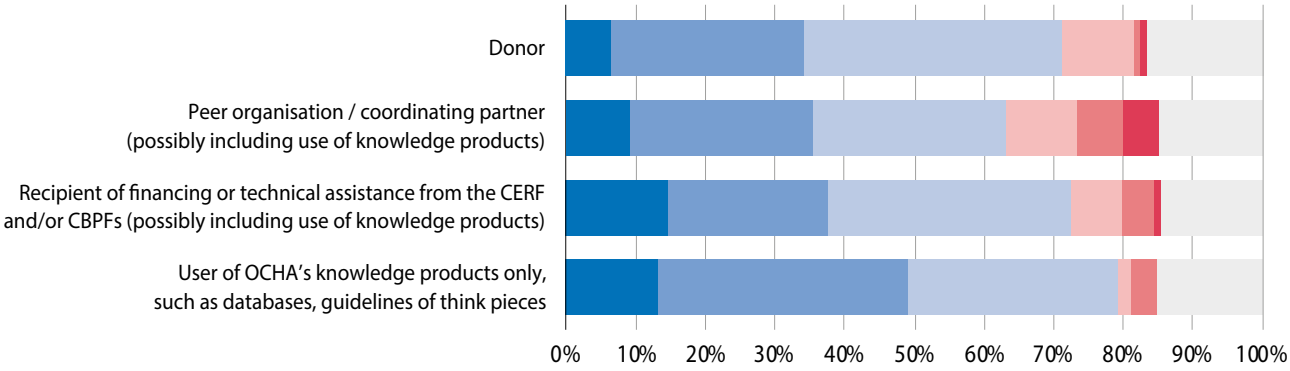
CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

