Key points

- Track emergency protection priorities using protection-specific indicators and sectoral indicators that are proxy indicators for protection.
- Apply UNHCR's standard indicators, adapting them to your context.
- Ensure that protection priorities are captured in the protection and solutions strategy as well as in your performance and impact monitoring.
- Collect and analyse data on health problems and risks with the aim of targeting major causes of excess mortality and morbidity.
- Prioritize and implement appropriate, feasible and effective health services, to reduce excess morbidity and mortality.

1. Overview

Emergency priorities assist UNHCR and its partners to frame the humanitarian response provided to refugees and other persons of concern, including during assessment, planning and monitoring. Emergency priorities are guided by UNHCRs Protection and Solutions Strategy articulated in the first few months of an emergency response. Emergency priorities reflect key principles of international refugee law and international human rights law as well as recognized humanitarian standards such as SPHERE standards. They are also informed by UNHCR's Global Strategic Priorities (GSP) and UNHCR's experience that these areas need concerted attention from the start of an emergency if the rights of persons of concern are to be fulfilled.

Emergency priority indicators are also a measurement tool that

- Establishes the gravity of a crisis (scope and prevalence).
- Monitors UNHCR's response and protection outcomes in an emergency.
2. Main guidance

Emergency standard

**Favourable protection environment.**

Ensuring safe access to territory, asylum protection, and protection against return.

- Establish presence in border areas; undertake border monitoring and protection monitoring.
- Establish links with law enforcement agencies.
- Ensure access to territory.
- Establish links with government entities on asylum.
- Ensure coordination on protection.
- Define protection strategies (for UNHCR, the response or a protection cluster, depending on context)

**Basic Needs and services.**

Reducing mortality and contributing to the fulfilment of international standards for shelter, nutrition, water, sanitation, health and education.

- Ensure access to primary health care
- Provide health care services if needed (identify needs, partner, resources)
- Ensure access to maternal and newborn care are part of essential health care
- Ensure timely referral and access to confidential and private medical care including PEP treatment
- Implement appropriate screening and programming for the treatment and prevention of malnutrition
- Establish WASH infrastructure to provide sufficient quantity and quality of water and sanitation facilities
- Conduct proper site assessment and site planning and set up shelter priorities and strategies.

| Overview: Emergency priorities, priority indicators and related interventions |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Protection priorities | Priority indicators | Standards: UNHCR/Sphere | Related priority interventions |
| **Favourable protection environment.** Ensuring safe access to territory, asylum protection, and protection against return. | Access to asylum facilitated. | Standard: yes | ◦ Establish presence in border areas; undertake border monitoring and protection monitoring.  
 ◦ Establish links with law enforcement agencies.  
 ◦ Ensure access to territory.  
 ◦ Establish links with government entities on asylum.  
 ◦ Ensure coordination on protection.  
 ◦ Define protection strategies (for UNHCR, the response or a protection cluster, depending on context) |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Border is open (to all categories; to some categories; to no categories).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distance of settlement from border of origin.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilian character of asylum maintained.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of cases of refoulement.</td>
<td>Standard: yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of persons of concern detained for illegal entry/stay.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incidents of threat to life, security and safety.</td>
<td>To be determined.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Documentation and registration.** Securing registration, civil documentation and birth registration. | Percentage of persons of concern registered individually. (Global Strategic Priorities, GSP.) | Standard: 100% Critical: 0-79% | ◦ Do level 1/2 registration (including IDPs).  
 ◦ Do profiling and movement tracking (IDPs).  
 ◦ Do status determination, if not prima facie recognition.  
 ◦ Facilitate issue of civil documentation.  
 ◦ Establish link between registration and birth registration.  
 ◦ As part of registration and/or profiling identify persons who have specific needs or are at risk. |
<p>| | The extent to which reception conditions meet minimum standards. | | |
| | The extent to which persons of concern can obtain identity documentation. | Standard: 100% Critical: 0-39% | |
| | | Standard: 100% Critical: 0-30% | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Security from violence and exploitation.</strong> Reducing protection risks of women, men, boys and girls, notably risks related to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and specific risks faced by children.</th>
<th>Known survivors of SGBV receive appropriate support (GSP).</th>
<th>Standard: 100% Critical: 0-40%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) for whom a best interest process has been initiated or completed.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Standard: 100% Critical: 0-29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of identified children of concern with specific needs who are assisted</td>
<td></td>
<td>Standard: 100% Critical: 0-74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | | ⚬ Identify service providers and implement referral pathways for access to services. ⚬ Coordinate information dissemination about services; include sub-working groups. ⚬ Provide or facilitate child protection (CP) and SGBV case management. ⚬ Facilitate/put in place family tracing and prevention of family separation. ⚬ Facilitate identification and screening/Identify and screen children who have specific needs or who are at risk.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Needs and services.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reducing mortality and contributing to the fulfilment of international standards for shelter, nutrition, water, sanitation, health and education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crude mortality rate (per 10,000/day)</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under-five mortality rate (per 10,000/day)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultations per clinician per day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliveries attended by skilled birth attendants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of eligible rape survivors receive PEP within 72 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Acute Malnutrition rate (GAM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe acute malnutrition rate (SAM)</td>
<td>&lt;2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litres of water/person/day. (GSP)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of persons/latrine.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covered shelter space per person (m²)</td>
<td>&lt;50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of women with sanitary supplies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of children of primary school age enrolled in primary education. (GSP)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Ensure access to primary health care
- Communicable disease surveillance and disease control
- Monitoring of nutrition situation and ensuring of timely response

- Ensure access to education and learning facilities (formal and non-formal).
- Provide material support to schools.
- Coordinate with all partners, especially national ones.
Community based protection.
Promoting participation of people of concern in the emergency response

| The extent to which persons of concern are represented in the leadership of management structures. | Standard: 95% Critical: 0-30% |
| Percentage of active female participants in leadership and management structures. | Standard: 50% Critical: 0-19% |

- Involve persons of concern when identifying needs, capacities and priorities.
- Support persons of concern to establish leadership and management structures.
- Undertake participatory assessments, set up feedback and complaints mechanisms.
- Support peaceful co-existence.
- Strengthen self-protection mechanisms.

Solutions-orientation:
Laying the foundation for solutions at the onset of the emergency

| Out of camp criteria applied. | Standard: yes |
| Access to national and existing social and administrative services. | Standard: yes |
| Percentage of persons of concern submitted for emergency resettlement who have been accepted for resettlement. | Standard: 100% Critical: 0-74% |

- Ensure links to and integration in local, national and existing services.
- Facilitate emergency resettlement.
- Identify opportunities for self-reliance.
- In situations of internal displacement, involve early recovery actors (including Government and civil society) in developing a solutions perspective from the onset of an emergency.

