MOPAN

Multilateral Organisation
Performance Assessment Network

Synthesis report

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

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MULTILATERAL

COUNTRY

DONOR

MOPAN

Preface

The Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) is a network of donor countries with a common interest in assessing the organisational effectiveness of multilateral organisations and their measurement and reporting on development and/or humanitarian results. MOPAN was established in 2002 in response to international forums on aid effectiveness and calls for greater donor harmonisation and co-ordination.

Today, MOPAN is made up of 19 donor countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. For more information on MOPAN and to access previous MOPAN reports, please visit the MOPAN website (www.mopanonline.org).

Each year MOPAN carries out assessments of several multilateral organisations based on criteria agreed by MOPAN members. Its approach has evolved over the years, and since 2010 has been based on a survey of key stakeholders and a review of documents of multilateral organisations. MOPAN assessments provide a snapshot of four dimensions of organisational effectiveness (strategic management, operational management, relationship management, and knowledge management). In 2013, MOPAN integrated a component to examine the evidence of achievement of development and/or humanitarian results to complement the assessment of organisational effectiveness.

MOPAN 2014

In 2014, MOPAN assessed four organisations as shown below. MOPAN Institutional Leads liaised with the organisations throughout the assessment process and Country Leads monitored the process in each country and ensured the success of the survey.

MOPAN Institutional Leads	Multilateral organisation
Norway and Korea	Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)
Denmark	United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
United States and Canada	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
Spain and The Netherlands	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

MOPAN Country Leads	Countries
United States	Bangladesh
Switzerland	Cambodia
France and Belgium	Democratic Republic of Congo
Germany	Ecuador
Finland and United States	Kenya
Ireland	Tanzania

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Roles of authors and the MOPAN Secretariat

The MOPAN Chair was held by France in 2014 and worked in close co-operation with the MOPAN Technical Working Group to launch and manage the survey. The MOPAN Secretariat, established at the OECD in April 2013, oversaw all related tasks.

MOPAN developed the key performance and micro-indicators, designed the survey methodology, co-ordinated the preparation of the lists of survey respondents, and approved the final survey questionnaire for each agency. MOPAN also directed the approach to the document review and oversaw the design, structure, tone, and content of the institutional reports.

Universalia and Epinion developed the survey instrument and carried out the survey and statistical data analysis. Universalia carried out the document review, conducted the interviews with multilateral organisation staff at headquarters and country levels, analysed the data and wrote the institutional reports. Epinion is a Danish market research company that conducts specially designed studies for public and private organisations based on data collected among an organisation's employees, members, customers, partners, and other sources. (Website: www.epinion.dk)

Universalia Management Group Ltd. is a Canadian consulting firm established in 1980 that specialises in evaluation and monitoring for international development. Universalia has made significant contributions to identifying best practices and developing tools in the fields of organisational assessment; planning, monitoring, and evaluation; results-based management; and capacity building. (Website: www.universalia.com)

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Acronyms

ACABQ	United Nations Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
AGD	Age, gender and diversity
DESS	UNHCR Division of Emergency, Security and Supply
DPSM	UNHCR Division of Programme Support and Management
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
ERT	Emergency Response Team
ExCom	Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme
GA	General Assembly
GPC	UNHCR IDP and Global Protection Cluster
GSP	Global Strategic Priority
HQ	Headquarters
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDP	Internally displaced people
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IPSAS	International Public Sector Accounting Standards
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MI	Micro-indicator
MO	Multilateral Organisation
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
MSRP	Managing for Systems, Resources and People
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD-DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
PAMS	Performance Appraisal and Management Systems
PDES	Policy Development and Evaluation Service
QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
RBM	Results-based management
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
UN	United Nations
UNBOA	United Nations Board of Auditors
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WFP	World Food Programme

Executive summary

This report presents the findings of an assessment of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) conducted by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN). MOPAN reports provide an assessment of four dimensions of organisational effectiveness (strategic management, operational management, relationship management, and knowledge management), an assessment of the organisation's relevance and reporting on its humanitarian results, and snapshots of UNHCR performance in each of the five countries included in the survey.

UNHCR was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1950 in recognition of the United Nations' responsibility to protect refugees in the aftermath of the Second World War. Since then, resolutions of the General Assembly and the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) have further developed the organisation's mandate: refining its responsibilities with respect to refugees and asylum-seekers; formalising its functions regarding returnees and stateless persons; and conferring it authority under certain conditions to engage with internally displaced persons.

The UN General Assembly and ECOSOC set policy directives for the organisation. An Executive Committee (ExCom) of member states (currently 94) provides executive and advisory functions that include reviewing and approving the organisation's biennial programmes and budget and authorising the High Commissioner to make appeals for funds. The High Commissioner, appointed by the General Assembly, is responsible for the direction and control of the organisation and reports annually to ECOSOC and the General Assembly on UNHCR's work.

UNHCR is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland and operates in 123 countries with a workforce of more than 9 000 employees. Centralised administrative functions are handled by the Global Service Centre in Budapest, Hungary.

UNHCR's corporate strategic plan (the Global Appeal) includes a set of Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs) that underscore areas of critical concern in pursuing its mandate to provide protection and assistance and to seek permanent solutions for refugees and other persons of concern. UNHCR's current strategic plan (2014-2015) includes eight operational strategic priorities and a set of support and management priorities to enhance organisational effectiveness (e.g. financial accountability, protection, humanitarian co-ordination, results-based management, and preparedness and response).

UNHCR receives a small annual subsidy from the United Nations regular budget that partially covers its management and administrative costs and obtains the bulk of its funding from voluntary contributions from donor governments, inter-governmental institutions, non-governmental organisations and the private sector (i.e. corporations, foundations and citizens).

In 2006, UNHCR set out on a far-reaching internal reform process to increase its efficiency and improve its delivery. In recent years, UNHCR has been working to consolidate and fine-tune reforms, focusing on results-based planning and budgeting, regionalisation, human resource management, support to operations, and oversight and accountability.

MOPAN assessment

MOPAN conducted one previous assessment of UNHCR in 2011.

The 2014 assessment is based on information collected through a survey of key stakeholders, document review, and interviews with UNHCR staff. The survey respondents included UNHCR's direct partners, MOPAN donors based in-country and at headquarters, and host government and peer organisations in countries where UNHCR has operations. Five countries were included in the MOPAN survey of UNHCR: Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Kenya and Tanzania.

A total of 214 respondents participated in the survey (34 MOPAN donors based at headquarters, 34 donors based in-country, 78 direct partners, 19 host government representatives, and 49 representatives of peer organisations). The document review examined more than 400 documents. Interviews were held with 24 UNHCR staff members at headquarters and 10 from country offices.

The main findings of the institutional assessment of UNHCR are summarised below.

Key findings

Strategic management

MOPAN established five key performance indicators (KPI) in the area of strategic management, which address the organisation's leadership on the results agenda and capacities for developing and following institutional and country strategies that reflect good practices in managing for results.

UNHCR is viewed as an organisation whose senior management and values emphasise the achievement of humanitarian results. Since the 2011 MOPAN review, UNHCR has taken steps to embrace results-based management but more work is required to support its effective application in UNHCR operations.

Among the four cross-cutting priorities examined by MOPAN, UNHCR was considered strong in mainstreaming gender equality and integrating emergency preparedness and response. Its support for environmental sustainability and good governance received mixed ratings. It is important to note that the MOPAN criteria examine the organisation's policies and strategies in these areas, not their implementation.

UNHCR country strategies are based on reliable needs assessments and provide causal links from inputs to outputs/outcomes. A key shortcoming relates to the design, funding, and update of contingency plans.

The review identified several limitations in UNHCR's strategic management performance. One relates to how UNHCR translates its mandate into operational priorities/objectives. While UNHCR has a clear mandate that is valued by stakeholders, the document review highlighted several ambiguities in its corporate strategy (the Global Appeal) since it does not clearly explain the rationale behind the elements presented (e.g. the choice of GSPs, the proposed indicators) and the link between the Global Appeal and the Results Framework, and between the GSPs and the anticipated areas of intervention. These omissions limit the Global Appeal's clarity and utility in guiding UNHCR in implementing its mandate strategically. While some of this information is briefly presented in other documents, these explanations are needed in the Global Appeal document itself so that the strategy is comprehensible and complete.

A second limitation relates to a disconnection between the short-term nature of the corporate strategy (two years) and the protracted refugee contexts within which UNHCR and other humanitarian organisations increasingly are operating, which may require longer term strategic plans and commitments to support the realisation of durable solutions in the lives of refugees and other persons of concern.

A third limitation relates to how UNHCR links its corporate results framework with its strategic plan. UNHCR has a complex results architecture that comprises a corporate results framework, GSPs, as well as emerging results frameworks for UNHCR's global programmes and some headquarter technical divisions. The multiplicity of frameworks creates challenges in tracking, reporting on and analysing UNHCR's performance on an organisation-wide basis.

Operational management

MOPAN established eight key indicators in the area of operational management, which refers to managing operations in a way that is performance-oriented, thus ensuring organisational accountability for resources and results.

The assessment found that UNHCR's greatest overall strength in operational management is its continuing delegation of authority for operational and management decision making to countries and, over the past several years, to regional offices as well. Delegation of authority was recognised positively in the 2011 and 2014 MOPAN reviews and UNHCR plans to continue to pursue decentralisation objectives in the future. However, some stakeholders expressed concern that UNHCR headquarters has become too lean and that resources to support the field and ensure internal controls are overstretched.

Another operational strength is the conformity of UNHCR's external audit processes with recognised international standards at organisation-wide, country and project levels.

Findings of the 2011 and 2014 reviews are consistent in terms of human resource management. UNHCR was commended for its staff security processes and staff code of conduct but there is a need for a more transparent staff performance appraisal system that links staff performance and opportunities for career development. UNHCR plans to revise its Performance Appraisal and Management Systems (PAMS) in 2014/15. The document review rated UNHCR very strong for its staff protection practices and systems.

Although stakeholders recognise UNHCR as a strong supporter of humanitarian principles, the organisation's documents do not emphasise these principles and UNHCR has not defined accountability for their application or monitoring.

Other areas requiring continued attention include: tracking expenditures by results at the operational and organisational levels (also a finding of the 2011 MOPAN review); more transparent processes to prioritise country-level funding allocations and decisions; following up on poorly performing programmes; and tracking performance in addressing evaluation recommendations.

UNHCR has taken steps to address and apply the tenets of the Transformative Agenda, and plans to continue. However, it has made little progress in responding to the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review.

Relationship management
MOPAN established four performance indicators in the area of relationship management, which refers to how the organisation is working with others.

Relationship management is a critical performance area for UNHCR given the broad consensus that is needed for refugee work in general, and given the increasing reliance on partners for programme implementation. It is also important given the increasing emphasis and value placed on collaboration, co-ordination, communication and joint actions by humanitarian assistance actors (implementing and operational partners alike) to respond more efficiently and effectively to the needs of refugees and other persons of concern including internally displaced persons (IDP).

Positive highlights identified through the document review and/or survey include: UNHCR's ability to respond quickly to changing circumstances; the quality of UNHCR's policy dialogue; its use of advocacy to enhance protection for refugees and other persons of concern; and its procedures which respondents generally considered easy to follow.

Respondents rated UNHCR as adequate with regard to how it engages with partners in policy dialogue and supports capacity development. UNHCR is an active contributor to inter-agency plans and appeals and collaborates with main operational partners (such as the World Food Programme) at various stages of the humanitarian programme cycle. The document review noted variations in the clarity of monitoring and evaluation arrangements with its partners. Actions taken by UNHCR with its partners since 2011 to clarify and improve partnership relations, arrangements and agreements (under the umbrella of the Enhanced Framework for Implementing Partners) are encouraging.

Continued UNHCR investment in cluster management and more time are required to realise demonstrable improvements in how clusters are led or co-led by UNHCR, and in how UNHCR co-ordinates with other operational partners. Recent steps taken to formalise the accountability interface between UNHCR's co-ordination of refugee response and OCHA's co-ordination of the broader humanitarian response are promising.