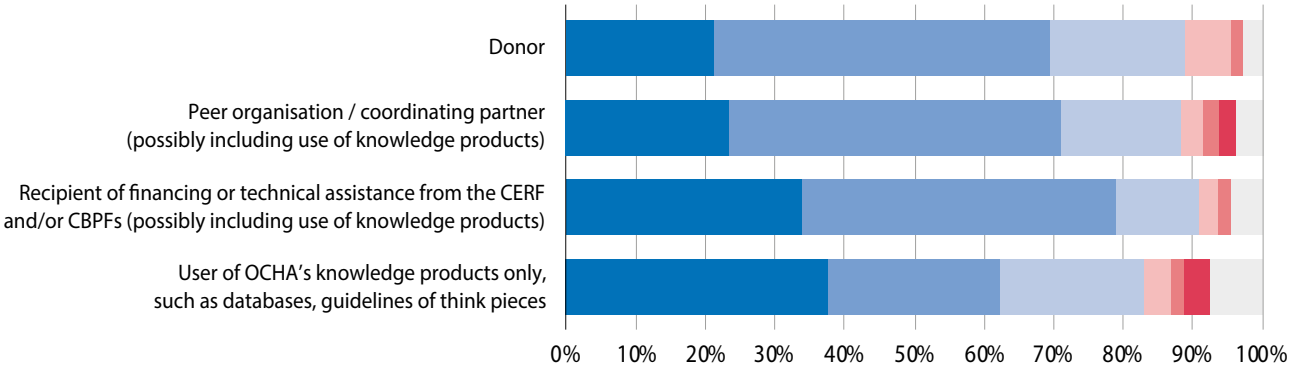
OCHA promotes gender equality



OCHA promotes environmental sustainability and addresses climate change

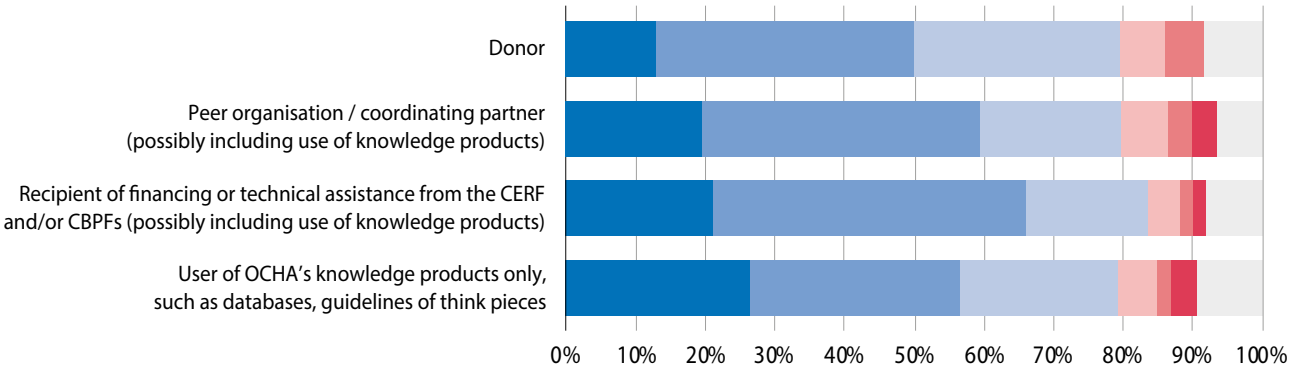


OCHA promotes human rights



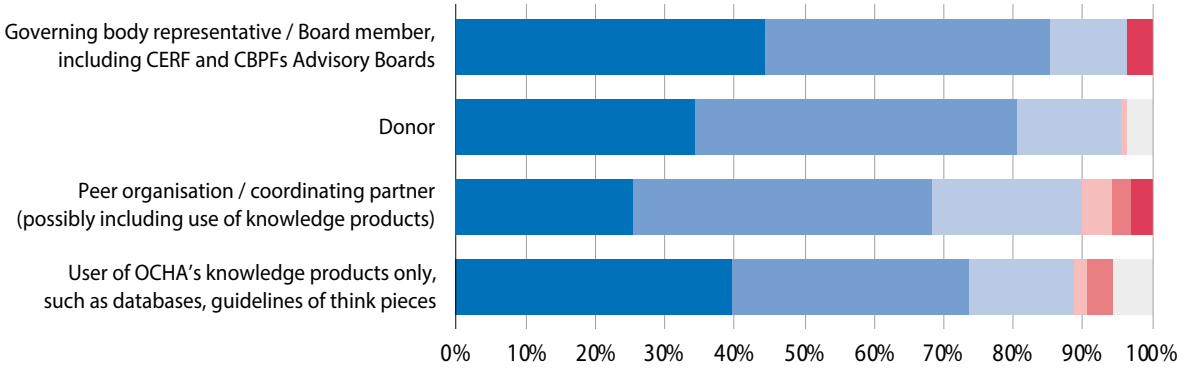
Strongly agree · Agree · Somewhat agree · Somewhat disagree · Disagree · Strongly disagree · Don't know / No opinion