Key considerations

Emergency priorities
Emergency priorities set overall priorities for the response framework that UNHCR applies in an emergency. They can be operationalized via processes associated with needs assessment, planning, programming and monitoring.

- Needs assessment. Emergency priorities can be set on the basis of needs assessments. Needs assessments may also be shaped by response priorities where evident priorities have been defined before a full needs assessment can occur.
- Strategic planning. Emergency priorities should be guided by an initial protection and solutions strategy developed within two weeks of an emergency. (See Protection and solutions strategy.) They are confirmed in a protection and solutions strategy produced 3 to 6 months later, which lays out the overall protection priorities of the emergency response and forms the foundation of key inter-agency planning documents (such as the Strategic Response Plan or Refugee Response Plan).
- Programming. Emergency priorities should be included in UNHCR's programming cycle and reflected practically in objectives, outputs and allocation of resources.
- Monitoring. Emergency priority indicators should be used to monitor the progress of emergency response priorities, over time and in different areas of the response.
- Evaluation. Emergency priorities, as reflected in strategic planning documents, are evaluated during UNHCR or inter-agency evaluations.

Emergency priority indicators
Emergency priority indicators are the primary measurement tool used to identify and track progress towards achieving protection and assistance priorities. They also indicate the scope and gravity of displacement and the situation in specific sectoral areas. To the extent possible, emergency priority indicators should always be used to measure both the gravity of an emergency and the response to it, reflecting UNHCR's focus on response and results.

Priority indicators in an emergency should be directly linked to response priorities, to ensure that data collection and analysis inform response planning and implementation. When selecting from among the list of suggested indicators below (see table), take account of your context and your response priorities. Emergency priority indicators should be linked to your performance and impact monitoring, in order to facilitate data collection and reporting and ensure that data collection and performance measurement are consistent.

Indicators in the table may also need to be contextualised to take account of the specific urban or IDP situations in which you are working.

**Priority interventions**
The priority interventions listed in the table are complemented by technical guidance elsewhere in the Emergency Handbook. They focus on actions that should be taken by UNHCR in the first six months of a humanitarian response, should be adapted to the specific context, and developed in accordance with key programme principles.

- Programme design, implementation and monitoring should take into account age, gender and diversity, and address specific inequalities and vulnerabilities.
- Men, women, girls and boys of concern should participate throughout the programme cycle.
- Programmes should complement and build on the capacities of Government authorities at central and local level, as well as those of local NGOs and community-based organizations.

**Centrality of protection**
Priorities and priority indicators in an emergency response need to reflect the centrality of protection. This commitment can be operationalised by:

- Programming and resourcing specific protection interventions and services.
- Mainstreaming protection in all sectors.
- Ensuring that programmes do not harm inadvertently.
- Ensuring that the overall vision and purpose of the response is based on and guided by clear protection and solutions outcomes.

If protection priorities and priority indicators need to be context-specific, the overarching emergency priorities help guide the response of UNHCR and partners towards core areas of protection and support in the course of coordinating sectors and clusters. They recognize that the rights of refugees and other persons of concern can only be met by well-integrated action in a range of operational areas, including shelter, nutrition, health, water and sanitation, education, and protection.
Priority emergency indicators therefore include protection-specific indicators, while sectoral indicators are used as proxies to measure overall protection outcomes.

Ownership and partnership
While emergency priorities are designed to assist UNHCR operations to take reliable and prompt action to further the protection and wellbeing of refugees and others of concern, their realization can only be achieved by collaborating and engaging with a wide range of actors, and depends on many factors including the availability of resources and the operating environment. UNHCR's engagement is developed taking these external realities into account, notably the capacities of others, including Government, other local actors, civil society, UN agencies, NGOs, and persons of concern themselves, in line with UNHCR's responsibilities for leadership, coordination and partnership.

Responsibilities
UNHCR Representatives are responsible for putting in place a framework for developing UNHCR's engagement in priority areas, from the onset of an emergency and in collaboration with partners. Representatives must also ensure that data collection and monitoring systems are established early on in an emergency, to facilitate tracking and reporting on UNHCR's progress towards its priorities, including the collection of age- and gender-disaggregated data.

Annexes


UNHCR, Action Against Sexual and Gender based Violence, An updated Strategy, 2011

UNHCR, Global Strategy for Settlement and Shelter 2014-2018

UNHCR, Global Strategy for Settlement and Shelter 2014-2018

UNHCR, Global Strategy for Livelihoods 2014-2018

UNHCR, Child Protection Framework 2012

The Sphere Project – Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response

Operational Guidelines for UNHCR’s Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement – UNHCR OG 2016 2
3. Links

UNHCR Public Health Emergency Information Toolkit iRHIS The SPHERE Project

4. Main contacts

Contact

- The Senior Protection Officer in your operation.
- As first port of call, the UNHCR Dep. Representative (Protection), UNHCR Asst. Rep. (Protection), and/or Snr Protection Officer in the country; or The UNHCR Regional Asst./Dep Rep (Protection) and/or Snr. Regional Protection Officer at the regional office (if applicable); or The Snr. Regional Legal Advisor in the respective UNHCR regional bureau, covering the respective country region, who in turn will liaise as required with the parent unit at UNHCR DIP. Your country Public Health Officer (if available in your operation.
- Your country, regional and headquarters technical experts, as appropriate (public health, nutrition, WASH).
- The Department of Programme Support and Management (DPSM), Public Health Section (PHS). At unit mailbox: hqphn@unhcr.org.

UNHCR operations plan in emergencies

11 September 2023

Key points

- The UNHCR office should appoint a broadly composed multi-functional planning team of UNHCR staff at the start of an emergency, to draft UNHCR's initial Plan and amend it as the situation evolves.

- Keep the results chain simple. Focus on key results the operation expects to achieve. Remember that each indicator must have a monitoring plan and a data collection mechanism. Prefer strong data and few indicators (quality rather than quantity).

- Initially, operations are advised to draft the Plan 'off-line', before recording and proceeding to detailed budgeting.

- Internal UNHCR planning requirements should not drive the external planning process, which needs to take a broader, inclusive approach. Do not underestimate the importance of inter-agency planning.

- Pay attention to the timelines of internal and external processes that are relevant to the management of an emergency operation (such as inter-agency planning documents, internal requests for additional resources, UNHCR and inter-agency appeals). Try to achieve
logical sequencing.