Knowledge management
MOPAN developed three key performance indicators to examine an organisation's feedback and reporting mechanisms as well as learning strategies that facilitate the sharing of knowledge and performance information. An organisation's ability to capture and effectively use knowledge to deliver its intended results is an important factor in its continued relevance and success (the Learning Organisation concept).

Surveyed stakeholders considered UNHCR adequate overall in knowledge management. The document review found that the organisation's evaluation function has accomplished a great deal despite modest financial resources, but identified several areas for improvement. As also noted in the 2011 review, although there is evidence of UNHCR's commitment to address noted shortcomings, the data raised concerns about UNHCR's ability to address limitations without adequate resources, management buy-in and increased structural independence of the evaluation function. As was the case in the 2011 MOPAN review, the document review also flagged several areas for improvement in how UNHCR reports on its performance (particularly in terms of outcomes and impacts at the organisation-wide level) and how it captures and utilises lessons learned to inform organisational work processes and programmes.

UNHCR's relevance and humanitarian results

UNHCR results are relevant to stakeholders in the complex environments in which it operates. UNHCR has adapted over time to ensure the protection and rights of the growing numbers of refugees and other persons of concern. It has a valued reputation for leadership in convening NGOs, UN sister agencies, experts, and states to help set global priorities. MOPAN perception data and documents consulted on UNHCR's practices present evidence that UNHCR is pursuing results relevant to its mandate that are aligned with global humanitarian trends and priorities and that respond to the needs and priorities of beneficiaries.

MOPAN survey respondents and UNHCR Global Reports indicate that UNHCR has made progress towards its organisation-wide results. However, current reporting practices and the lack of documented evidence available on the organisation's contributions to results make it difficult to have a clear and comprehensive picture of these achievements. This is due to the partial reporting on UNHCR's corporate results, the complexity of results frameworks, and insufficient numbers of evaluation reports.

In contrast to its reporting on organisational progress, UNHCR provides richer data and narratives on the contributions it makes at the country level. MOPAN survey respondents in each country also view that the organisation is making adequate or strong contributions in all its rights groups. Documentary evidence across the sample of five countries indicates that UNHCR is achieving its planned results at the output level and making partial progress towards expected objectives.

Conclusions

UNHCR is a unique multilateral agency that, since its founding in 1950, has adapted to vastly changed world circumstances and humanitarian needs. UNHCR's relevance is not in doubt. However, UNHCR is not immune to the considerable challenges of 21st century organisational development.

Since the MOPAN assessment in 2011, UNHCR has faced a dynamic operational context that has placed significant demands on the organisation's capacities. It has sought to meet the challenges but not without difficulty.

UNHCR has a relevant, clear and valued mandate that has evolved over time to protect, provide assistance and seek permanent solutions for refugees as well as other persons of concern.

As was also found in the 2011 MOPAN assessment, UNHCR's corporate strategy and results frameworks do not fully define, communicate, guide or monitor how its mandate is translated into organisation-wide results. UNHCR has operationalised results-based management (RBM) through a complex system that has several limitations.

UNHCR is perceived to make contributions to humanitarian results, but neither its reports nor its performance measurement systems provide a clear and complete picture of how it is improving the circumstances and well-being of persons of concern. UNHCR corporate reports do not yet aggregate results over time, geographic regions, and rights groups. As with other organisations engaged in humanitarian action, there is room for improvement in the use of evidence in decision making and reporting.

Over the past few years UNHCR has been working actively to improve its relationships with its implementing and operational partners. Recent developments in co-ordination of mixed refugee situations are promising, but UNCHR is not yet identified as strong in partnering effectively with other humanitarian organisations.

UNHCR has taken steps to address and apply the tenets of the Transformative Agenda, and plans to continue. However, it has made little progress in responding to the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review.

Overall MOPAN ratings of UNFPA

The two charts below show the ratings on the key performance indicators that MOPAN used to assess UNHCR in 2014. The first chart shows the ratings on 20 indicators designed to measure organisational effectiveness (practices and systems), and the second chart shows ratings on the three indicators designed to assess UNHCR's relevance, and evidence of progress towards organisational and country-level results.

Organisational effectiveness– overall ratings

Strategic management	Survey respondents	Document review
KPI-1 Providing direction for results	4.65	4
KPI-2 Corporate strategy based on clear mandate	4.83	4
KPI-3 Corporate focus on results	N/A	3
KPI-4 Focus on cross-cutting priorities	4.47	4
KPI-5 Country focus on results	4.38	5
Operational management		
KPI-6 Transparent and timely funding	4.18	3
KPI-7 Results-based budgeting	3.94	4
KPI-8 Financial accountability	4.57	4
KPI-9 Using performance information	4.26	3
KPI-10 Managing human resources	4.38	5
KPI-11 Performance-oriented programming	N/A	4
KPI-12 Delegating authority	4.57	5
KPI-13 Humanitarian principles and protection approach	4.81	4
Relationship management		
KPI-14 Adjusting to local conditions and capacities	4.36	N/A
KPI-15 Contributing to policy dialogue	4.62	N/A
KPI-16 Cluster management	4.43	4
KPI-18 Harmonising procedures	4.46	4
Knowledge management		
KPI-19 Evaluating results	4.11	3
KPI-20 Presenting performance information	4.40	3
KPI-21 Disseminating lessons learned	4.05	4

Legend	
Strong or above	4.50–6.00
Adequate	3.50–4.49
Inadequate or below	1.00–3.49
Document review data unavailable	◆
Not assessed	N/A

Relevance and evidence of progress towards results – overall ratings

Relevance and results	Assessment Rating
KPI A: Evidence of UNHCR's relevance	Strong
KPI B: Evidence of progress towards organisation-wide results	Inadequate
KPI D: Evidence of progress towards UNHCR stated country-level results	Adequate

Weak Inadequate Adequate Strong

1. Introduction

1.1 PURPOSE OF MOPAN ASSESSMENTS

MOPAN assessments are intended to:

- Generate relevant, credible and robust information MOPAN members can use to meet their domestic accountability requirements and fulfil their responsibilities and obligations as bilateral donors
- Provide an evidence base for MOPAN members, multilateral organisations and their partners/clients to discuss organisational effectiveness and reporting on development and/or humanitarian results
- Support dialogue between individual MOPAN members, multilateral organisations and their partners/clients to build understanding and improve organisational performance and results over time at both country and headquarters levels.

MOPAN's assessment methodology is evolving in response to what is being learned from year to year, and to accommodate multilateral organisations with different mandates (e.g. global funds, organisations with significant humanitarian programming, organisations with a predominantly humanitarian mandate).

1.2 PROFILE OF UNHCR

Establishment and mandate

The decision to establish UNHCR was made in 1949 by the United Nations General Assembly in recognition of the United Nations' responsibility to protect refugees and in the aftermath of the Second World War, which had caused massive displacement of people across Europe (UNHCR, 2013 [02]; UN-Women, n.d.[02]). Informed by the experiences of previous international refugee institutions, the 'Statute' or provisions for the functioning of UNHCR were adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 1950 (UNHCR, 2013 [02]; UN General Assembly, 1950 [01]). Multiple General Assembly and UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolutions have since further developed the organisation's mandate: refining its responsibilities with respect to refugees and asylum-seekers; formalising its functions regarding returnees and stateless persons; and conferring it authority under certain conditions to engage with internally displaced persons (UNHCR, 2013 [02]; UNHCR, 2014 [34]). UNHCR's mandate is also supported by legal instruments: the 1951 *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol* (UNHCR, n.d. [86]), the 1954 *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons* and the 1961 *Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness* (UNHCR, 2013 [02]; UNHCR, 2013 [06]; UNHCR, 1954; UNHCR, 1961).

UNHCR is mandated to provide international protection and humanitarian assistance to and seek durable solutions for refugees and asylum seekers. The organisation is also tasked with supervising States' compliance with their international obligations towards refugees and asylum seekers, and with leading and co-ordinating comprehensive responses for these groups with all concerned stakeholders. UNHCR is also responsible for identifying, preventing and reducing statelessness, and for providing protection to stateless persons. Returnees are also part of UNHCR's 'core' mandate: The High Commissioner has authority to provide reintegration assistance to former refugees who have returned to their country of origin and to monitor their treatment. This role also involves making transitional assistance arrangements for returnees with development actors (UNHCR, 2013 [02]).

UNHCR's involvement with internally displaced persons (IDPs) has focused on enhancing their protection and providing them with humanitarian assistance through special operations allowed by the General Assembly when there is:

> …a specific request/authorization from the Secretary-General or a competent principal organ of the UN; the consent of the state or other entities concerned; assurance of access to the internally displaced; availability of adequate resources and the Office's particular expertise and experience; complementarity with other agencies; and adequate staff safety. (UNHCR, 2013 [02])

UNHCR has also extended a 'good offices' function and provided humanitarian assistance and protection to groups other than the persons of concern listed above (e.g. local communities, war-affected civilians, and besieged populations) as requested by the General Assembly (UNHCR, 2003 [04]).

Governance and structure

UNHCR has a complex governance structure. Its primary governing bodies are the UN General Assembly and ECOSOC, which set policy directives for the organisation. Since 1959, the organisation has been guided by an Executive Committee (ExCom), which is a subsidiary body of the General Assembly. The ExCom provides key executive and advisory functions that include reviewing and approving the organisation's biennial programmes and budget, advising the High Commissioner in the exercise of his/her functions, and authorising the High Commissioner to make appeals for funds (UNHCR, n.d. [58]; UNHCR, 2003 [02]). The ExCom's membership is large, including at present 94 members elected from "the widest possible geographical basis from those States with a demonstrated interest in, and devotion to, the solution of the refugee problem" (UNGA, 1957 [01]; UNHCR, 2014 [23]). In 1995, the ExCom established its own subsidiary body, the Standing Committee, which meets three times yearly to carry out work between ExCom annual plenary sessions and also holds informal consultative meetings on topics requiring in-depth discussion (UNHCR, n.d. 60).

The High Commissioner, appointed by the UN General Assembly, is the head of UNHCR and responsible for the direction and control of the organisation. He/she reports annually to ECOSOC and the General Assembly on UNHCR's work, and is assisted by a Deputy High Commissioner and by Assistant Commissioners for Protection and Operations (UNHCR, n.d. [59]).

UNHCR is a devolved organisation: It operates in 459 offices in 123 countries with a workforce of more than 9 000 employees, nearly 90% of whom are deployed in the field (UNBOA, 2012 [01]; UNHCR, 2013 [07]). Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, the organisation shifted many of its centralised administrative functions (including finance, personnel, payroll, recruitment, posting and supply management) to a Global Service Centre in Budapest, Hungary, in 2008 in order to streamline costs (UNHCR, 2008 [10]).

Strategy in place

While pursuing its all-embracing endeavour of providing protection and assistance and to seek permanent solutions for refugees and other people of concern, each biennium UNHCR designs a set of Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs) that underscore areas of critical concern to the Office of the High Commissioner. The GSPs are a common set of priorities that serve as a master plan for global operations, a key input for the UNHCR planning, as well as an essential standpoint for reviewing and approving operations plans designed in the Field (UNHCR, 2013 [06]; UNHCR, n.d. [02]; UNHCR, n.d. [05]).[1]

1. The GSP approach to UNHCR strategic planning was first introduced for the 2010-2011 biennium. Since then, the GSPs have been refined through extensive internal consultations. They have been streamlined and the number of impact indicators have been reduced in order to increase their focus and manageability, field operations have selected the indicators most applicable to their context, and a continued management unit – GSP Management Team – was established at Headquarters and is co-ordinated jointly by the Division of Programme Support and Management and the Division of Emergency Security and Supply (UNHCR, 2013 [03]; UNHCR, 2013 [32]).