OCHA promotes the value of a diversity of actors within the humanitarian system

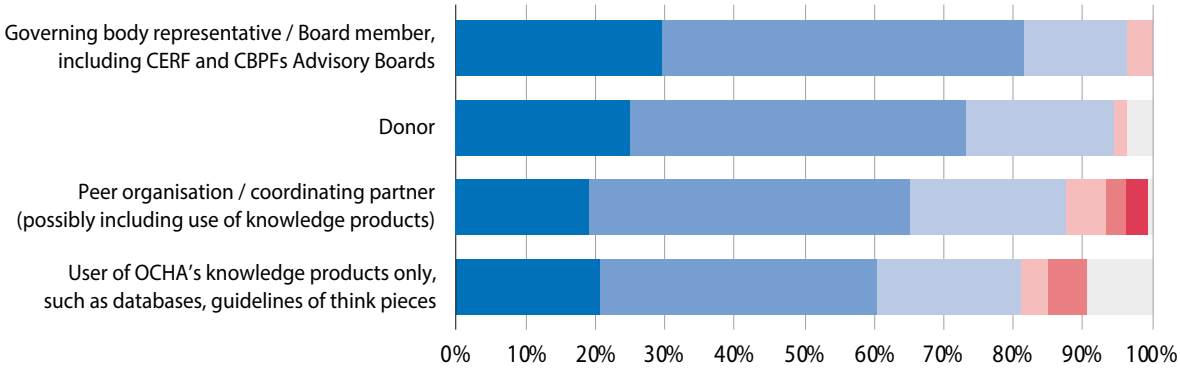


MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS

OCHA's knowledge and information products are useful for my work

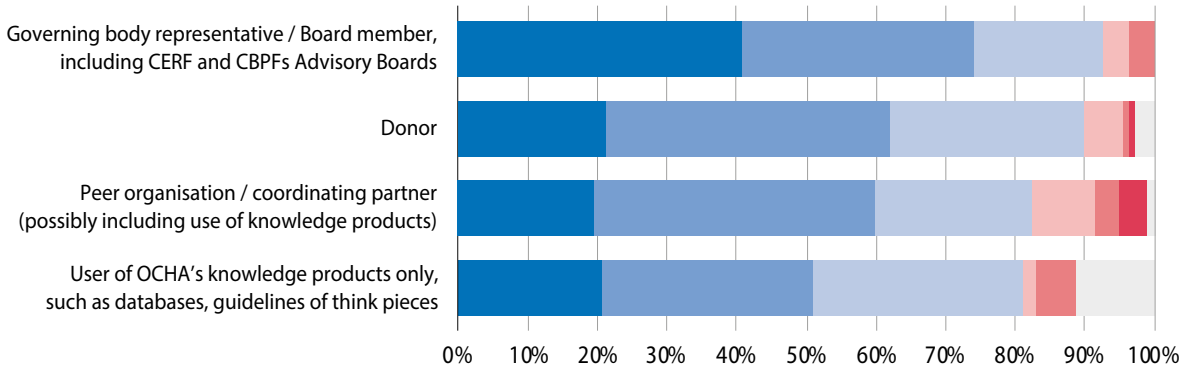


OCHA's knowledge and information products are provided in a format that makes them easy to use

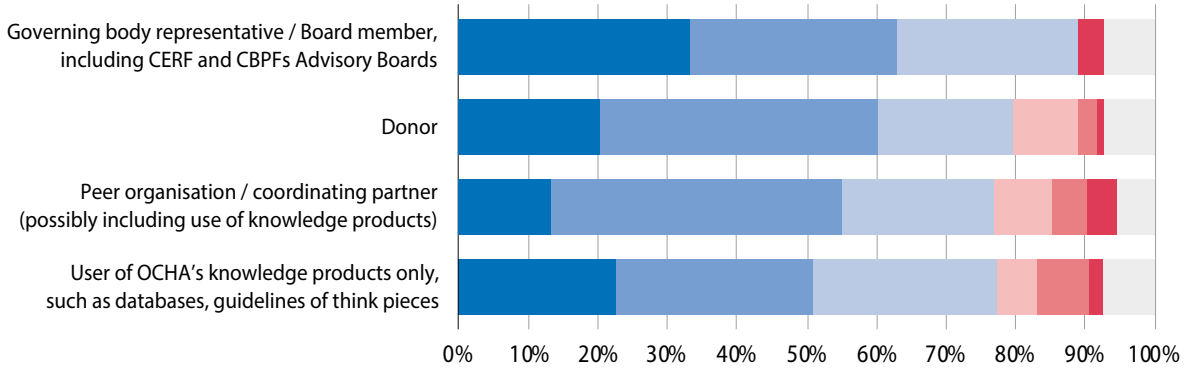


Strongly agree · Agree · Somewhat agree · Somewhat disagree · Disagree · Strongly disagree · Don't know / No opinion

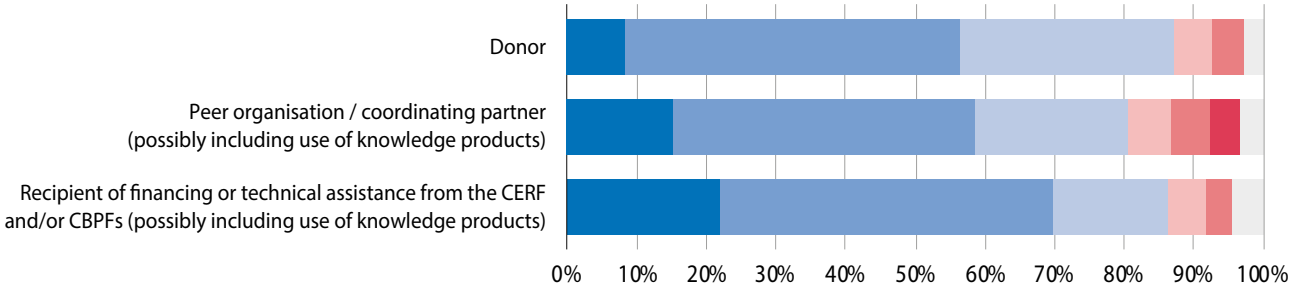
OCHAs knowledge and information products are up-to-date and timely