- The Plan should be a living document that is updated after major developments or decisions.
- Whenever an Operating level or Operation Plan increases, or project partnership agreements are signed or revised, update the indicator targets (for both impact and performance). Periodically review the results chain and associated budgets to ensure they remain consistent: this will help you track and report achievements. All elements of the results chain, and narratives with respect to objectives, should be completed and recorded in Focus by the end of the calendar year.
- Operations are advised to develop a basic results chain to inform the logframes of project partnership agreements and their budgets. If it becomes necessary to create new objectives, outputs, or indicators, they should be recorded in Focus because these are essential elements of the Plan.
- Review and update the Budget Control Plan (BCP) form for your operation, so that staff have access to Plan entry and submission(s).

1. Overview

This entry describes the internal UNHCR procedures that UNHCR offices must follow when planning an emergency response. UNHCR internal plans provide the basis for HQ decisions on urgent allocations of resources and other form of support in emergencies. They enable UNHCR to track and report on progress achieved, and to be accountable for resources it receives.

UNHCR is committed to an inclusive and participatory approach to planning. For refugee emergencies, see the [refugee coordination model](https://www.unhcr.org) and refugee response plans; for IDP emergencies, see the [Transformative Agenda](https://www.unhcr.org), the [cluster approach](https://www.unhcr.org) and strategic response plans (SRPs) and preliminary response plans (PRPs). This entry focuses on UNHCR's internal procedures; other humanitarian agencies engaged with UNHCR in emergency situations apply their own agency-specific internal rules and procedures.

Several important processes triggered in an emergency situation have planning dimensions that should be reflected in UNHCR operations plans (‘the Plan’). It is essential to link these processes as a Plan evolves; they should not be seen as separate.

**Essential elements of a Plan**

- Planning figures and assumptions.
- Needs and priorities.
- Key emergency response strategies, intended results, and activities.
- Resource requirements.
These elements need to be integrated in a given context and timeframe, and agreed by stakeholders.

**Note**

- Offices should base the development of UNHCR operations plans on contingency plans and preparedness activities whenever these are available, in order to save time.
- Plans should always be aligned with UNHCR's budget structure and results framework and recorded in UNHCR's planning and budgeting tool (Focus).
- UNHCR staff should not allow UNHCR's internal planning requirements to drive the external planning process, which requires a broader and more inclusive approach.

### 2. Main guidance

#### When and for what purpose

An emergency is a situation in which the lives, rights and well-being of refugees and other persons of concern are or will be threatened unless immediate and appropriate action is taken on a scale that UNHCR’s existing capacity at country and regional level cannot provide. To address an emergency, therefore, UNHCR needs a Plan, supported by resources, that will deliver an adequate and timely response to the emergency needs identified, establish a framework for tracking and reporting on progress, and thereby make UNHCR accountable for additional resources that it receives.

- In an emergency, the first objective is to secure the resources and capacities required to set up and start to deliver a response.

The UNHCR office needs to present a concise emergency request that provides enough detail to permit UNHCR HQ to mobilize the resources required. The Entry on UNHCR's financial resource allocation for emergencies contains templates and timelines. At this early stage, the office should define the minimum elements of the Plan (its structure, a pillar, a population planning group, a goal, main objectives, and principal initial activities).

An initial request should be communicated as soon as possible, if necessary before inter-agency plans have been developed with partners. This does not imply that UNHCR pre-empts the final Plan, which will emerge from an inter-agency planning process, informed by rapid needs assessments. The purpose of an initial request is to enable UNHCR to start urgent life-saving interventions.
Inter-agency planning processes should be inclusive and participatory; UNHCR Plans should reflect that approach. The initial internal Plan may be amended once inter-agency plans are agreed, aligning UNHCR with the role it assumes in those plans.

At the start of an emergency, initial needs are often met by means of a short-term appropriation from the Operational Reserve (OR), which meets the immediate additional requirements of an operation.

The authority to transfer appropriations from the Emergency Reserve and increase the OL accordingly to mount an initial emergency response in countries included in a newly declared Level 1, 2 and 3 emergencies is delegated to:

a. Directors of Bureaux for requests of up to $5 million per such country;
b. AHC-O for requests of up to $10 million per such country.

Such emergency appropriations and associated OL increases can only be used for OPS and ABOD in country operations. Initial allocations should be released within 24 hours. They should cover immediate response needs, including the need to comply with Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS) or other critical security requirements. When the assessed needs of an operation rise above USD 10 million in one financial year, a Supplementary Budget is created. The UNHCR office, in cooperation with the relevant bureau, prepares a detailed Plan with costs, which must be approved by the Resource Planning and Management Board (RPMB). UNHCR then issues a Supplementary Appeal in accordance with its internal financial rules. For more information, see UNHCR supplementary funding appeals.

UNHCR supplementary appeals for an emergency set out the main elements of the Plan (agreed planning figures and assumptions, key strategies and activities, the budget).

UNHCR shares the appeal with donors and partners in order to raise required funding. The above steps and processes include important planning elements that must be drafted, submitted and recorded in accordance with UNHCR procedure. By linking its planning processes, and continuously reviewing its planning documents, UNHCR is able to produce well-designed and coherent plans that can be communicated to internal and external audiences, implemented rapidly, and reported on in terms that are measurable, enabling it to demonstrate achievements and progress.
Summary of guidance and/or options

Summary of guidance and/or options
UNHCR's approach to planning focuses on the protection and assistance needs of populations of concern, and uses the UNHCR Results Framework. This identifies a hierarchy of goals, rights groups, objectives, and outputs, as well as indicators to measure achievements against objectives and outputs. Budgeting is done against outputs.

(a) Plan development and key steps

- **Define the pillar.** UNHCR identifies four budget pillars, corresponding to the status of persons of concern. Refugees and asylum-seekers fall under pillar 1, internally displaced persons under pillar 4. For other situations, see the chart below.
- **Select or create a population planning group (PPG).** This should represent a specific planning, budgeting and reporting category.
- **Select a corresponding goal.**

Planning for a PPG begins with selecting the goal for a new or existing PPG. As a rule, operations should select an emergency response goal. However, this may not be required in all emergency situations; consider the specific context of the country or region.