The 2014-2015 biennium planning exercise confirmed the 2012-2013 GSP enduring relevance, while accentuating the importance of sustaining the engagement in GSPs in order to achieve results. Accordingly, UNHCR has predominantly maintained 2012-2013 strategic priorities during the current biennium, although a number of modifications have been made: some GSP areas have been broadened, a new area was included, and some impact indicators have been added (UNHCR, 2013 [03]). UNHCR's current strategic plan (2014-2015) includes the following eight operational strategic priorities (UNHCR, 2013 [03]; UNHCR, 2013 [06]):

1. Ensuring access to territorial protection and asylum procedures; protection against refoulement; and the adoption of nationality laws that prevent and/or reduce statelessness.
2. Securing birth registration, profiling and individual documentation based on registration.
3. Reducing protection risks faced by people of concern, in particular, discrimination, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and specific risks faced by children.
4. Reducing mortality, morbidity and malnutrition through multi-sectoral interventions.
5. Meeting international standards in relation to shelter, domestic energy, water, sanitation and hygiene.
6. Promoting active participation in decision making of people of concern and building coexistence with hosting communities.
7. Promoting human potential through increased opportunities for quality education and livelihoods support.
8. Expanding opportunities for durable solutions for people of concern, particularly those in protracted situations, including through strengthening the use of comprehensive approaches and contributing to sustainable reintegration, local settlement and successful resettlement in third countries.

Along with the operational GSPs, a set of Support and Management priorities is also indicated and updated to identify the key priorities in strengthening management functions to support global and field operations that are sought during the current biennium. These priorities highlight the efforts that UNHCR will make to enhance its organisational effectiveness in areas such as financial accountability, protection, humanitarian co-ordination, results-based management, and preparedness and response (UNHCR, 2013 [06]; UNHCR, n.d. [05]; UNHCR, 2013 [03]).

A pivotal element in UNHCR's strategy is the acknowledgment that impact is only achieved through comprehensive joint action with hosting States, displaced communities, UN agencies and non-governmental organisations (UNHCR, 2013 [06]; UNHCR, n.d. [02]).

Finances

UNHCR receives a small annual subsidy from the United Nations regular budget that partially covers its management and administrative costs (UNHCR, n.d. [44]).The organisation must therefore obtain the bulk of its funding from voluntary contributions from donor governments, inter-governmental institutions, non-governmental organisations and the private sector (i.e. corporations, foundations and citizens).

In 2013, UNHCR received contributions of USD 2.965 billion - an unprecedented amount - to address the needs of nearly 43 million persons forcibly displaced within or beyond their countries of origin. Nevertheless, these funds covered only 60% of the comprehensive budgetary requirements identified by the organisation for the year (through its global needs assessment and its supplementary appeals for unanticipated emergencies). An additional challenge concerns the continued downward trend in unrestricted contributions, which dropped to 16% of overall funding received in 2013; tightly earmarked contributions concurrently increased to 64%. The organisation notes that unrestricted/unearmarked contributions play a key role in "allowing operations to start up and continue without interruption throughout the year, especially at times when new emergencies tend to divert resources from less visible operations" (UNHCR, 2014 [22]).

UNHCR relies heavily on implementing partners and operational partners to implement its field activities, particularly in the delivery of protection and assistance to refugees and other persons of concern. Implementing partners are those to whom UNHCR delegates project implementation using funds supplied by UNHCR. An organisation that works in co-ordination with UNHCR, but does not receive funding, is referred to as an operational partner. In 2013, UNHCR channelled USD 1.15 billion (nearly 40% of all its expenses) through its implementing partners (UNHCR, 2014 [22]).

Reform processes

In 2006, UNHCR began a reform process to increase the proportion of resources devoted to protection, assistance and solutions for people of concern and to reduce the share of funding spent on the organisation itself. In recent years, UNHCR has been working to consolidate and fine-tune reforms, focusing on results-based planning and budgeting, regionalisation, human resources management, support to operations, and oversight and accountability (UNHCR, 2010 [18]; UNHCR, 2011 [13]). UNHCR's High Commissioner, Mr. António Guterres, reports that the organisation has reduced by more than half the share of resources allocated to Headquarters since 2006 (i.e. from 13.5% of total UNHCR expenses down to 6.5%), and that programme delivery and support now account for 96% of the organisation's costs, with only 4% going towards management and administration (UNHCR, 2014 [22]).

For additional information, please consult the UNHCR website: www.unhcr.org.

1.3 PREVIOUS MOPAN ASSESSMENTS OF UNHCR

Since MOPAN's establishment in 2003, it has conducted two assessments of UNHCR (in 2011 and 2014). Although MOPAN's methodology has changed over time, findings from the previous MOPAN assessment can provide some insight into the evolution of the organisation and the perceptions of surveyed stakeholders.

The main findings of the 2011 MOPAN review were as follows:

- UNHCR has a clear mandate that is valued by its stakeholders. From its strategy to its operations, UNHCR respects humanitarian principles. UNHCR is commended for its openness to policy dialogue.

- UNHCR has made progress in adopting results-based management practices, but some work is still required in fine-tuning its organisational results framework. The assessment finds that clearer statements of expected results, clearer linkages between results at each level, and better performance indicators to measure results could enhance its overall capacity to plan, deliver, and report on results achieved.

- UNHCR's approach to cross-cutting priorities is well articulated at the strategic level but may be less clear in the field. Its emergency preparedness and response is improving but faces some on-going challenges.

- The organisation has put in place substantial delegation of authority to the field with respect to the allocation and re-allocation of approved financial resources.

- UNHCR manages its human resources within a recognised code of conduct, has taken measures to ensure staff security, and has a range of accessible personnel when rapid deployment of staff is required. Its practices in managing staff performance have improved, but there is still work to be done in policies and procedures that link staff performance to promotion.

- Despite some improvements in 2010, UNHCR faces challenges in linking its budgets and expenditures with its humanitarian results.

- UNHCR's programming process is designed to draw on performance information, but the use of such information to inform decisions about country operation plans and general programming is not clear at this time. The reporting aspects of Focus have not yet been fully taken advantage of.

- UNHCR reports do not comment explicitly on results at all levels (especially outcomes and how its activities are affecting the outcome area) or on programming adjustments made at the country level on the basis of performance information.

- UNHCR is recognised for contributions to inter-agency processes but needs to improve its coordination with other actors.

- UNHCR's evaluation function is improving but is constrained by limited resources.

- UNHCR could enhance its transparency by sharing more of its documents.

In Chapters 3 and 4, any notable changes in the assessment of the organisation since the previous assessment are noted in specific findings, the conclusions and the Executive Summary – as appropriate.

2. Methodology

2.1 OVERVIEW

The detailed MOPAN methodology – "the Common Approach" – is presented in the Technical Report, Volume II, Appendix I. The following is a brief summary.

MOPAN assessments examine:

- Organisational effectiveness: Organisational systems, practices, and behaviours that MOPAN believes are important for managing for results, and that influence an organisation's ability to achieve its strategic objectives and contribute to its proposed development or humanitarian results at the country level; and

- Humanitarian and/or development results: Evidence of an organisation's contributions to development and/or humanitarian results at both the organisation-wide level and the country level, as well as the relevance of the organisation's work.

Refinements that have been made in the methodology over time should be taken into consideration when comparing MOPAN assessments of an organisation across years.

Data collection methods and sources
Over the years, MOPAN developed a mixed-methods approach to generate relevant and credible information that MOPAN members can use to meet their domestic accountability requirements and support dialogue with multilateral organisations that they are funding.

MOPAN uses multiple data sources and data collection methods to triangulate and validate findings. This helps eliminate bias and detect errors or anomalies.

In 2014, the two primary sources of data were surveys of the multilateral organisations' stakeholders (see respondent groups in Section 2.2 below) and a review of documents prepared by the organisations assessed and from other sources. Interviews with staff of multilateral organisations contributed to contextualising data and helped clarify findings emerging from other data.

Assessment of organisational effectiveness
MOPAN examines performance in four areas of organisational effectiveness: strategic management, operational management, relationship management, and knowledge management. Within each performance area, effectiveness is described using key performance indicators (KPIs) that are measured through a series of micro-indicators (MIs) using data from the survey and document review.

For organisational effectiveness, survey respondent ratings are shown as mean scores and are presented alongside document review ratings based on criteria defined for each micro-indicator. Not all micro-indicators are assessed by both the survey and the document review. The charts show survey scores and document review scores for the relevant KPIs or MIs.

Assessment of development and/or humanitarian results
MOPAN also examines the concrete evidence of results achieved and the relevance of country-based activities through four key performance indicators:

- Evidence of the multilateral organisation's relevance
- Evidence of the multilateral organisation's progress towards its organisation-wide results
- Evidence of the multilateral organisation's progress towards its stated country-level results
- Evidence of the multilateral organisation's contribution to national goals and priorities, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). (This KPI was not applied in the assessment of UNHCR.)

In this component of the assessment, a "best fit approach" is used in determining the ratings for the KPIs above. This approach is used because it is better suited when criteria are multi-dimensional, there is a mix of both qualitative and quantitative data, and it is not possible to calculate a simple sum of the data points. Based on an analysis of all lines of evidence (document review, survey and interviews), each KPI is given a preliminary rating (strong, adequate, inadequate, weak) based on performance descriptors. A panel of experts reviews and validates the preliminary ratings and draft findings.[2] The criteria used as a basis for judgement and the process followed to arrive at a final rating are described in the Technical Report, Volume II, Appendix I.

2.2 DATA SOURCES AND RATINGS

Survey

MOPAN gathers stakeholder perceptions through a survey of MOPAN members (at headquarters and in-country) and other key stakeholders of the multilateral organisation. Donor respondents are chosen by MOPAN member countries; other respondents are identified by the multilateral organisation being assessed.

The survey questions relate to both organisational effectiveness and to the achievement of development and/or humanitarian results. Survey respondents are presented with statements and are asked to rate the organisation's performance on a six-point scale where a rating of 1 is considered "very weak" up to a rating of 6 which is considered "very strong." A mean score is calculated for each respondent group (e.g. donors at headquarters). The descriptions of the six ratings are shown in the Technical Report, Volume II, Appendix I, Section 3.2.3.

MOPAN aims to achieve a 70% response rate from donors at headquarters and a 50% response rate among respondents in each of the survey countries (i.e. donors in-country and other respondent groups such as direct partners).

All survey respondents are also required to answer two open-ended questions:

- What do you consider to be the organisation's greatest strength?
- What do you consider to be the area where it most needs improvement?

Responses are reviewed using content analysis based on the themes of the micro-indicators and then categorised by common themes that emerge from the comments. Percentages are calculated based on

2. The panel is composed of the Senior Methodological Advisor, the senior consultants involved in each of the assessments, and external peer reviewers with knowledge of the particular agency, the UN system, or expertise in managing for results.

the total number of people who responded to the MOPAN survey for each organisation and the number of responses on each theme. The themes that respondents note most frequently are cited in the report, when relevant.

UNHCR survey respondents

In the 2014 assessment, the survey results for UNHCR reflect the views of 214 respondents on UNHCR's performance in the areas of organisational effectiveness and contribution to humanitarian results.[3]

The respondent groups for UNHCR included: donors at headquarters, donors in-country, direct partners, host governments,[4] and peer organisations.[5]

Figure 2.1 | **Number of survey respondents and total population for UNHCR by geographic focus and respondent group (n=214)**

Actual number of respondents (total population)						
Geographic focus	**Donors at HQ**	**Donors in country**	**Direct partners**	**Peer organisations**	**UNCT DaO partners**	**Total**
Bangladesh	–	4 (7)	16 (17)	3 (7)	9 (15)	32 (46)
Democratic Republic of Congo	–	6 (11)	12 (21)	3 (5)	12 (19)	33 (56)
Ecuador	–	5 (7)	11 (13)	6 (6)	6 (9)	28 (35)
Kenya	–	14 (16)	27 (35)	3 (8)	14 (19)	58 (78)
Tanzania	–	5 (10)	12 (12)	4 (7)	8 (10)	29 (39)
Global	34 (48)	–	–	–	–	34 (48)
Total	**34 (48)**	**34 (51)**	**78 (98)**	**19 (33)**	**49 (72)**	**214 (302)**
Response rate	71%	67%	80%	58%	68%	71%

Document review

The document review considers: multilateral organisation documents; internal and external reviews of the organisation's performance; and evaluations, either internal or external, of the achievement of results at various levels.[6]

3. See Technical Report, Volume II, Appendix I (methodology) for an explanation of the weighting formula and scheme.
4. The host government category includes representatives of the government in the countries selected for the MOPAN assessment that receive assistance from or host the activities of the organisation assessed.
5. The peer organisation grouping comprises representatives of UN organisations or international NGOs that have significant investments in humanitarian assistance programming. Respondents are based at the field level in the countries included in the assessment. These organisations co-ordinate with but do not receive direct funding from the organisation assessed.
6. MOPAN does not use bilateral assessments of multilateral organisations as a source of data because some of these assessments draw on MOPAN as a source of data.