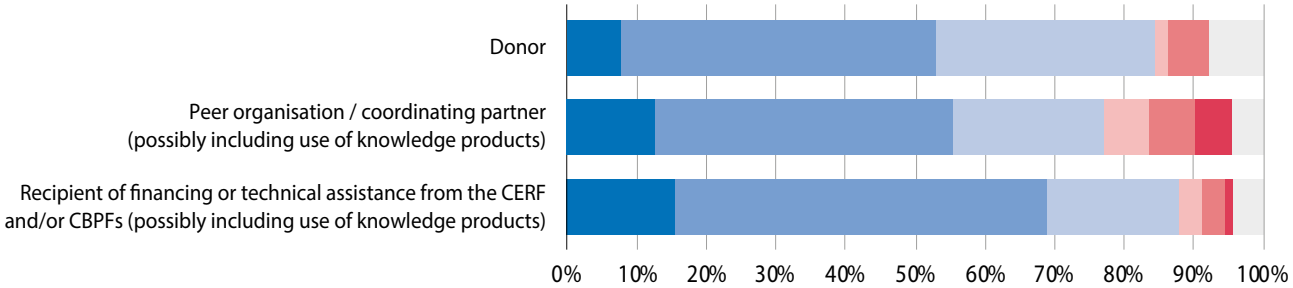
OCHA provides high-quality inputs to humanitarian policy dialogue



OCHA shares key information (analysis, budgeting, management, results) with partners on an ongoing basis

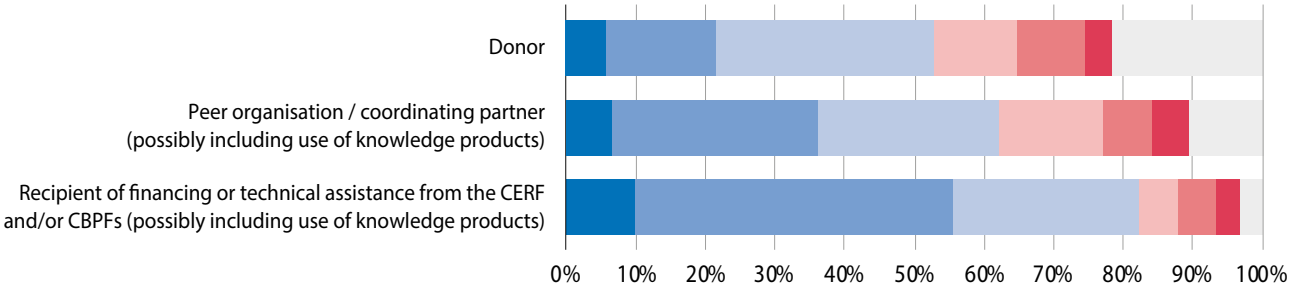


OCHA adapts to changing conditions as jointly agreed with partners

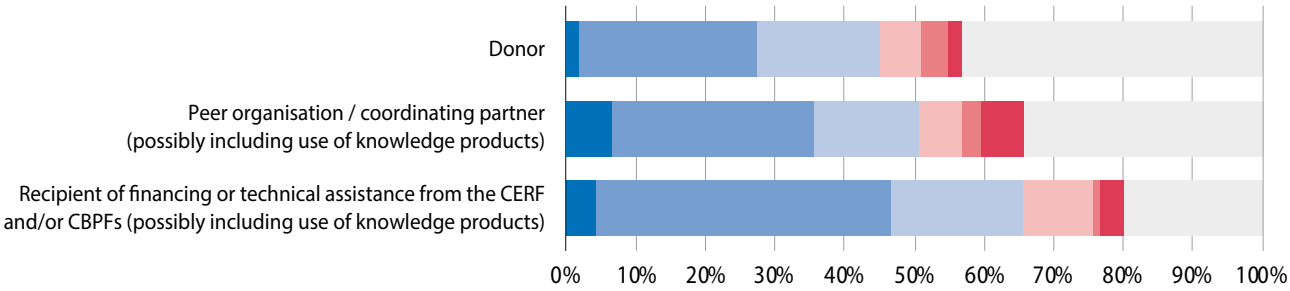


Strongly agree · Agree · Somewhat agree · Somewhat disagree · Disagree · Strongly disagree · Don't know / No opinion