Other considerations:

- Normally an existing Population Planning Group (PPG) should be used, combined with a new emergency goal. In order to avoid unnecessary complexity in the operations plan narrative and to facilitate the integration of activities into regular programming post-emergency, a new PPG should only be created if there is an influx of refugees from a different country of origin not covered by an existing PPG or into a new area that will require a distinct response plan post-emergency. If the emergency involves a new population group, create a new PPG. Complete a ‘Chartfield creation request form' and submit it to DSPR/ARBAS, DSPR/IMAS/Focus and the bureau.
- If a new office needs to be established, with an assigned or new cost centre for separate budgeting and expense tracking, create a new cost centre. Complete a ‘Chartfield creation request form' and submit it to the bureau; on approval, the bureau should forward it to DSPR/ARBAS.
- If there are new sites (e.g. camps), and it is desirable to plan, budget and monitor programmes at site level, create new site(s). Complete a ‘Chartfield creation request form' and submit it to DSPR/ARBAS, DSPR/IMAS/Focus and the bureau.

(b) Results chain for a new situation
When the Plan's basic structure has been determined, and chartfields created and recorded as
necessary (for new PPGs, cost centres, or sites), develop a results chain. Results chains for emergency operations should be kept simple, focusing on the key results the operation expects to achieve in the emergency phase with only a limited number of objectives, outputs and indicators. This will simplify budgeting (including requests for additional resources), partnership agreements, monitoring and reporting. There is always the opportunity to add later new objectives, outputs and indicators post-emergency. The selection of indicators, the establishment of baselines and targets and the inclusion of narrative in the operations plan is not mandatory immediately. However, it is recommended to include them as early as possible in line with the Resource Planning and Management Board (RPMB) submissions.

- Select the relevant rights groups (thematic groups of objectives). With few exceptions, any rights group can fall under any goal.
- Select objectives and outputs from the pre-defined menu.
- Add or select impact indicator(s) for each selected objective; set a baseline; set targets (both prioritized and comprehensive).
- Add or select performance indicator(s) for each selected output; set targets (both prioritized and comprehensive).

What is a baseline?

**Baseline:** shows the situation for an impact indicator at the beginning of a planning period (when an emergency has occurred) and is used to measure progress over time.

What is a comprehensive target?

**Comprehensive Targets (OP Targets):** for Impact Indicators and Performance Indicators display the level of planned achievement for a comprehensive plan and if the entire OP budget for an objective or output is made available for the planned implementation period.

What is a prioritized target?

**Prioritized or Operating Level Targets (OL Targets):** for Impact Indicators and Performance Indicators display the level of prioritised planned achievement and with the OL level budget.

The operation selects impact and performance indicators from a pre-defined menu. Each output and objective must have at least one indicator, and may have several.

The operation then sets baselines for impact indicators, and targets for both impact and performance indicators. Comprehensive or overall targets (that assume full funding) and prioritized targets (if funding is incomplete) must be set separately. Every objective should be accompanied by a narrative that presents each deliverable and how it will be implemented. Both comprehensive and prioritized targets must be consistent with objectives, and outputs must be consistent with associated targets and budgets.
Operations are encouraged to choose a limited number of indicators, bearing in mind that each requires clear measurement criteria, a monitoring plan, and data collection mechanisms. If an indicator cannot be measured, it should not be selected.

**({c}) Developing budgets**

Operations are encouraged to make use of the UNHCR Emergency Response Budgeting Template to assist in developing credible budgets. The overview below addresses comprehensive and prioritized budgets:

- **Comprehensive budgets = Operations Plan (OP).**
- **Prioritized budgets = Operating level (OL).**

Comprehensive (needs-based) budget requirements for operational elements are calculated and entered for each selected output, using relevant chartfields.

The comprehensive budget of an Operations Plan sums the resources that will be required to implement all the interventions necessary to meet the new needs of persons of concern that are due to an emergency situation. Because needs almost always exceed the resources available, UNHCR also prioritizes its interventions, based on the Operating level.

Each Operations Plan (OP) is broken down into two elements: activities and budgets in the operating level (OL); and activities and budgets above operating level (AOL). OL + AOL = OP.

To prioritize, staff must place each objective and output in one of three categories, triggering the assignment of a corresponding budget. An objective and output is

- **Not prioritized** if it is fully above the OL. Implementation is a low priority. OL = 0.
- **Partially prioritized** if it falls partly in the OL. Implementation is a medium priority. OP > OL.
- **Prioritized** if it falls fully in the OL. Implementation is a high priority. OP = OL.

Because emergency situations are volatile, both comprehensive and prioritized Operations Plans need frequent revision. They should be seen as documents in evolution, responsive to the needs of populations of concern, inter-agency planning, available information, and decisions on
(d) **Post-emergency phase**

UNHCR's emergency interventions should eventually be integrated in longer term planning exercises or phased out. Such decisions (including their timing and process) should be made by the UNHCR office in consultation with the relevant bureau. The bureau should confirm decisions on phasing out or integration in regular operations management cycle, after consulting other divisions, no later than in January for the next planning year.

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**How to implement this at field level?**

(a) **Initial stage**

At the start of an emergency, the first priority is to obtain essential resources and other forms of support from UNHCR HQ. The UNHCR office submits a request for initial allocation of additional budgetary resources.

This request describes essential elements of the Plan, and identifies the resources required. For a new emergency response, the essential elements are:

- The Plan's structure (pillar, PPG, goal).
- Main activities, grouped in terms of initial objectives, with budgets at the level of outputs.

On approval by UNHCR HQ, this basic planning information should be entered in Focus and submitted.

(b) **Integration of inter-agency planning**

The basic Plan is elaborated and adjusted as more information becomes available about the needs of persons of concern, the role UNHCR will assume in the emergency response, and through the inter-agency planning process. The UNHCR office adjusts the internal Plan to make it consistent with the outcome of the inter-agency planning process.

When the requirements for a programme in a given year exceed USD 10 million, the Resource Planning and Management Board (RPMB) must establish a Supplementary Programme with an additional operations plan and Operating Level.

Further requests to increase requirements must be accompanied by a memorandum justifying each request, and Appendix 1A or Appendix 1AA describing expected results.
(c) Internal Plan records
When response delivery and implementation are under way, the UNHCR office must update the Plan in Focus, to establish accountability and enable it to report on achievements. The Plan should be amended to include:

- Selected objectives and final narratives at the level of objectives.
- Selected and specified outputs.
- Targets and baselines for impact indicators.
- Targets for performance indicators, to measure the performance of both UNHCR and partner agencies.

There is no set term by which an operation should have recorded all elements of the Plan, because by definition an emergency response cannot be programmed until it occurs. Operations are strongly encouraged to record the internal Plan in UNHCR's internal systems and records (Focus, MSRP, Project Partnership Agreements) before the end of the calendar year in which an emergency occurs.