In the assessment of UNHCR, the assessment team reviewed more than 400 publicly available documents.

Document review ratings are based on a set of criteria that MOPAN considers to represent good practice in each area. The criteria are based on existing standards and guidelines (for example, UNEG or OECD-DAC guidelines and the Sphere standards), on MOPAN identification of key aspects to consider, and on the input of subject-matter specialists. The rating for each micro-indicator depends on the number of criteria met by the organisation.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are conducted at headquarters, regional offices (in some cases), and country offices of multilateral organisations with staff members who are knowledgeable in areas that relate to the MOPAN assessment. The interviews provide the assessment team with i) the most accurate information about a multilateral organisation's on-going reform agenda and the key documents that explain the various systems and practices that have been established to support it; and ii) contextual insight to clarify, refute and/or validate observations emerging from other lines of evidence/data sources.

As part of the 2014 assessment of UNHCR, interviews were conducted with 24 UNHCR staff members from headquarters and 11 staff members from country offices.

2.3 STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE MOPAN COMMON APPROACH

MOPAN continues to improve methodology based on experience each year. The following strengths and limitations should be considered when reading MOPAN report on UNHCR.

Strengths

- The MOPAN Common Approach is based on existing bilateral assessment tools with the intent to reduce the need for other assessment approaches by bilateral donors.
- In line with donor commitments to aid effectiveness and ownership, it seeks perceptual information from different stakeholder groups.
- It uses multiple sources of data to increase the validity of the assessment, enhance analysis, and provide a basis for discussion of agency effectiveness.
- MOPAN reports are validated and reviewed by the MOPAN members, the multilateral organisation being assessed and the MOPAN Secretariat.

Limitations

- Although MOPAN uses recognised standards and criteria for good practice, such criteria do not exist for all indicators. Many document review criteria were developed by MOPAN; these are a work in progress and not definitive standards.
- The MOPAN methodology is reviewed and revised periodically to reflect expectations of MOPAN members. This poses some challenges for comparing and explaining differences in ratings from one assessment to another. Using ratings on their own will not provide sufficient explanation of the progress or lack of progress a multilateral organisation is making (e.g. the 2011 and 2014 UNHCR assessments).

- The countries selected for MOPAN assessments are the same for all organisations reviewed each year. They comprise only a small proportion of each institution's operations, thus limiting generalisations. This is particularly true for UNHCR: the 2014 selection does not reflect its biggest operations nor important dimensions of its work (e.g. support for IDPs).

- The survey covers a broad range of issues and individual respondents may not have the knowledge to respond to all the questions relating to a given organisation. In addition, survey rating choices may not be used consistently by all respondents. Some respondents may tend to avoid extremes on a scale and respondents in some cultures may be unwilling to criticise or too eager to praise.

- In the survey at the country level, there are sometimes only a few respondents in a particular respondent group. To ensure confidentiality in such cases, the Technical Report does not provide a breakdown by respondent group. In addition, if the evaluation team identifies outliers whose survey responses are shifting the trend in the mean scores, the report makes a note of this and presents the mean scores without the outlier ratings.

- While the use of multiple sources of data strengthens the validity of MOPAN assessments, there are often differences between the findings from different data sources. Some differences may be explained by the fact that document review ratings are based on very specific criteria while survey results are determined by the perceptions of a wide range of stakeholders with different levels of knowledge. Interviews often provide important context for the assessment, but may not be sufficient to explain any differences between the survey and document review ratings.

Challenge in applying the MOPAN Common Approach to UNHCR

- MOPAN has very specific criteria for document review and there is very little documented evidence of UNHCR contributions to humanitarian results. This affected the document review ratings of UNCHR's contributions to organisation-wide results (KPI B).

- The countries selected for the MOPAN 2014 assessment did not include countries in which UNHCR has its biggest operations or those where UNHCR's protection capacity has been most tested over the last few years (e.g. Syria and the surrounding region).

The large amount of data and efforts to explore convergence of the different sources may help to mitigate the limitations. Interviews at headquarters and with some decentralised staff enrich the analysis beyond document reviews and survey responses. The reports thus provide a reasonable picture at a particular point in time of both the systems associated with the organisational effectiveness of multilateral organisations and the evidence of development and/or humanitarian results achieved.

3. UNHCR's organisational effectiveness

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of UNHCR's organisational effectiveness. Any noticeable changes in UNHCR's practices and systems since the previous MOPAN assessment are noted. The assessment draws on document review, survey results, and interviews. Data on the specific micro-indicators that were assessed in each KPI are presented in the Technical Report.

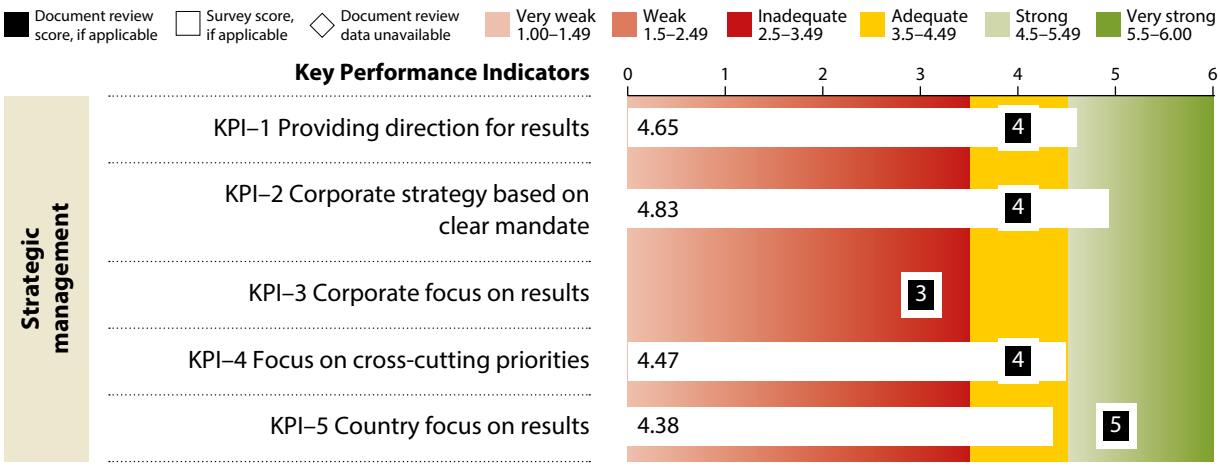
3.2 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

3.2.1 Summary

Survey respondents overall perceived UNHCR to be strong or adequate in its strategic focus on results, on its cross-cutting priorities, on the clarity of its mandate, and on the alignment of its organisation-wide strategy to its mandate. The document review ratings generally ranged from adequate to strong, except for UNHCR's corporate focus on results, which it assessed as inadequate.

Figure 3.1 shows the overall survey and document review ratings for the five KPIs in the strategic management performance area.

Figure 3.1 | **Performance area I: Strategic management, survey and document review ratings**



3.2.2 Findings on each key performance indicator

KPI 1: Providing direction for results

Finding 1: **UNHCR is viewed as an organisation whose senior management and values emphasise the achievement of humanitarian results. While UNHCR has taken steps to embrace results-based management, more work is required to support its effective application in UNHCR operations.**

The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) strategic priorities for 2013-16 identify the promotion of a strategic and coherent results culture across the entire UN system as one of the system's strategic approaches.

The MOPAN assessment examined whether UNHCR has a value system that focuses on the achievement of results, whether its senior management shows leadership on results management, and whether UNHCR ensures the application of results-based management policies. Surveyed stakeholders rated UNHCR strong overall in terms of its value system and senior management leadership, but had mixed opinions on its application of results-based management: Direct partners rated UNHCR strong, while donors at HQ rated it adequate and the difference was statistically significant. The document review rated UNHCR adequate in terms of its results-based management practices.

The 2011 MOPAN review identified similar shortcomings with UNHCR's results-based management practices. UNHCR has taken several steps to strengthen its results focus over the past four years. It has: developed guidelines and tools such as the Results-Based Management in the UNHCR handbook (UNHCR, n.d. [51]) and the RBM Framework (available on the Global Focus website); made improvements to corporate tools supporting RBM (e.g. Focus Reader, TWINE, and Global Focus web portal); and provided training to staff on different aspects of results-based planning and reporting (UNHCR, 2014 [21]). The Global Focus Insight dashboard, a new business analysis tool that has been operational since mid-2013, brings together financial and performance information for senior managers across the organisation. It gives operations managers more opportunity to analyse trends (i.e. tracing and comparing back to 2010) and make full comparisons between country operations, and prompts a renewed focus on data quality. UNHCR monitors the use of the Results Framework to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of operations and allows for proper and meaningful planning and reporting on results (UNHCR, 2013 [13]).

Much of the effort to improve results-based management at UNHCR has focused on Focus Client, a software designed for tracking results. However, persistent problems with the upgrade of this on-line system have perhaps overshadowed discussions about the underlying purpose of the practice of managing for results (Allen & Li Rosi, 2010; UNHCR, 2013 [13]). Several UNHCR staff members interviewed for this assessment expressed continuing dissatisfaction with Focus Client, and some felt that its "form filling" requirements had caused people to turn their attention away from developing a clearer strategic vision.

The adequacy of resources and accountability systems to support RBM is an area that requires on-going attention in all UN agencies (Bester, 2012), and UNHCR is no exception. UNHCR acknowledged that it needs to improve direction on use of the budget structure to assist country offices in planning and budgeting for long-term interventions, and to strengthen field staff capacities to track earmarked contributions and progress made towards the achievement of the global strategic objectives (UNHCR, 2010 [26]).

KPI 2: Corporate strategy based on clear mandate

Finding 2: **UNHCR has a clear mandate that is valued by stakeholders as well as a corporate strategy (the Global Appeal) that guides country-level operations. Several technical shortcomings with its corporate strategy as well as the strategy's relatively short-term perspective may limit UNHCR's ability to implement its mandate strategically. The strategy is not yet aligned with directives of the United Nations quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR).**

The review of UNHCR's corporate strategy examined the extent to which it is based on a clear definition of mandate and the extent to which UNHCR aligns its strategic plan with the guidance and priorities of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR).

Donors at headquarters, host governments and peer organisations were asked whether UNHCR has a clear mandate to protect: i) refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons; and ii) internally displaced persons. Respondents considered the clarity of UNHCR's mandate for refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons to be strong overall but rated the clarity of its mandate for internally displaced persons as adequate. When asked about UNHCR's greatest strengths, UNHCR's mandate was the most frequently identified strength (noted by 22% of all respondents and 47% of donors at headquarters). UNHCR's mandate has been revised over time in keeping with Statute Clauses 3 and 9 and by subsequent General Assembly resolutions as explained and confirmed in the Note on the Mandate of the High Commissioner for Refugees and his Office:

Illustrative survey respondent views: UNHCR's mandate often cited as its greatest area of strength

"UNHCR's clear mandate to lead and coordinate international action to protect refugees worldwide is clearly its greatest strength." (Donor at HQ respondent)

"Being one of the most important UN agencies, UNHCR's core strength lies in its mandate, given by the Geneva Convention, and subsequently the way, UNHCR is generally seeking to implement it." (Donor in-country respondent)

"It [UNHCR] has resources and a clear mandate to protect and assist refugees." (Peer organisation respondent)

> The Statute is, however, not the only source of law for the mandate of the High Commissioner and his Office. Paragraph 9 of the Statute provides for the further evolution of his functions and activities. Since 1950, the General Assembly and, to some extent, the Economic and Social Council [ECOSOC], have developed the mandate further. From time to time, the mandate of the High Commissioner and his Office has also been extended via "good offices" arrangements. (UNHCR, 2013 [02]).