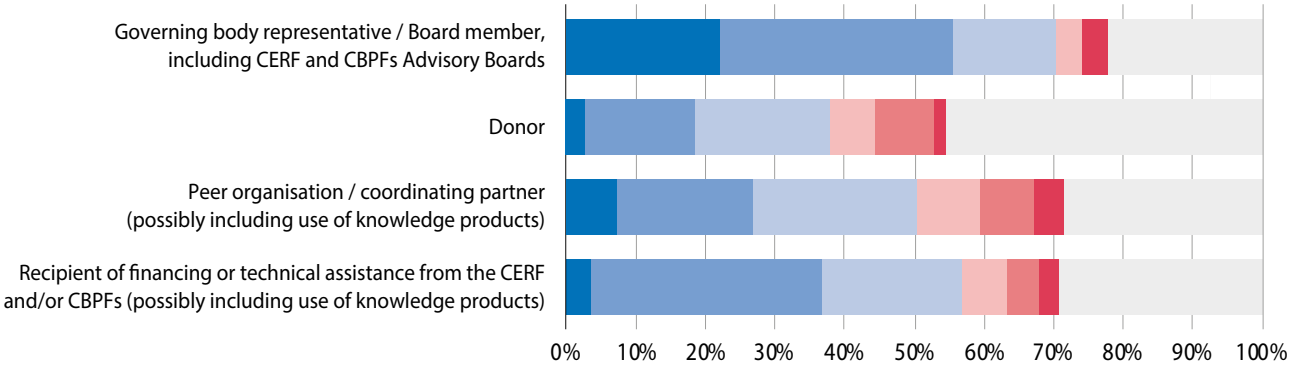
OCHA helps build the capacity of country systems



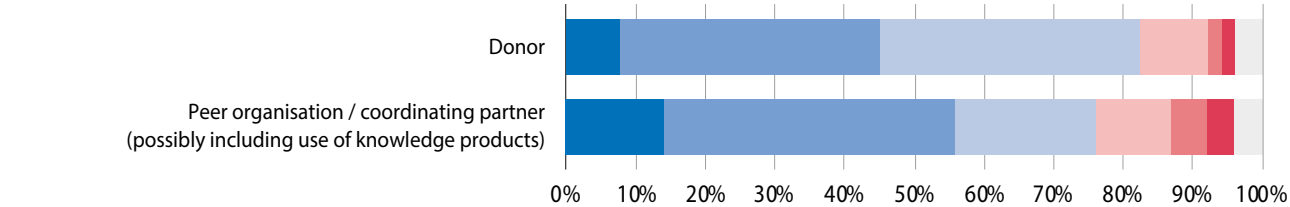
OCHA management processes (e.g. hiring, procuring, disbursing) do not cause unnecessary delays for partners that implement humanitarian operations



OCHA seizes opportunities to support countries in furthering their development partnerships (for example though south-south co-operation, triangular arrangements, and the use of country systems)

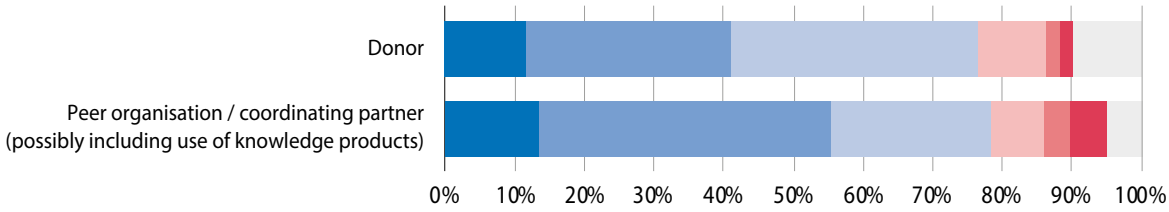


OCHA's activities help to improve prioritisation, reduce duplication and ensure that assistance and protection reach the people who need it most

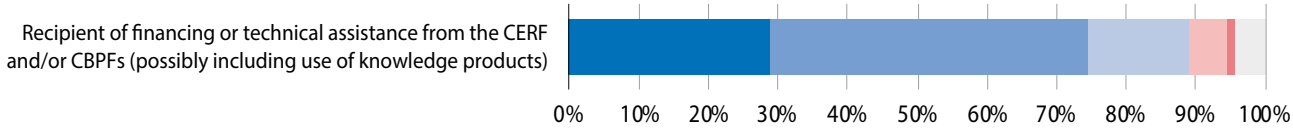


Strongly agree · Agree · Somewhat agree · Somewhat disagree · Disagree · Strongly disagree · Don't know / No opinion