(d) Post-emergency
In the final stage of an operations plan in emergencies, UNHCR manages disengagement, phase-out or integration in the longer term planning. This is determined by the needs of persons of concern, and involves planning, implementation and reporting. Decisions are taken in consultation with the relevant bureau.

Annexes

Sample request to budget committee for new additional requirements

UNHCR, checklist for setting up emergency programmes in Focus

UNHCR, Financial Resource Request Form

UNHCR, frequently used objectives (refugee and IDP operations) in emergencies

UNHCR Results Framework

UNHCR, chartfield creation form
3. Links

UNHCR indicator guidance UNHCR Focus practical guidelines for planning UNHCR Quick Focus Guide

4. Main contacts

The Division of Strategic Planning and Results, Integrated Programme Service at: hqdpsmtps@unhcr.org.

IT emergency standby partners

08 March 2023

Key points

- Confirm that UNHCR IT capacity is not available before requesting support from standby partners.
- Ensure your request has the required details and supporting documents (TORs) to facilitate quick follow-up by HQ.

1. Overview

To improve its response to emergencies, UNHCR has concluded standby partnerships with government agencies, NGOs, and private sector organizations that possess specific expertise and capacity complementing UNHCR’s internal surge capacity. Several of these agreements meet information technology (IT) needs, such as:

- Technical expertise
- Data and voice connectivity, bandwidth
○ IT equipment needs

Through these arrangements, qualified short-term deployees can be provided quickly, using simplified procedures. Sometimes, these arrangements are at no cost to UNHCR; in other cases, UNHCR jointly or fully finances them. This entry reviews these services and indicates how to request them.

2. Main guidance

When and for what purpose?

External deployment resources should be used in moderation; they do not replace regular staffing arrangements in UNHCR. External deployment arrangements should be seen as a short-term means to support and augment UNHCR’s operational resources when this is absolutely necessary. In general, external deployment resources should only be deployed when:

○ UNHCR is unable to meet staffing needs at short notice.
○ Specific profiles or expertise are required that UNHCR staff do not possess.
○ Additional help is needed for a short period (three to six months).

Description and /or specifics

- **The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB)** is able to provide personnel with a variety of specialities to support the assessment and implementation of IT services.
- **Emergency.lu**, a public-private partnership led by the Government of Luxembourg, provides rapid deployment satellite terminals (VSATs) and IT support personnel (including transportation) in the first hours following the declaration of an emergency.
- **The International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP)** offers a number of IT modules and emergency response teams that operate in locations where the communication infrastructure is limited. IHP often supports the establishment of base camps and interagency common services.
- **DSB (Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning)** manages a pool of IT experts with relevant equipment.
- **RedR Australia** has an emergency roster that includes IT experts deployable for 3-6 months.
- **Irish Aid**, the Development Cooperation Division of Ireland’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, can deploy IT experts to humanitarian emergencies for 6 months.
- **German Federal Agency for Technical Relief (THW)** can provide IT equipment and IT support personnel, who are usually deployable for 4-6 weeks.
How to request / implement / seek support?

Requesting IT deployees
If a UNHCR office requires an IT deployee, it should submit a request to the DIST IT Emergency Preparedness and Response Section (EPRS) and the Regional Bureau IT Lead. EPRS will liaise with the Emergency Partnerships and Deployments Unit to formalize the request and identify a suitable Standby Partner.

The request, together with specific terms of reference (ToR), should include the following information:

- Profile required
- Location
- Expected starting date and duration
- Background information (conflict/country/region)
- Specification of operation
- Main duties and responsibilities
- Supervisor and reporting line
- Skills required (language, technical, coordination, other)
- Living conditions, accommodation
- Gender and geographical restrictions due to security situation (if applicable)
- Budget code against which the deployment will be charged (when required)
- Other relevant information

Division of Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS) will request standby partners to identify candidates for the deployment. When candidates have been agreed, in consultation with EPRS, they will be deployed in accordance with the usual emergency deployment procedures (see Entry on How to request emergency deployees).

3. Links

Emergency standby partners (deployment of personnel and service packages)

4. Main contacts

- DIST IT Emergency Preparedness & Response Section (EPRS), at: ICT.Emergency@unhcr.org.
- Division for Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS), at: hqecmdpl@unhcr.org
Video conferencing and live streaming

08 March 2023

Key points

- Do not underestimate the power of video!

1. Overview

The dramatic evolution of software technology and transmission media, and the advent of IP and broadband, have made multiple video-based applications possible, including simple transfer of video files, deferred or live streaming of events, webcasts, video-on-demand (VoD), telemedicine and advanced video conferencing techniques.

In fact, numerous powerful and fully mobile video tools for communication and collaboration have emerged in the last decade. Video is typically used for remote meetings and interviews, RSD, e-learning, webinars, and live coverage. Audio-visual coverage of remote dramatic events is now at the heart of the information machine and, because it is so powerful, video is widely used by humanitarian organizations.

2. Main guidance

When and for what purpose?

UNHCR's video unit frequently uses video techniques (to cover events, transmit interviews with the High Commissioner, transfer UNHCR field footage to media, etc.). DIST currently supports UNHCR's video unit technically and provides connectivity via MSS (mobile satellite systems) and FSS (fixed satellite systems).

During an emergency, it may be necessary to video-communicate with HQ or partners, to hold a discussion, share information, or broadcast (upload/stream).

Description and /or specifics

Video communications include three major elements:
Connectivity (VSAT, MSS, ISP, etc.)
A video platform
An operator

Connectivity. In UNHCR, connectivity is provided by an office-based VSAT or fibre internet access, or (when off-site) by a hand-carried MSS (mobile satellite system) such as BGAN. Recent software enhancement makes it possible to bundle two BGANs, increasing speeds (eventually dedicated) to more than 1 Mbps, which is enough to run video conferences of SD (standard definition) quality. It is possible to achieve HD (high definition) video in a field environment, but it remains expensive in terms of bandwidth requirements.

Video platform. This depends on the application required. Typically, video conferencing sessions are transmitted through Cisco Webex Online Meetings, Microsoft Teams, or Cisco Video Conferencing.

How to request / implement / seek support?

Request video conferencing capacity from the local IT expert, the Bureau IT Lead, or directly from DIST IT Operations if first responders need hand-carried video capacity, DIST is responsible for preparing this. (See ‘contact and support' below.)

3. Links

https://intranet.unhcr.org/en/support-services/ict-operations/ict-services/conf...

4. Main contacts

Contact the Division of Information Systems and Telecommunications (DIST).