The persons of concern that fall within the High Commissioner's mandate have been clarified and extended over time, first regarding returnees, then stateless persons, and eventually internally displaced people (IDP). However, UNHCR does not have an exclusive mandate to protect IDP and can only act upon the request of the Secretary-General or other competent UN organs and with the consent of the concerned State. In 2003, the General Assembly extended UNHCR's mandate "until the refugee problem is solved"; prior to that, UNHCR's mandate was reviewed and renewed every five years (UNHCR, 2013 [02]; UNHCR, 2014 [34]).

UNHCR's corporate strategic plan (the Global Appeal) includes a set of Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs) that underscore areas of critical concern to the Office in pursuing its mandate of providing protection and assistance, and to seek permanent solutions for refugees and other people of concern (UNHCR, 2013 [06]). While UNHCR's Global Appeal document is intended to translate UNHCR's mandate into operational priorities/objectives, a review of the 2014-15 document reveals several technical shortcomings that limit its clarity in explaining how UNHCR is implementing its mandate. These include the absence of explanations in the Global Appeal document about: the link between the Global Appeal and UNHCR's considerably more comprehensive and detailed Results Framework for the period 2014-15; the rationale for the selection of the eight operational GSPs; and the rationale for the proposed impact indicators and global engagement statements. Finally, the strategy document does not explain how the GSPs relate to the eight sets of 'anticipated areas of intervention for 2014' (i.e., tables that list planned interventions) identified for each of UNHCR's rights groups in the Global Appeal document. While some of this information is briefly presented in other documents (such as the Update on the GSPs (UNHCR, 2013 [03]) or Global Report 2013 (UNHCR, 2014 [22])), these explanations are needed in the Global Appeal document itself so that the strategy is comprehensible and complete. Furthermore, the Global Appeal document does not list the risks, assumptions and theories of change associated with implementation of the organisation-

wide strategy. Finally, the corporate results framework upon which the GSPs are based are not provided in a public document. These concerns limit the clarity and utility of the Global Appeal document as a corporate wide strategy for UNHCR. If the Global Appeal document is intended primarily to serve other UNHCR purposes (e.g., a resource mobilisation tool to provide examples of country level programming), UNHCR then needs to identify what other (existing or new) document serves as its strategic plan.

In addition to the above noted technical gaps, a second limitation relates to the short-term nature of the corporate strategy (two years) which is also reflected in the corporate results framework indicators. This may reflect both the unpredictable field that UNHCR works in, as well as the temporal nature of the organisation until 2003 when UNHCR had a relatively short-term planning horizon and required planning and reporting practices that adjusted to that horizon. However, given the extension in its mandate "until the refugee problem is solved", as well as the large number of protracted refugee situations, its relatively short-term strategic planning timeframe may not be as suitable for tracking the kind of contributions (including durable solutions) it hopes to make in the lives of refugees and other persons of concern.

Since the 2010-2011 biennium UNHCR has carried out consultations with senior management and member states to monitor the relevance and focus of the GSPs (UNHCR, 2013 [03]; UNHCR, 2013 [06]; UNHCR, 2013 [46]; UNHCR, 2013 [32]). However, it is not clear if the consultation process meets donor expectations.

The alignment of UNHCR's strategic plan with the guidance and priorities of the United Nations quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) was assessed only through document review and was rated inadequate. There is no documented evidence that UNHCR has adopted directives of the QCPR; interviews with UNHCR indicate that the organisation has not yet aligned its strategic plan in content with QCPR and that, unlike some other UN organisations, UNHCR is not required to report to its governing body on the QCPR (UN Secretary-General, 2014 [01]).

KPI 3: Corporate focus on results

Finding 3: **UNHCR does not link its corporate results framework with its strategic plan in a way that allows it to clearly articulate and measure its aggregate organisation-wide results.**

UNHCR's corporate focus on results was assessed only through the document review. It considered the extent to which UNHCR's results frameworks have causal links from inputs to outputs/outcomes and include standard performance indicators in organisation-wide plans. UNHCR organisation-wide strategies were rated inadequate in terms of their focus on results.

UNHCR has a complex results architecture. Its corporate results framework clearly links outputs and objective results statements, with specific outputs identified to contribute to the achievement of each objective. This framework serves as the catalogue from which country operations pick their programming results. However, it is not used by the organisation to aggregate results across all operations. Instead, UNHCR has formulated Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs), with global engagement statements (targets) against which it has made a commitment to report annually and to present performance information on aggregated country-level results (UNHCR, 2013 [06]).

In addition, UNHCR's GSP/results framework system does not encompass UNHCR's global programmes. These programmes are managed from headquarters but take place at the country level, and focus on the

following technical sectors: shelter; education; public health; reproductive health and HIV; nutrition and food security; water, sanitation and hygiene; information management; livelihoods; and the environment. At the 64th session of the Executive Committee in September 2013, the UNHCR Director of the Division of Programme Support and Management indicated that monitoring and evaluation frameworks were being developed to measure results in these technical areas (UNHCR, 2013 [21]). There is evidence in fact that many headquarter technical divisions are pushing to develop their own results systems (i.e. other than the Focus platform) to monitor results, such as the recently developed Twine system for the health sector (UNHCR, 2014 [21]). The multiplicity of results frameworks contributes to the noted complexity of UNHCR's results architecture.

The operational and support/management GSPs in UNHCR's corporate strategic plan (Global Appeal) for the 2014-2015 biennium are connected to the corporate results framework through a subset of the latter's objective-level indicators. However, as the organisation does not report on these indicators in practice (it reports on broader global engagements that identify the number of countries in which progress is being observed) the connection is obscured. Moreover, the GSP statements are composites of multiple ideas; the proposed mapping with the results framework indicators (and by association their corresponding objective statements) does not capture the range of ideas covered in the GSPs.

The indicators in UNHCR's results framework are generally SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time bound). However, the organisation only uses a few of these to measure its programming performance at an organisation-wide level. During interviews, the organisation mentioned that an attempt had been made in 2010 to report on the full framework, but that this had proved unwieldy. This is not surprising, as the framework currently includes 158 impact indicators and 724 output indicators. Past experience has shown that organisations with small numbers of carefully selected results and indicators find it easier to manage for results (Kusek & Rist, 2004 [01]).

KPI 4: Focus on cross-cutting priorities

Finding 4: **Among the four cross-cutting priorities examined by MOPAN, UNHCR was considered strong in mainstreaming gender equality and integrating emergency preparedness and response. Its support for environmental sustainability and good governance received mixed ratings. It is important to note that the MOPAN criteria examine the organisation's policies and strategies in these areas, not their implementation.**

The review examined UNHCR's focus on four cross-cutting priorities: gender equality, the environment, good governance, and emergency preparedness and response. On the basis of survey responses and available documentary evidence, UNHCR was rated adequate overall. Due to the lack of documentary sources on good governance, this aspect was rated through the survey only. MOPAN criteria examine the organisation's policies and strategies in these cross-cutting areas, not their implementation, and there is limited documented evidence of how these are applied.

Emergency preparedness and response – UNHCR's performance in emergency preparedness and response was rated strong by survey respondents and the document review. Its strengths included: the issuance of an Emergency Preparedness Package for Refugee Emergencies and a guidance note (and *de facto* policy) in 2013 defining roles and responsibilities regarding preparedness co-ordination, planning, early warning and contingency planning; the inclusion of emergency preparedness and response as one of UNHCR's Global Strategic Priorities in the 2014-15 Global Appeal; and noted improvements in its

emergency response capacity. In addition, various UNHCR units provide staffing, funding and technical expertise for its emergency preparedness and response work including the Division of Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS), the Global Learning Centre and the Division for Programmed Support and Management (DPSM) (UNHCR, 2013 [06]). UNHCR monitors and evaluates efforts regarding emergency preparedness and response, and adapts its practices and systems in response to evaluations findings and recommendations.

Reviews and evaluations of UNHCR's emergency preparedness and response performance in recent years identified a number of gaps in its capacity, policies and tools, including the need to systematically operationalise UNHCR's emergency policies and procedures (UNHCR, 2013 [01]; Richardson, Bush, & Ambroso, 2013).

Gender equality – Survey respondents and the document review each rated UNHCR strong overall. The document review noted that UNHCR's commitment to gender equality is reflected in various key policy documents including its Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) Policy Forward Plan 2011-16 (UNHCR, 2011 [02]) which identifies seven strategic results to be achieved over the period and its organisation-wide strategic plan. UNHCR has also clearly defined roles and responsibilities for mainstreaming gender in its Accountability Framework for AGD (UNHCR, 2007 [01]). UNHCR does not currently track financial resources spent on specific themes such as improving age, gender and diversity mainstreaming, and has identified this as an area for improvement. It also recognises its need to systematically gather sex-disaggregated data in order to understand and document the protection situation of refugee and displaced women and girls (UNHCR, 2014 [14]).

Environmental sustainability – UNHCR's promotion of environmental sustainability in its work was rated adequate by survey respondents and inadequate by the document review. UNHCR's Environmental Guidelines were adopted in 1996 and updated in 2005 based on experience and new thinking on environmental management. The essence of these guidelines suggests that UNHCR has primary responsibility for integrating environmental considerations into all of its decisions and activities affecting the protection and well-being of refugees (UNHCR, 2005 [01]). In addition, in 2014, UNHCR adopted a Global Strategy for Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE) with the objective of enabling refugees to meet their energy needs in a safe and sustainable manner. The integration of environmental concerns is not evident as a priority in global plans or current country strategies, although UNHCR is in the process of developing new energy strategies in five priority countries.

UNHCR has taken steps to establish clear roles for UNHCR and its partners' environmental concerns at corporate and programmatic levels including the development of a toolkit to help managers and field staff adopt a more systematic approach to assessing and monitoring the environmental impacts of refugee operations (the Framework for Assessing, Monitoring and Evaluating the Environment in refugee-related operations (FRAME) (UNHCR, 2009 [01])).

Interviews indicate that the unit responsible for environmental sustainability at HQ is small, has limited financial resources and relies heavily on staff who are either seconded or financed directly by interested donors. The unit has been working hard to find entry points (e.g. SGBV, domestic energy needs, etc.) but any mainstreaming that takes place is limited to pilot initiatives financed by donors.

Good governance – Survey respondents rated UNHCR adequate overall for promoting the principles of good governance in its work.[7] Various policies, guides and memorandums provide evidence that UNHCR

engages in governance and legal issues such as refugee protection and transitional justice; furthermore, its work is often related to good governance principles. However, assessing UNHCR's practices and systems for promoting good governance based on documents was a challenge for several reasons. First, there are issues with regard to the meaning of good governance in development versus humanitarian contexts. Second, even though UNHCR promotes principles of good governance and engages in aspects of good governance in its work (for example, protection policy development, advocacy for the rule of law and implementation of standards), its work in this area has never been seen as a "good governance" package or documented as such (e.g., UNHCR does not explicitly discuss good governance in policies, guidelines, reports and resource allocations).

KPI 5: Country focus on results

Finding 5: **UNHCR country results frameworks incorporate causal links from outputs to outcomes and include performance indicators. UNHCR uses needs assessments to inform planning of humanitarian operations and to design interventions. Contingency planning is an area for improvement.**

Overall, UNHCR was rated strong for the evidence of causal links from inputs through to outputs in country results frameworks. The country-level results frameworks mirror the structure of the corporate results framework – i.e. output and objective-level results statements are included and causally linked, with specific outputs (products and services) identified to contribute to the achievement of each objective (outcome/impact-level results) as previously noted under KPI 3 on corporate focus on results.