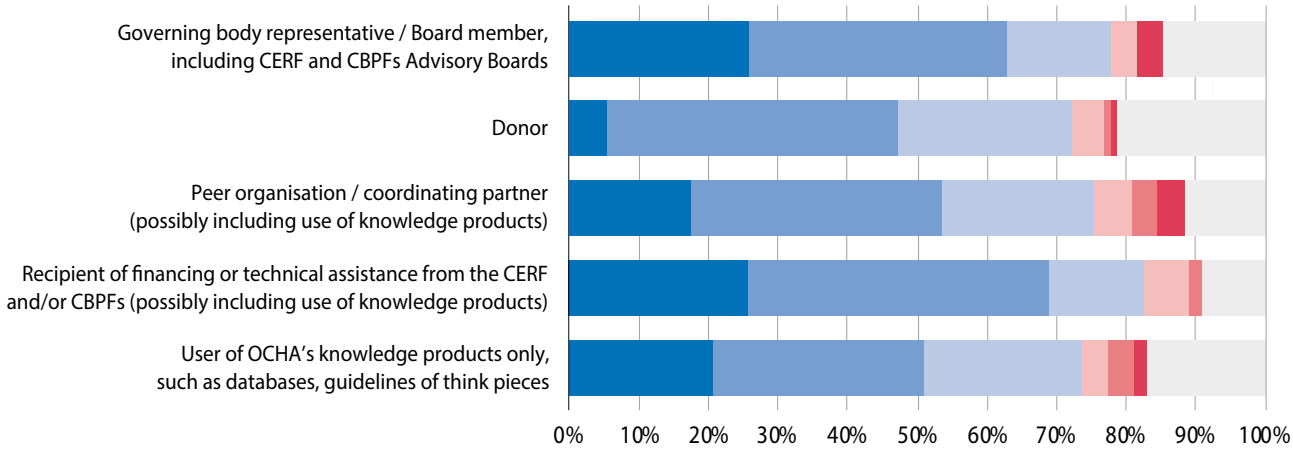
OCHA facilitates joint monitoring of progress on shared goals



OCHA requires CERF and CBPF recipients to apply clear standards for preventing and responding to sexual misconduct in relation to host populations

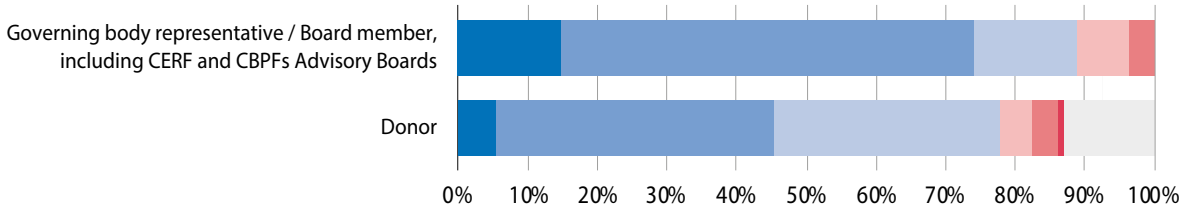


OCHA helps promote mechanisms for preventing and responding to sexual misconduct across the humanitarian sector



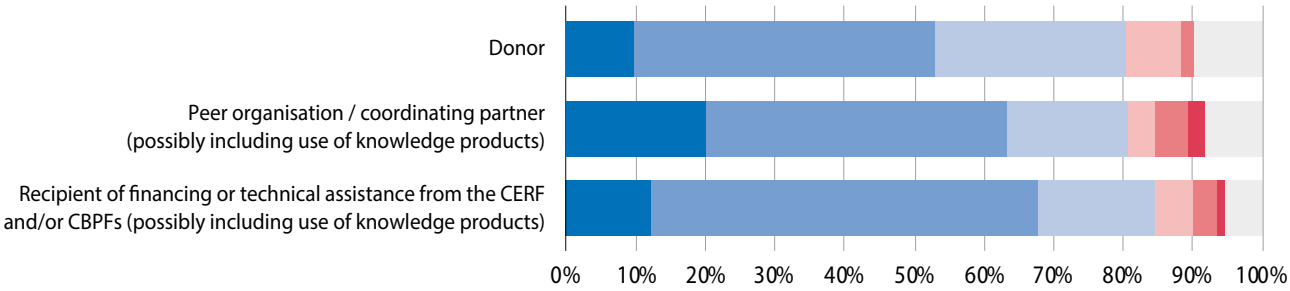
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

OCHA prioritises a results-based approach – for example when engaging in policy dialogue, or planning and implementing interventions