- DIST Global Service Desk: hqussd@unhcr.org.
- UNHCR HQ Video Unit: hqvideo@unhcr.org

Evaluations of emergency operations

20 March 2023

Key points

- Typically, longer running operations are evaluated. Evaluations do not normally occur in the first months of an emergency operation (this is when real time reviews are held).
- The Evaluation Service commissions, oversees and completes an evaluation of each UNHCR
Level 3 emergency operation, within 18 months after its declaration.

- Evaluations of L1 or L2 emergencies may also be commissioned by the Evaluation Service at the High Commissioner's request.
- For humanitarian system-wide L3 emergencies, an Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) is typically conducted some 9 to 12 months after a system-wide scale-up activation is declared.
- Evaluations seek to improve the design, performance, and results of projects and operations.
- They are an essential tool for finding out why programmes succeed or fail, and to document insights, lessons and experiences that can be acknowledged and incorporated in future planning and decision-making.
- Evaluation reports are in the public domain.

1. Overview

This Entry indicates when evaluations of emergency operations are conducted and provides general guidance and information on evaluations.

UNHCR applies the definition adopted by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in its 2016 Norms and Standards for Evaluation:

...an assessment, conducted as systematically and impartially as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institutional performance. It analyses the level of achievement of both expected and unexpected results by examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality using appropriate criteria such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

More generally, evaluations should provide answers to the following key questions:

- Are we doing the right thing?
- Are we doing the right thing on a scale that will make a difference in the lives of persons of concern?
- How well have our interventions been and how do we know this?
- What results have been achieved?
- Are there better ways to achieve those results?
- To what extent can a given result be attributed to a specific intervention?

An evaluation that answers the questions above in a credible and timely manner, informed by evidence, and which focuses on use of the results, can positively influence planning, design, budgeting, implementation and reporting. Evaluations contribute to evidence-informed
programming, policy-making and organizational effectiveness, and strengthen results-based management in UNHCR.

UNHCR evaluations occur at two levels:

Centralised evaluations are commissioned and managed by the Evaluation Service (ES). They primarily focus (a) on policies, strategies, programmes and themes of corporate significance at global, strategic and institutional level, and (b) on Level 3 emergency operations.

Decentralised evaluations are commissioned and managed by Divisions, Regional Bureaux or regional and country offices. They primarily focus on activities, themes, sectors, operational areas, programmes and projects at regional or country level.

Distinct but complementary

Evaluation is distinct from, but complements, other oversight functions, such as audit and inspection, which focus more on risk management, control and governance objectives, compliance with UNHCR policies and regulations, and risks.

Monitoring and evaluation are often linked. However, evaluation also differs from (continuous) monitoring and other forms of assessments.

Evaluations are expected to generate credible evidence that is sufficient to answer questions about implementation and process, and also questions about the relevance and coherence of interventions, their adaptation to context, cause-and-effect concerns, and their contribution to results.

2. Main guidance

When and for what purpose

When

The Policy on Emergency preparedness and Response (UNHCR HCP 2017-1) stipulates that within 18 months (or earlier if so decided by the High Commissioner), the Evaluation Service commissions, oversees and completes an evaluation of each UNHCR Level 3 emergency operation. Evaluations of Level 1 or Level 2 emergencies may also be commissioned in accordance with UNHCR's policy on Evaluations.

Note: The relevant Bureau(x) and DESS conduct a real-time review of each Level 2 and Level 3 emergency operation after three months, by means of a joint mission or workshop. Reviews involve the key stakeholders and assess the timeliness, appropriateness and effectiveness of UNHCR's operational response. They recommend adjustments and course corrections that may be required. They also monitor the application of UNHCR's policy on emergency preparedness and response.
For humanitarian system-wide L3 emergencies, an Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) is typically conducted some 9 to 12 months after a system-wide L3 emergency is declared. The Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) initiates IAHEs on behalf of the IASC, as advised by the Emergency Directors Group (EDG). The Evaluation Service often contributes and participates in the management of IAHEs.

Regional Bureaux or Regional and Country Offices may also decide to initiate and commission a decentralized evaluation of L1 or L2 level emergency responses. In such cases, they should inform the Evaluation Service, who will provide expertise, support and advice, and review draft reports for quality assurance purposes.

**For what purpose**

The overall purposes of an evaluation are to support organizational accountability and learning and contribute to the continual improvement of UNHCR's performance in addressing the protection, assistance and solutions needs of refugees, stateless persons and other persons of concern.

In practical terms, evaluations objectively assess results and generate insights into how operations, policies and programmes are performing.

**Summary of guidance and/or options**

UNHCR's evaluation policy has four overarching principles. These guide best practice in planning, design and delivery and, taken together, provide a comprehensive framework for UNHCR evaluations.

**Independence.** Independence underpins the legitimacy of evaluation work by reducing the potential for conflicts of interest that might arise if managers and policy-makers were solely responsible for evaluating their interventions. The principle covers both behavioural and organisational independence.

**Impartiality.** Independence requires impartiality, which in turn depends on the professional integrity of evaluation managers and evaluation teams, as well as the absence of undue influence that might create bias.

**Credibility.** Evaluations must be credible if intended users are to act with confidence on their results, and take steps to incorporate the learning they generate in policy, advocacy, programming, decision-making, and implementation processes.

**Utility.** Whenever an evaluation is initiated, there should be a clear, specific, and well-communicated intention to apply its analysis, findings, conclusions and recommendations. This is essential if evaluations are to inform decision-making processes and contribute to operational
Management of an evaluation

The Evaluation Service commissions and manages centralized evaluations, and offers quality assurance, expertise and support to decentralized evaluations.

Preparation

An evaluation manager is appointed. For centralized evaluations the manager is an evaluation officer of the Evaluation Service. In decentralized evaluations, the manager is a staff member of the UNHCR entity that commissions the evaluation; the Evaluation Service provides support and advice as required.

The evaluation manager has important responsibilities throughout the different phases of an evaluation process, and is the key interlocutor for the evaluation team.

UNHCR's approach to evaluation normally includes the phases described below:

**Phase 1 - Preparation and terms of reference**

This phase focuses on the evaluation's initial and preparatory steps, namely clarifying its scope, defining its purpose and objectives, and agreeing the key questions that will be asked. This information is used to develop terms of reference (ToR), which are published to seek expressions of interest from individual consultants or firms. Bids from potential consultants or firms are reviewed and the evaluation team is selected.

**Phase 2 - Inception**

Phase 2 focuses on finalizing contract details, analysing background materials, and preparing and executing inception visits (where applicable). The team also lays the groundwork for data collection and drafts and finalizes its inception report.