UNHCR was also rated positively for using reliable needs assessments to inform its humanitarian operations. All country-based survey respondents rated UNHCR strong on this criterion, with the exception of peer organisations who rated it adequate; the differences are statistically significant. The document review found that UNHCR guidelines describe how the organisation should conduct participatory needs assessments to inform operations planning, project and sub-project design, and reporting (UNHCR, 2010 [02]; UNHCR, 2005 [08]). UNHCR policy documents also specify that needs assessments are to be carried out in a timely manner as the first step of country operational planning, while the Global Needs Assessment: Prioritization (2010) notes that needs assessments are primarily field-based since regional and country offices are better equipped to identify needs and assign priorities (UNHCR, 2010 [02]). Reviews, evaluations and mission reports provide evidence that UNHCR implements its policy on needs assessment and uses such information to guide operational planning and design of interventions. UNHCR's comprehensive review of its needs assessments in 2012 demonstrated that needs assessment at the country-level are carried out systematically and made recommendations to improve the assessment content and process (UNHCR, 2013 [38]).

Survey respondents rated UNHCR adequate for the extent to which it consults its humanitarian partners in designing humanitarian responses.

In 2013, UNHCR updated its contingency planning guidance for refugee situations, resulting in a user-friendly Preparedness Package for Refugee Emergencies (UNHCR, 2014 [16]). UNHCR considers that contingency planning, along with risk assessment and security training, is an important component

7. Good governance was defined as the exercise of authority through traditional and institutional processes that are transparent and accountable, and that encourage public participation.

of efforts to strengthen a culture of security within the organisation (UNHCR, 2013 [06], p. 37). Recent reviews of UNHCR emergency operations in Syria and Lebanon suggest that while contingency plans were generally in place, their design, funding, and updating could be improved. In recent joint humanitarian operations for Syrian and Sudanese refugees, UNHCR and its partners consulted key partners in the design of contingency plans. Although UNHCR has updated its contingency plans in the past, it is unclear whether this practice is institutionalised at the corporate or country levels. In addition, documents reviewed did not produce evidence that UNHCR tests its contingency planning through simulations or other exercises; this would be an area for improvement.

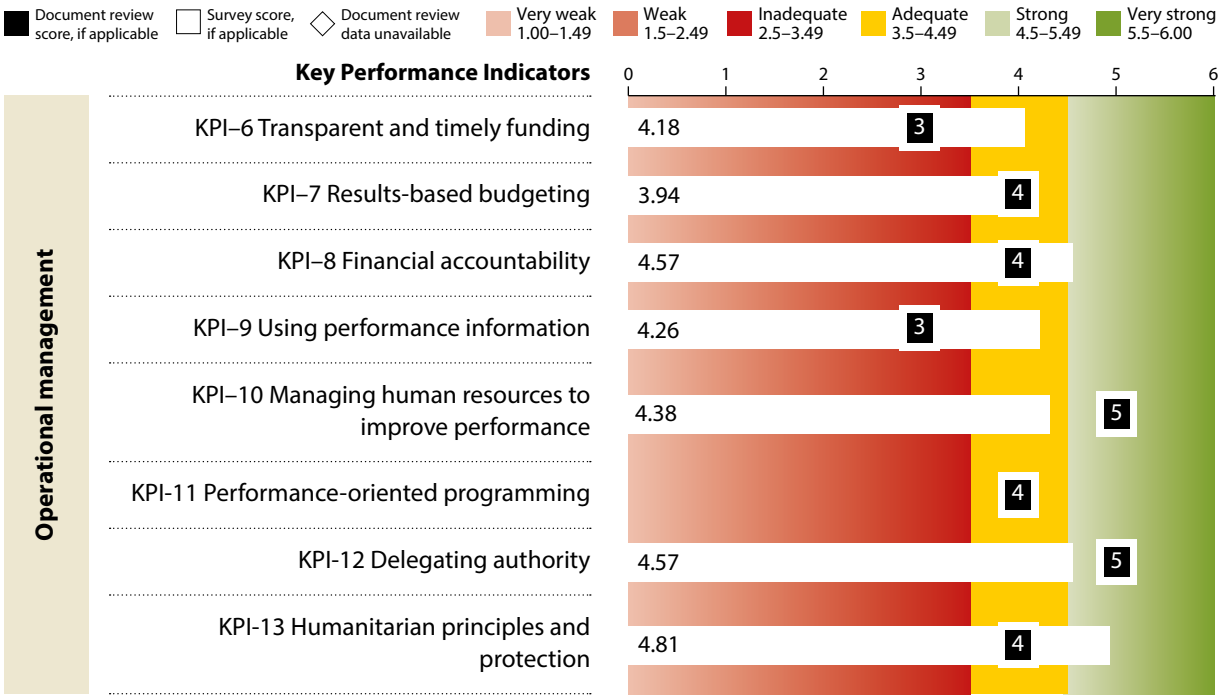
3.3 OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

3.3.1 Summary

UNHCR's practices and systems are considered adequate or strong in most areas of operational management: results-based budgeting, financial accountability, management of human resources, performance oriented-programming, delegation of authority, and humanitarian principles and protection approaches. The document review however rated UNHCR inadequate for the transparency and timeliness of funding and the use of performance information.

Figure 3.2 shows the overall survey and document review ratings for the KPIs in the operational management performance area, which assess whether an organisation is managing operations in a way that is performance-oriented, thus ensuring organisational accountability for resources and results.

Figure 3.2 | **Performance area II: Operational management, survey and document review ratings**



3.3.2 Findings on each key performance indicator

KPI 6: Transparent and timely funding

Finding 6: **While surveyed stakeholders perceive UNHCR's funding processes as adequate overall, there are concerns about the processes used to prioritise country-level funding allocations and decisions.**

Transparent funding processes can help demonstrate UNHCR's accountability to its stakeholders, while timely funding processes are essential in responding in appropriate ways to evolving humanitarian crises and needs.

Surveyed donors in-country and at HQ rated UNHCR adequate for the timely delivery of funding to operations, although a high proportion (35%) indicated that they had insufficient knowledge to respond. Surveyed direct partners, host governments and peer organisations rated UNHCR adequate in transferring financial resources to humanitarian partners.

Unrestricted contributions play an important role in allowing UNHCR operations to start up and continue without interruption during the year, especially at times when new emergencies divert resources from less visible operations (UNHCR, 2014 [22]). Although the organisation was rated adequate overall, donors expressed mixed views on whether UNHCR makes its funding criteria known publicly: 47% rated UNHCR inadequate or below, 38% rated it adequate or above, and 15% answered 'don't know'.

The document review rated UNHCR inadequate due to the lack of information about the process used to prioritise funding allocations and decisions at the country level. The UN Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) recommended in September 2013 that UNHCR review its budgeting approach to increase transparency:

> While noting that, according to the High Commissioner's report, the Executive Committee has indicated its preference for the continuation of the needs-based budget methodology, the Committee is of the view that the presentation of the UNHCR budget could benefit from the preparation of a resource plan, along with the needs-based budget, that would integrate resource planning into UNHCR's planning and reporting processes, and would make the UNHCR programme budget more transparent and accessible (ACABQ, 2013 [01]).

KPI 7: Results-based budgeting

Finding 7: **UNHCR's current systems are adequate in linking budget allocations to expected results at the operational level but not at the organisation-wide level. The most significant noted shortcoming is the absence of workable systems to track expenditures by results at the operational and organisational levels.**

Results-based budgeting is a management tool adopted by the UN and many other development organisations to encourage and support the effectiveness and quality of programmes by linking results to the cost of producing them rather than simply reporting on the quantity of inputs and outputs. The 2011 MOPAN review noted that UNHCR faced challenges in linking its budgets and expenditures with its humanitarian results.

Linking budget allocations to results – Surveyed donors at HQ rated UNHCR adequate in linking budget allocations to expected results, a rating that was mirrored in the document review. In recent years, the organisation has made considerable changes and improvements to its budget processes to better align these with its results framework; most significant is the change in methodology to a global needs assessment as of the 2010-2011 biennium, which provided an opportunity to better align needs assessments, planned programming and the organisation's budget. The UN Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) recognised UNHCR as "one of the first United Nations entities to implement results-based management" and noted that related lessons learned by the organisation would be of system-wide interest (ACABQ, 2010 [01]). However, while UNHCR's system allows it to track budget from activities through to outcomes at the operations level, at the organisation-wide level, it presents budget information by pillar rather than results (outputs or outcomes/ objectives) (UNHCR, 2013 [07]) as well as by geographic location, and since 2014-15, by rights groups.

Linking expenditures to results – While surveyed donors gave UNHCR an adequate rating for linking expenditures to results, the document review rated it inadequate for two reasons. First, while UNHCR budgets by output at the country level, it is in practice unable to reliably report expenditures by output due to the high degree of data manipulation required. Second, it presents expenditures by pillar (rather than by result) at the organisational level.

Since 2009, UNHCR has invested considerable effort in adapting its enterprise resource planning software (Managing for Systems, Resources and People, or MSRP) and integrating it with Focus, its results-based management systems tool (ACABQ, 2010 [01]). The organisation reports that the MSRP system is going through an upgrade, which may provide UNHCR with an opportunity to produce financial reports on outputs. In practice this might be challenging given the absence of an established system in UNHCR to track and allocate staff costs to specific outputs, and reservations expressed by interviewed staff about UNHCR's previous experience with timesheet systems (where the costs were perceived to have outweighed the benefits).

KPI 8: Financial accountability

Finding 8: **UNHCR's external audit practices are notable strengths in its financial accountability processes. In response to concerns that its existing arrangement with OIOS does not meet its internal audit needs, UNHCR is considering bringing the internal audit function in-house. There are several areas for improvement in UNHCR procurement practices.**

The quality of an organisation's financial accountability practices plays an important role in influencing stakeholder confidence in its credibility. The review of UNHCR's financial accountability practices included reviews of its external and internal audit processes, as well as its procurement, anti-corruption and risk management procedures.

As was the case in the 2011 MOPAN review, UNHCR was rated adequate overall for its financial accountability practices. It was rated strong in the document review for external audit processes at organisation-wide, country and project levels that conform to recognised international standards. UNHCR has studied the possibility of bringing the internal audit function in-house in response to concerns that its existing arrangement with the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) does not meet its internal audit needs. While alternative arrangements for internal audit have been discussed, no conclusion has been

reached. During the last few years, UNHCR and OIOS have conducted lengthy discussions to better define the responsibilities under the current audit arrangements (UNBOA, 2014 [01]) and, according to UNHCR, a revised MOU is to be signed shortly.

UNHCR has updated its 2008 anti-fraud policy and has developed a new Strategic Framework for the Prevention of Fraud and Corruption (UNBOA, 2012 [01]; UNHCR, 2014 [17]). Since this framework was adopted in July 2013, UNHCR has not yet reported on its effectiveness and 41% of donors at HQ did not know whether UNHCR implements its policy on anti-corruption.

While donors at headquarters and in-country rated UNHCR strong for its processes to quickly follow up on irregularities identified in audits, 53% responded 'don't know' on this survey question. The document review considered UNHCR adequate in this area.

While direct partners rated UNHCR procurement procedures as strong, the document review rated this area adequate. According to OIOS, UNHCR offices demonstrated "inadequate arrangements for monitoring how procurement was carried out by implementing partners", based on a review of field audits conducted in 2012-2013 (OIOS, 2013 [01], p. 9). A 2011 UN Board of Auditors (UNBOA) report also identified several shortcomings and while most of the recommendations on the procurement function were recently addressed, as noted in a 2014 follow-up report, there are still some ongoing issues with the procurement system (UNBOA, 2014 [01]). Many of the measures to improve the procurement process are new, and it will take some time before their full effect can be felt across the organisation.

In 2014, UNHCR adopted a Policy for Enterprise Risk Management (UNHCR, 2014 [32]) after several years of planning and preparation. This policy, which applies to the corporate and country/operation level, complies with the principles prescribed by recognised international standards for risk management (ISO 31000). The document review thus rated UNHCR adequate in this area.