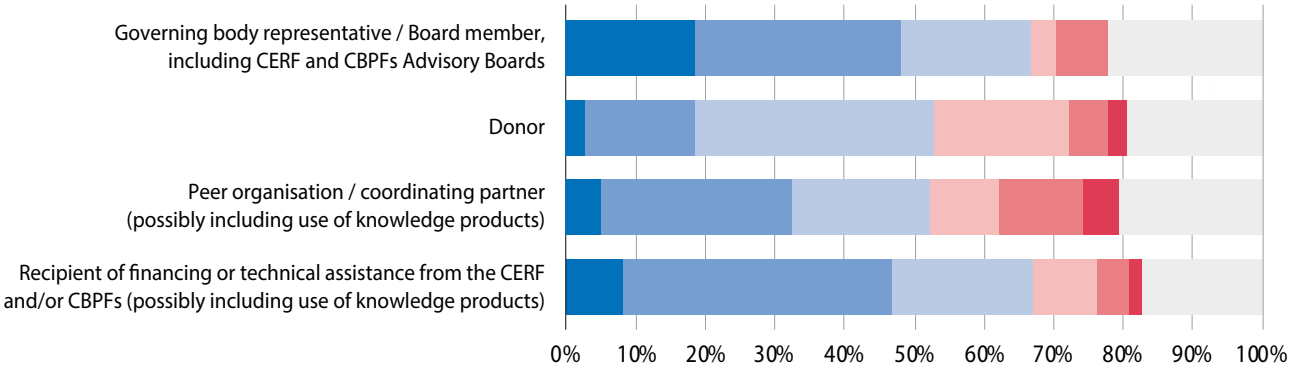


Strongly agree | Agree | Somewhat agree | Somewhat disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know / No opinion

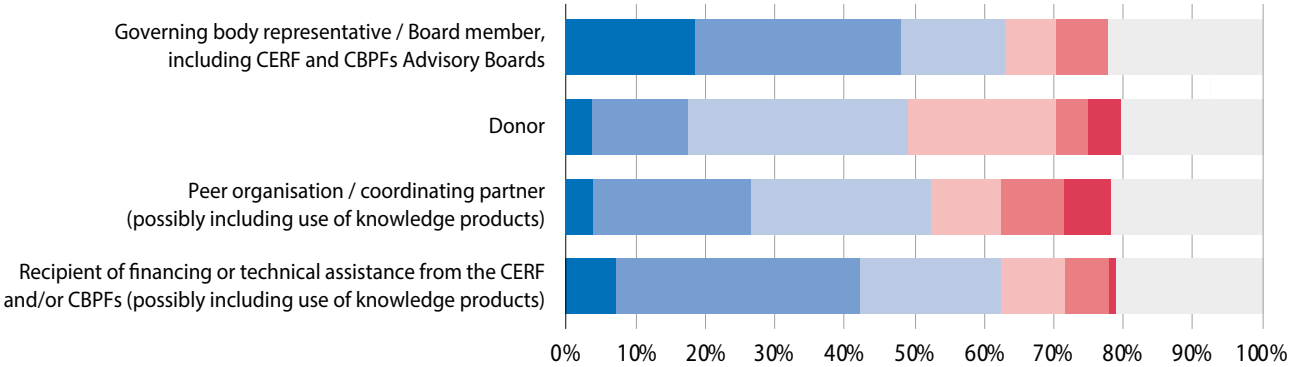
OCHA consults with stakeholders on the setting of results targets at a country level



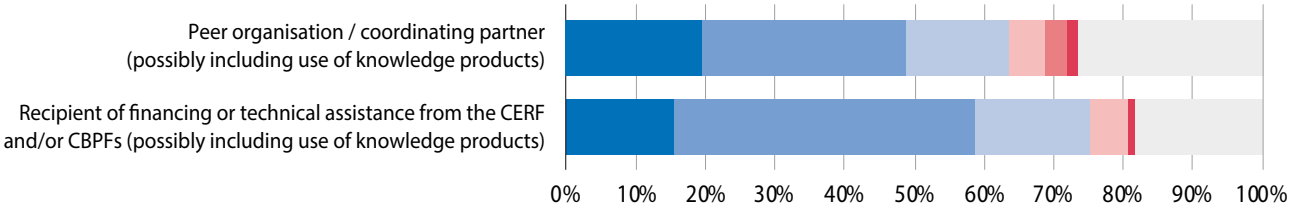
OCHA consistently identifies which interventions are under-performing



OCHA addresses any areas of under-performance, for example through technical support or changing funding patterns if appropriate



OCHA participates in joint/inter-agency efforts to prevent, investigate and report any sexual misconduct by personnel in relation to the host population (SEA)