The inception report is essentially a tool that enables the evaluation team and UNHCR to agree on how the evaluation should proceed.

**Phase 3 - Data collection and early analysis (including field mission)**

The evaluation team gathers data from multiple sources, and uses different methods and approaches to assemble and analyse evidence relevant to the evaluation questions. Field missions take place during this phase.

**Phase 4 - Drafting the report**

The team analyses its data and prepares, reviews and revises a draft evaluation report. This phase ends when the team completes its main deliverable, that is to say when the final report is approved. In the case of centralized evaluations the report is approved by the Head of the Evaluation Service, and in the case of decentralized evaluations by the senior manager who commissioned the evaluation.
Phase 5 - Dissemination and management response
The evaluation report is sent to key stakeholders. Management drafts a response. The management response summarizes stakeholders' responses to the evaluation's findings and recommendations, and includes planned follow-up actions. Both the evaluation report and the management response are published online.

How to implement this at field level?

When a centralized evaluation of an emergency operation is planned, the Evaluation Service informs the Representative(s) and liaises closely with the regional bureau concerned.

Evaluations require the support of both Representative(s) and the country office(s) concerned. They are requested to:

- Inform all relevant parties in advance (UNHCR colleagues, UN and NGO partners, government, donors), introduce the evaluation team, and explain that staff and partners may be approached for interview.
- Allocate a focal point on substance, as well as for logistical and administrative support.
- Make available to the evaluation team documents that capture key developments, decisions and results relating to the emergency operation.
- Assist the evaluation team to set up interviews with key stakeholders. Interviews should include persons of concern and should adopt an age, gender and diversity (AGD) approach.

Representative(s) and country office(s) may also be requested to provide logistical support (subject to operational constraints).

Annexes

UNHCR, Policy on Evaluation HCP 2016 2

UNEG, Norms and Standards for Evaluation 2016

IASC, Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations of Large Scale System-Wide Emergencies (IAHEs) Guidelines of 30 April 2014

3. Links

Norms and Standard Evaluations (2016) UNEG, Code of Conduct for evaluation in the UN system
UNEG, UN Ethical Guidelines for evaluations ALNAP UNHCR Age, Gender and Diversity Policy: Working with people and communities for... UNEG website
4. Main contacts

Evaluation Service at Headquarters: hqevaser@unhcr.org

Partnership Management for Emergency Preparedness and Response

03 November 2023

Key points

- Review existing partnerships and stakeholder mapping, to identify potential gaps during contingency planning to respond to the envisaged emergency scenario
- Pre-select a pool of potential partners, during contingency planning, through an expedited call for expressions of interest where the results are assessed by the multi-functional Implementation Programme Management Committee (IPMC)
- Ensure that partners are registered on the UN Partner Portal (UNPP), no later than three months after signing their project workplans
- From 2024 onwards, create a Partnership Framework Agreement (PFA) for new partners with already incorporated waived emergency conditions and, in parallel, a project workplan with the mandatory requirement of a financial plan

1. Overview

This entry focuses on how UNHCR’s engagement and actions, when preparing for and responding to emergencies, advance our delivery of life-saving protection and humanitarian assistance to forcibly displaced and stateless persons through partnerships.

UNHCR’s partnership approach is guided by the principles of partnership endorsed by the Global Humanitarian Platform on 12 July 2007, which emphasize equality, transparency, a results-oriented approach, responsibility and complementarity. The UNHCR Procedures on Partnership Management provide a unified framework and overall direction for partnership management processes throughout the three inter-linked phases of the programme cycle: PLAN for, GET and SHOW Results.
Funded partners, who receive financial support from UNHCR, are referred to as “partners” in this document. Non-funded partners are referenced as such. UNHCR disburses a significant part of its annual expenditure through over 1,200 partners, and effective implementation with partners is fundamental to any emergency response.

2. Relevance for emergency operations

UNHCR works closely with partners to protect and assist forcibly displaced and stateless people, particularly in an emergency. A partnership agreement is a mandatory instrument whenever UNHCR transfers funds to partners, including in declared emergencies.

Partnerships during emergencies make it possible to:

- Rapidly identify and swiftly respond to the needs of forcibly displaced and stateless persons.
- Collaborate and coordinate in a principled manner with other humanitarian responders, mitigating the risk of duplication.
- Provide essential resources to partners, enabling them to deliver results for emergency programmes.

Demonstrate sound stewardship and accountability to partner organizations, donors, communities, individuals and other stakeholders.

3. Main guidance

**Partnership contingency planning**

As part of contingency planning, the existing project workplans and the stakeholder mapping are reviewed to identify potential gaps in expertise, the scope of required results, target population, and the geographical place of delivery during an emergency.

As part of contingency planning, if gaps are identified, a country operation can establish a pool of potential partners. This allows for timely due diligence while ensuring that the best-fit partner is ready to embark quickly in an emergency response when required. This can entail:

- Stipulating within the call for expression of interest the duration for which this contingency pool of partners remains valid. For example, a country operation may mobilize potential partners from the contingency pool until 20XX.
- If a pool of potential partners is recommended by the IPMC via a call for expression of interest, the UNHCR representative (or head of sub-office) may sign an agreement with a partner from the selected pool, whether or not an emergency of any level has been declared.

**Partnering in an emergency**

The representative or director has the authority to decide on the best-fit implementation
modalities, without an IPMC recommendation. This decision considers the needs, operational capacity, presence, and availability of other stakeholders, and other context-specific parameters. After the emergency declaration expires, the representative will revisit implementation modalities prior to the next year of implementation.

Once an emergency of any level has been declared, the following partnership management procedures apply for the duration of the declaration, including any extension:

- During an emergency declaration, the head of sub-office, representative or director can expand the scope of an existing PFA (for example, to cover a new outcome or geographical area) without a new recommendation from the IPMC – if the partner has prior experience, proven capacity and is willing to expand.
- The registration of a partner on the UN Partner Portal and all applicable capacity assessment processes are to be completed as soon as possible, and no later than three months after signing the project workplan. See the Programme Handbook for further details surrounding a partner’s capacity strengthening and risk management, as well as the applicable capacity assessment processes.
- For new partners, a PFA is generated. In parallel, a project workplan is created with the mandatory requirement of a financial plan. The operation does not need to complete the project description, results plan or risk register ahead of the project workplan signature. The financial plan may be signed with one account code (budget line) per output. The first instalment is released based on the conditions of the project workplan and financial plan only.
- An amendment of the project workplan is then required in case the partnership is extended beyond the emergency declaration period, to include a project description, a results plan, a risk register and any further applicable project workplan components.
- Partners are entitled to special supply procedures, including a ceiling increase for request for quotations and a shortened floating period for formal methods of solicitation. See the Procurement emergency handbook entry for more information on all the special supply procedures that automatically apply to UNHCR when an emergency is declared. See the Programme Handbook for further details surrounding partner’s procurement capacity assessed during the internal control assessment or questionnaire (ICA/ICQ).
- The project closure of a project workplan may be completed, within the emergency declaration period, having only released one instalment, with the PFA, project workplan, financial plan, one project financial report (PFR) and any other reports (as agreed by the operation).