KPI 9: Using performance information

Finding 9: **Overall, UNHCR performs adequately in using performance information to inform policy and strategy development and to plan new country-level interventions. Its performance in identifying and following up on poorly performing programmes and evaluation recommendations needs improvement.**

Overall, survey respondents considered UNHCR adequate on all survey questions related to its use of performance information. Interestingly, a high proportion of donors at HQ (i.e. between 32% and 53%) reported they had insufficient knowledge to respond to these questions.

The document review considered UNHCR adequate in using performance information to inform policies and strategies and in designing new country-level interventions. The use of performance information to inform policies has not been systematic, as highlighted in an OIOS audit in 2011 (OIOS Internal Audit Division, 2011 [01]). In response to the audit recommendations and to strengthen its policy management system, UNHCR issued a Policy on the Development, Management and Dissemination of UNHCR Internal Guidance Material which has been effective as of January 1, 2014. (UNHCR, 2014 [29]). UNHCR is considered by OIOS to have addressed all recommendations from the 2011 internal audit on policy creation and dissemination; as many changes are recent, it will take some time before the benefits of these new practices can be fully realised within the organisation. In terms of using performance

information in planning new country-level interventions, the document review found that while there are some references made to how information on performance achievements/shortcomings are leading to modified or new programming within planning documents for the five countries assessed, these are rare.

UNHCR does not have a specific system for identifying and following up on poorly performing programmes. The UN Board of Auditors highlighted areas for improvement noting for instance in 2011 that UNHCR had "identified deficiencies in monitoring and control by UNHCR of the performance of implementing partners, including instances of failure to comply with the requirements of the UNHCR verification framework" and in 2013 that "[t]he review of financial reports is not always aligned or coordinated with a review of performance, providing limited documentary evidence enabling UNHCR to intervene if the partner is not performing in line with the levels of funding provided" (UNBOA, 2011 [01]; UNBOA, 2013 [01]). UNHCR reports that it completed development of Global Focus Insight in 2013, a tool that links performance information with expenditures and provides dashboard views that allow comparison of performance between different country operations and can generate a series of analytical reports (UNHCR, 2014 [17]). Staff interviewed reported that Global Focus Insight was proving to be a useful tool, and that it showed promise for helping the organisation monitor and address performance issues.

There are also shortcomings in UNHCR systems to respond to evaluation recommendations. Its Evaluation Policy indicates only that the Executive Office may choose to issue a directive to senior managers for implementation of specific evaluation recommendations, and that a follow-up process is to be undertaken six months following the report (UNHCR, 2010 [10]). The OIOS pointed out in a Review of the Evaluation Capacity of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees conducted in 2013 that UNHCR lacks a systematic process for considering evaluation findings and conclusions, for issuing management responses, and tracking implementation of evaluation recommendations. The OIOS report also recommended that UNHCR table key strategic evaluations during governing body discussions. UNHCR indicates that it has introduced a management response requirement for evaluations, which is being overseen by the Internal Compliance and Accountability Committee, and that PDES is now systematically using a management response matrix tool. At the time of writing the effectiveness of these new practices was not yet evident.

KPI 10: Managing human resources to improve performance

Finding 10: **The strengths of UNHCR's human resource management systems include staff security processes and its adoption and use of a staff code of conduct. Various improvements are needed in UNHCR's performance measurement policy and systems so that staff performance and opportunities for career development are better linked, and so that the systems are more transparent. UNHCR has plans to revise such systems in 2014/15.**

The review of UNHCR's human resource management systems included an examination of the extent to which its performance assessment systems are results-based, the transparency of systems to manage staff performance, the adequacy of staff security and deployment systems as well as the existence of a staff code of conduct.

As in the 2011 MOPAN review, UNHCR scored well overall in terms of the appropriateness of staff security measures (rated strong by both survey respondents and the document review) and in how staff deployment in country fosters the development of effective country level partnerships. The document

review rated UNHCR very strong for its staff code of conduct and associated systems which include a process for personnel to report on misconduct of managers or colleagues, annual reports of non-compliance with the code of conduct, as well as an annual overview of Inspector General's Office (IGO) investigations of misconduct provided to the General Assembly in the Report on Activities of the Inspector General's Office and the Report of the Board of Auditors (UNHCR, 2013 [12]; UNBOA, 2013 [01]).) Country-level respondents rated UNHCR strong for staff following the code of conduct while donors at HQ rated UNHCR adequate for monitoring and reporting on compliance with the code of conduct, although a high number of don't know responses was also registered.

UNHCR's human resource management procedures were found to be adequate in terms of surge mechanisms, the use of results-focused performance assessment procedures and the transparency of systems to manage staff performance.

The document review suggests that UNHCR is adequate in terms of its surge mechanisms, which include the in-house Emergency Response Team (ERT) and a Senior Corporate Emergency Roster established in 2011 to complement the ERT. In the event that rapid personnel deployment needs cannot be met in-house, UNHCR has procedures for accessing external emergency personnel. Since 2011, UNHCR has been reviewing its emergency systems and adapting practices in order to enhance emergency preparedness and response, including rapid personnel deployment. However, evaluations of recent emergency operations suggests that UNHCR's deployment of staff, particularly technical experts, is not fully effective (Ambroso, G.; Janz, J.; Lee, V.; Salomons, M., 2013; Richardson, Bush, & Ambroso, 2013). Evaluations of UNHCR's performance in deployment in recent emergency operations (Tunisia and Egypt, South Sudan, and Syria) leads to mixed conclusions on its effectiveness (Ambroso, Collyer, & Li Rosi, 2013).

The assessment noted UNHCR's actions since 2009 to reform its human resource management systems, including the introduction of a Performance Appraisal and Management Systems (PAMS). A 2012 report from the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) noted how the introduction of the PAMS has supported timely management and assessment of staff performance: "The implementation of PAMS achieved over 85% adoption in the first year of the system rollout across various duty stations and categories of staff. PAMS supported consistency, enforced mandatory mid-term reviews and provided timely information for other human resources-related actions" (OIOS, 2012 [01], p. 8).

UNHCR's system to manage staff performance received an adequate rating in terms of transparency as PAMS does not explain how performance assessments are linked to incentives or rewards. The 2011 MOPAN assessment of UNHCR also noted some disconnects in staff performance and promotion practices. External evaluations of UNHCR have not commented on transparency (or lack thereof) in human resource decisions.

UNHCR noted that PAMS needs improvement, particularly with regard to its simplification and linkage to opportunities for career development (UNHCR, 2013 [17], p. 7). UNHCR recently revised its promotions policy (released in February 2014), its performance management policy (launched in November 2014), and is revising its contracts policy (still being developed) to ensure that meritorious performance is recognised for promotion to higher grades and responsibilities (UNHCR, 2013 [17], p. 7).

A large proportion of donors at HQ reported that they were not familiar enough with several of UNHCR's human resource procedures to respond to the survey questions for three MIs.

KPI 11: Performance-oriented programming

Finding 11: **UNHCR's country/regional programming processes are strong in terms of attention to risk analysis, but considered inadequate in the use of milestones/targets to rate the progress of programme implementation.**

The document review yielded mixed results on the performance orientation of UNHCR programming. The organisation was rated strong in terms of the attention paid to protection risk analysis prior to the approval of new initiatives, for several reasons. UNHCR's programming is based on assessments of needs, which include assessment of the protection risks faced by populations of concern during the planning phase, including main causes and consequences, and capacity of governments and communities to address these risks (UNHCR, 2010 [22]). To support the assessment of needs and protection risks by country offices, UNHCR has developed a number of guidance tools. For example, UNHCR's Manual for staff outlines how staff should carry out risk assessments and specifies that assessment findings feed directly into operations planning, project and sub-project design, and reporting (UNHCR, 2005 [08]). Such practices were followed in reviewed UNHCR planning and reporting documents for the five countries assessed by MOPAN. The UNHCR Tool for Participatory Assessment in Operations provides detailed instructions on how to obtain accurate information and assess the protection risks faced by particular groups of persons of concern using a consultative approach, and includes a list of potential protection risks including general risks, physical risks, social risks, economic risks, and potential risks associated with cultural practices (UNHCR, 2006 [07]).

A review of UNHCR Participatory Assessments in 2012 conducted by UNHCR's Division of International Protection reported a real commitment to the approach and confirmed the strength of the consultative process in practice, based on documentation from 42 country operations. The report highlighted some areas for improvement related to how assessment findings and recommendations are reported and tracked in country plans, and the need for sufficient information on the methods or reasoning used to determine programming priorities (UNHCR, 2013 [38]).

In terms of the use of milestones/targets to rate the progress of implementation of UNHCR programmes, UNHCR was rated inadequate on the basis of a sample of work plans for three of the five countries sampled. The review found that while the project description file includes targets at the output level, the activities presented in the work plan, which are meant to enable output achievement, generally do not specify targets (i.e. it is often unclear what would represent a satisfactory measure of activity completion). The quality of the activities presented in the plans reviewed were also observed to be highly variable, described at times in very broad terms providing limited utility for tracking progress in output implementation. In early 2014, UNHCR indicated that it is developing tools to analyse the rate of implementation by partners, as well as procedures to enhance control mechanisms and ensure closer coupling of payments to implementing partners with their performance (UNHCR, 2014 [30]).

KPI 12: Delegating authority

Finding 12: **UNHCR is considered strong in delegating operational and management decision making locally. It has worked on strengthening and expanding the authority delegated to regional offices and plans to pursue this in 2014.**

The 2011 MOPAN review found that UNHCR had put in place substantial delegation of authority to the field with respect to the allocation and re-allocation of approved financial resources. In 2014, based on both the document review and stakeholder survey responses, UNHCR was rated strong for its delegation and decentralisation of key operational and management decision making in contextually appropriate ways. The UN Board of Auditors also identified UNHCR as an organisation "with extensive delegations of authority from headquarters to country representatives" (UNBOA, 2013 [01]). Over the past few years, UNHCR has issued or updated several documents to clarify authorities for decision making at different levels, including the Global Management Accountability Framework (2010) (UNHCR, 2010 [18]), and a framework for resources allocation and management (revised in 2007 and 2011) which clarifies the division of responsibilities between the operational and financial branches (UNHCR, 2011 [24]; UNHCR, 2007 [15]).

Nevertheless, in the 2013 review, the UN Board of Auditors identified room for continued improvement in UNHCR's system of delegation, highlighting instances of non-compliance as well as inconsistencies in levels of scrutiny. It recommended that UNHCR make improvements to its internal controls framework and benchmark its accountability structure against similarly devolved organisations. In January 2014, UNHCR proposed various actions to respond to the recommendations (UNHCR, 2014 [17]).

Since December 2006, UNHCR has worked on strengthening and expanding the authorities of its regional offices. In 2014, its Organizational Development and Management Service (ODMS) will pursue this, collaborating with relevant headquarter bureaux and divisions (UNHCR, 2013 [06]). Interviewed UNHCR staff was positive overall about the changes made to empower the field with greater decision-making authority and to concentrate a greater proportion of expenditures on field-level programming and support. However, several expressed concern that headquarters had become or was on the verge of becoming 'too lean' and that resources to support the field and ensure internal controls were overstretched.

KPI 13: Adherence to humanitarian principles and the UNHCR protection approach

Finding 13: **UNHCR has effective practices and systems in place to fulfil its role in protection.**

Since its founding in 1951, UNHCR considers that it has been a staunch promoter of humanitarian action; it views protection as the cornerstone of its mandate. The document review rated UNHCR very strong for its protection practices and systems. UNHCR's protection focus for refugees was established in General Assembly resolution 428 (V) on December 14, 1950. Subsequent General Assembly resolutions, Economic and Social Council resolutions and UNHCR Executive Committee conclusions have expanded UNHCR's core mandate to include responsibility for the provision of international protection to asylum-seekers, returnees, and stateless persons. UNHCR has also been authorised to work and extend its protection focus to internally displaced persons (IDPs).