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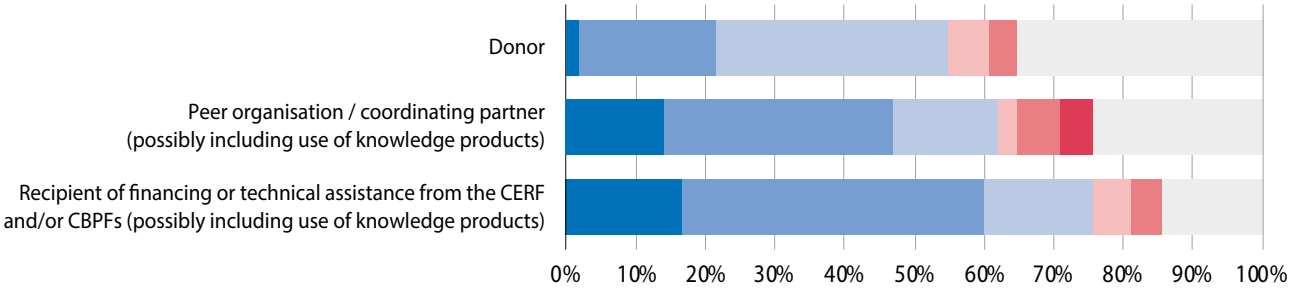
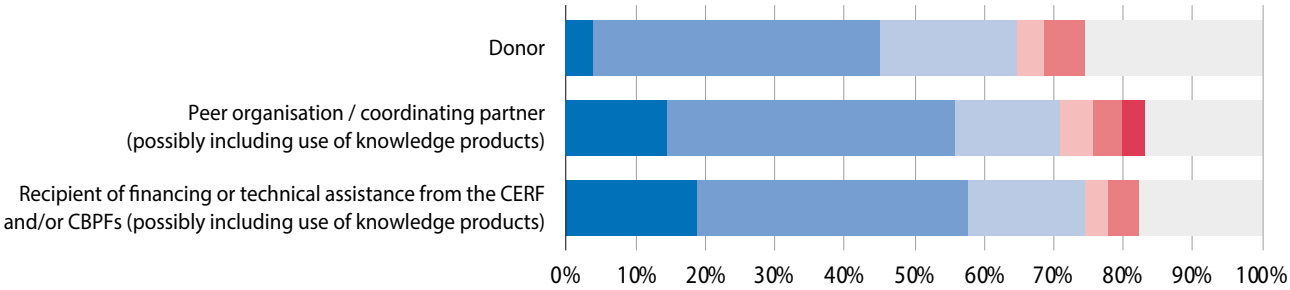
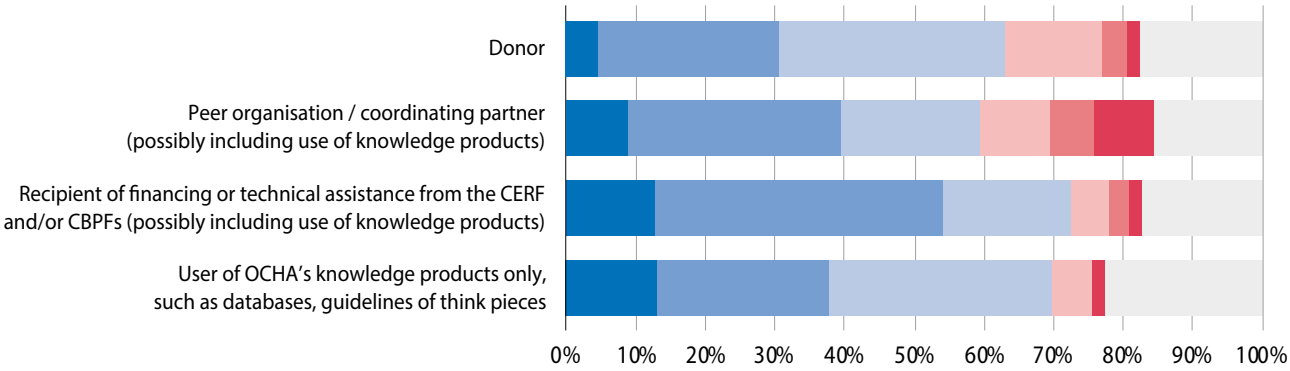
Where interventions are required to be evaluated, OCHA follows through to ensure evaluations are carried out



OCHA participates in joint evaluations at the country/regional level



OCHA learns lessons from previous experience, rather than repeating the same mistakes



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