**Monitoring partnerships in an emergency**

Monitoring partnerships is a crucial component of an emergency response. There are no reduced implementation and results monitoring requirements during a declared emergency. The frequency of monitoring activities for partnerships may in fact increase.

The humanitarian situation in a country is often fluid and subject to frequent change. Monitoring partnership projects is therefore essential to track and confirm their progress against agreed performance targets, adjust their direction and implementation as needed, and identify measures to improve their impact and quality. UNHCR, its partners and other stakeholders, i.e.
local authorities (as applicable), should jointly monitor and review partnership projects, share information and coordinate, to strengthen their collective ownership and joint responsibility for project results.

To ensure effective monitoring of partnerships, it is recommended that a country operation updates (or develops) the annual assessment, monitoring and evaluation workplan as soon as possible, that is revisited on an annual basis, which is informed by the overall M&E plan. This will enable the operation to determine the key M&E activities required for the emergency response. See the **Programme Handbook** for more information.

During an emergency, the partners’ capacity to prevent, mitigate and respond to risks of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) is monitored regularly by the UNHCR multi-functional team and the PSEA focal point. For a partner who is in a high-risk environment and has previously been assessed as having a low or medium PSEA capacity and therefore has a capacity strengthening implementation plan (CSIP), the operation monitors the implementation of CSIP activities after three months and continues checking its progress throughout the emergency declaration and any extension period. Within six months of implementing a CSIP, or nine months in the case of extension, the partner should have reached full capacity. See UNHCR’s **Procedures on Partnership Management** for more information about continuing partnerships with partners that are not able to reach full PSEA capacity for further years/project workplans.

Reasons for signing a project workplan with a partner despite its low or medium capacity during an emergency may include the partner’s specialized technical expertise within a particular area, lack of viable alternatives in that sector or location, or a satisfactory risk assessment of the partner. Capacity-strengthening regarding PSEA is a key area of UNHCR’s work with these partners.

**Associated risks**

Emergency preparedness is critical to be able to respond to the humanitarian crisis, mitigate the impact and reduce human suffering and loss of life. Risk management will help anticipate risks and opportunities that could impact the achievement of shared objectives. UNHCR and partners need to manage and effectively mitigate risks identified (for further guidance see the **Risk Management Toolkit** to help identify critical risks in an operation). There is a need to exercise due diligence as the following risks are heightened during an emergency:

- Significant expansion of the operation with new protection and assistance needs and new priorities.
- Civil society not sufficiently developed and lack of NGO capacity in the operation.
- Partners may lack capacity / unable to upscale to address growing operational needs.
- Security situation or other disturbances impact implementation and access to forcibly displaced and stateless persons.
- Competing priorities for limited staff impacts planning and implementation capacity.
- Fraud or other misconduct may occur as a result of faulty internal control systems (see UNHCR’s **risk management tool on fraud prevention** for further guidance).
- Resources provided may not be used for their intended purpose.
- Funds may be utilized inefficiently, reducing the quality or availability of the services that
forcibly displaced and stateless people receive.
- Some partners may not fully account for funds entrusted to them by UNHCR.
- Unethical behaviour of personnel, including risk of SEA.

**Associated mitigating measures**

- Ensure coordination mechanisms with partners and stakeholders.
- Early engagement of partners in contingency planning.
- Engage complementary partner(s) in view of geographic coverage.
- Update annual assessment, monitoring and evaluation plan based on risk.
- Implement monitoring mechanisms, including remote monitoring (if physical access is not feasible).
- Verify partner controls, standard operating procedures, recordings of transactions, and that segregation of duties is followed.
- Raise awareness and conduct training on PSEA as well as fraud and corruption prevention and reporting, among partners, UNHCR personnel and forcibly displaced and stateless people.
- Establish effective complaints/feedback mechanisms in consultation with communities.
- Expand outreach monitoring and remain accessible to forcibly displaced and stateless people.

**Post emergency phase**

During an emergency declaration, the country operation should initiate planning for the post-emergency phase. This includes reviewing partnership agreements, together with the regional bureau and relevant HQ divisions, at the end of an emergency declaration, to ensure continuity of the response.

It is at the discretion of the representative to decide when the competitive selection process for partners recommences after an emergency declaration has expired. It is their responsibility to ensure that this decision is clearly documented.

For project workplans that were created during an emergency, if they are extended beyond the emergency declaration period, then an amendment is required. This amendment includes a project description, results plan, risk register and any further applicable project workplan components.

Partnership agreements require partners to provide unhindered access to audit, monitoring and inspection teams, during or post-emergency. The monitoring, verification and audits must provide reasonable assurance that UNHCR funds are spent for the intended purpose and used to provide protection and assistance in the manner intended. Among other safeguards and to remain credible with donors, UNHCR should verify the integrity of and data in partners’ reported results and expenditure. All projects that UNHCR funds and implements with partners are subject to audit. Projects due for audit are identified by DSPR/IMAS through a risk-based approach.
Partnership Management in Emergencies

- Before an emergency is declared, onboard pooled partners during competitive partnership selection as part of contingency planning.

- Ensure new partners register on the UNPP within three months of signing a project workplan.

- Sign a partnership framework agreement and project workplan, entering as much information as is available at the time, with a financial plan only (one account code per output may be applied). The first instalment is released based on the conditions of the contract and financial plan only.

- Assess the partner’s capacity in protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), within three months of signing a project workplan.

- Assess a new partner’s internal controls or retrieve their latest internal control questionnaire risk rating from a UN project audit.

- Update (or develop) the annual assessment, monitoring and evaluation workplan to determine the key M&E activities required for the emergency.

- Verify all reported results and expenditure ahead of releasing instalments.

- Coordinate project audits accordingly.

4. Links

UN Partner Portal Procedures on Partnership Management Risk management tool on fraud prevention Programme Handbook

5. Main contacts
Head of Operational and Partnership Management Unit
Senior Programme Management and Support Officer
UNHCR Division of Strategic Planning and Results

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