There is clear evidence that UNHCR has resourced its protection strategy with staff at all levels of the organisation and a centralised unit, the Division of International Protection (UNHCR, 2013 [06]), and the Biennial Programme Budget 2014-2015 demonstrates that UNHCR is dedicating funds to protection. It

has also developed a series of guidelines, frameworks and tools for staff and other actors, as well as a number of training programmes on protection. UNHCR monitors and reports on progress made at the organisational scale on its protection-related work, notably through its Notes on International Protection submitted to the UN General Assembly, its Global Reports, and corporate evaluations on protection-related activities.

UNHCR is also seen as being strong in protection in a context in which there are on-going debates and acknowledged ambiguity about what 'protection' encompasses (UNHCR, 2000 [01]). A recent study commissioned by the Global Protection Cluster concluded that the definitional issue remains a concern, with different actors interpreting the protection concept differently, thus compromising the development of a clear and unified message on what protection is and why it is important (Murray & Landry, 2013).

Finding 14: **While stakeholders consider UNHCR a strong supporter of humanitarian principles, UNHCR's documents make little reference to these principles and UNHCR has not defined accountabilities for their application or monitoring.**

The humanitarian principles (humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and operational independence) provide the foundations for humanitarian action on behalf of all affected populations, including refugees.

Overall, survey respondents rated UNHCR strong for its adherence to humanitarian principles. Peer organisation respondents were less positive than other surveyed groups on whether UNHCR takes relevant corrective action when unable to implement humanitarian principles. They rated UNHCR adequate while other respondent groups rated it strong and these differences are statistically significant.

While UNHCR Statute specifies its non-political and humanitarian character, the document review rated UNHCR weak in this area as there is limited explicit emphasis on humanitarian principles in UNHCR documents including UNHCR's Global Appeal documents for both the 2012-13 and 2014-15 biennia. Moreover, the organisation does not appear to have defined clear accountabilities for applying the principles in humanitarian or conflict-related situations, or to be monitoring their application systematically or at all. This is significant, as recent studies have underlined that host governments' respect for humanitarian principles is perceived to be diminishing, which is of concern as their withholding of humanitarian access represents a significant barrier to protection (Murray & Landry, 2013). In a recent report to the General Assembly, UNHCR reported that it recognises the importance of strengthening communication regarding the humanitarian principles (UNHCR, 2013 [56]).

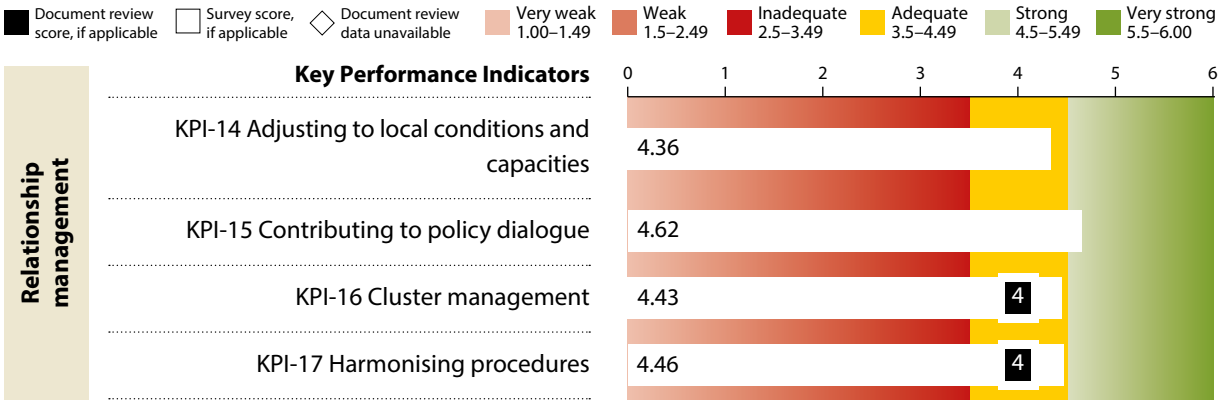
3.4 RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

3.4.1 Summary

Overall, survey respondents considered UNHCR adequate in all areas of relationship management, except contributing to policy dialogue, which they rated strong. The document review provided ratings of adequate on UNHCR's practices and systems in the area of cluster management and harmonisation of procedures.

Figure 3.3 shows the overall ratings for the four KPIs in the relationship management performance area, which illustrates how the organisation is working with others at the country level.

Figure 3.3 | **Performance area III: Relationship management, survey and document review ratings**



3.4.2 Findings on each key performance indicator

KPI 14: Adjusting to local conditions and capacities

Finding 15: **Surveyed stakeholders reported that UNHCR responds quickly to changing circumstances and has procedures that are easy to follow and address. UNHCR was rated adequate for supporting partner capacity development, an area that the organisation has committed to improve in dialogue with its implementing partners.**

In humanitarian settings, an organisation's responsiveness to dynamic local conditions and its ability to draw upon local resources are considered crucial for effective, appropriate and timely responses.

Illustrative survey respondent views: UNHCR's operational flexibility, adaptability and responsiveness cited as an area of strength

UNHCR is "Rapid at setting up an operation at the onset of a crisis" (Peer organisation respondent)

"UNHCR is very efficient in managing operations due to having highly committed staff with relevant professional capacity in the field." (Direct partner respondent)

UNHCR's strength is its "decentralized operational model that makes decision making quite effective and efficient." (Direct partner respondent)

As was the case in the 2011 MOPAN review, survey respondents rated UNHCR strong for its ability to respond quickly to evolving circumstances on the ground. UNHCR's operational flexibility, adaptability and responsiveness was the second most frequently identified strength in respondents' written comments on open-ended questions, noted by 18% of all respondents. In fact, this was noted by 35% of donor in-country respondents and 26% of representatives of host governments. UNHCR also received a strong rating from direct partners and host government respondents for the ease with which its procedures can be understood and completed (although in responses to open-ended survey questions, 10-14% of respondents in three of the countries and 13% of all direct partners across countries described procedures as 'burdensome').

In relation to the capacity development of its partners, UNHCR received an adequate overall rating from respondent groups at the country level. UNHCR is taking several steps to engage with and support its implementing partners, the most notable of which is the High Commissioner's structured dialogue on partnership with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the International Federation of

Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). This dialogue, which began in 2011, identified several recommendations intended to improve UNHCR's responsiveness to local conditions and its effective support for the development and use of local capacities (also referred to as UNHCR's Enhanced Framework for Implementing Partners). For example, UNHCR has pledged to: i) engage more systematically with all key partners in the early days of a crisis to allow for joint assessments, analysis, prioritisation, strategic planning, and at critical moments after the crisis; ii) work more closely with partners to ensure strategic information-sharing; iii) strengthen its institutional strategy for capacity development of national NGOs; and iv) engage in a transparent and agreed process and mechanism for handling issues of partner concern (UNHCR, 2013 [36]).

Illustrative survey respondent views: UNHCR's burdensome procedures mentioned as an area for improvement

"UNHCR needs to improve on timely processing of partner subagreements" (Direct partner respondent)

An area for improvement is the "delays in making some decisions on activities that need HQ involvement or sign off. UNHCR HQ needs to give more autonomy for the Field offices to make some type of decision in order to overcome time factor." (Direct partner respondent)

"I think that it would be best if UNHCR works on delivering sub-agreements in good time so as to enable the IPs (especially those who depend on them 100%) to kick-start their projects/activities on time. And if there is any issue impeding the signing of the same, then they should be handled in a timely manner so as to avoid anxiety on the side of the partners." (Direct partner respondent)

While it is still early to assess UNHCR's effectiveness in implementing these recommendations, there are indications in UNHCR's report on its 2014 annual consultation conference with NGOs that good progress is being made. Notable actions include the publication of a Guidance Note on Improving Information-Sharing among Partners (UNHCR, ICRC, ICVA, n.d. [01]), the recruitment by UNHCR in early 2014 of an expert to analyse UNHCR, international NGO and national NGO capacity strengthening efforts; the review of UNHCR consultation forums (which led to the introduction of social media at national forums and the introduction of regional consultations); and the addition of a session on partnership in 2014 and all future UNHCR-NGO annual consultations, offering UNHCR and its partners a regular opportunity to assess how they are faring in their partnerships (UNHCR, n.d. [71]).

KPI 15: Contributing to policy dialogue

Finding 16: **UNHCR has a positive reputation among surveyed stakeholders for the quality of its policy dialogue and how it uses advocacy to enhance protection for refugees and other persons of concern. UNHCR continues to enhance its engagement with partners on joint policy and advocacy.**

UNHCR regards advocacy as a key element in its activities to protect refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people and stateless people. Surveyed donors, host governments and peer organisations valued UNHCR's inputs to policy dialogue, while its direct partners were less positive (the difference is statistically significant). However, all surveyed stakeholders lauded UNHCR's use of advocacy with governments and other key partners to enhance protection for refugees and other persons of concern. UNHCR was also considered to generally respect the views of partners by survey respondents.

The survey responses may not fully reflect the organisation's most recent efforts to enhance the way that it engages with its partners on policy dialogue. One example is the High Commissioner's structured dialogue on the NGO-IFRC-UNHCR partnership (UNHCR's Enhanced Framework for Implementing Partners), in which UNHCR acknowledged the complementarities in the roles, expertise and relationships among humanitarian

partners in the response to refugees and stateless persons, and committed to enhancing collaboration with partners in developing advocacy positions and strategies, and to "putting IDPs back onto the policy advocacy agenda." (UNHCR, 2013 [36])

Reports provided to NGOs during the 2014 Annual Consultations indicate that several joint policy actions have already taken place. These include: collaboration between UNHCR and NGOs around advocacy for Syrian refugees such as the Europe Act Now campaign of the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) involving more than 100 NGOs as well as UNHCR in more than 40 European countries; and the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, a regional, multi-year strategy agreed upon by the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan with the support of UNHCR and involving international and national NGOs to identify and implement comprehensive solutions for Afghan refugees and returnees in the region (UNHCR, n.d. [71], p. 2). In addition, since 2013, UNHCR-NGO Annual Consultations have included advocacy sessions, providing UNHCR and its partners regular opportunities to explore possibilities for complementary advocacy at the global, regional and field levels (UNHCR, n.d. [71], p. 3). For example, the June 2014 session "Advocating Together for Protection" was intended to examine how the *Principles of Partnership* and the *Guidance Note on Advocating Together for Protection*, could be used to strengthen collaboration in developing advocacy strategies among other objectives (UNHCR, n.d. [54])

KPI 16: Cluster management

Finding 17: **Since 2011, UNHCR has initiated several actions to further enhance its approaches to cluster management. Current UNHCR efforts to bring clarity to respective inter-agency responsibilities may lead to greater expediency and cluster effectiveness.**

While refugee issues falling within the criteria of its mandate remain UNHCR's direct responsibility, UNHCR is also called upon to extend protection and assistance to other distressed populations, such as IDPs. UNHCR's workload has increased markedly as a result over recent years. Given that UNHCR is expected to address the needs of these additional caseloads in collaboration with other bodies, each of which has its own mandate and areas of expertise, mechanisms have been put in place to ensure optimal mutual understanding and application of each entity's role. This process was greatly helped by the creation of the cluster system and later by the Transformative Agenda.

Indeed, following the recommendations of an independent Humanitarian Response Review in 2005 (Adinolfi, C.; Bassiouni, D. S.; Lauritzen, H. F.; Williams, H. R., 2005), the cluster approach was adopted by UN organisations as one way of addressing gaps and strengthening the effectiveness of humanitarian response through building partnerships. The 2011 Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Transformative Agenda made provisions for improving the co-ordination and performance of inter-agency clusters to address internal displacement in conflict and natural disaster situations.

UNHCR participates actively in all clusters relevant to its involvement with selected non-refugee populations and assumes the lead for the protection cluster given its long experience in this field. Its role, including its ability to exercise leadership, differs as a function of the caseloads being dealt with (e.g. refugees as opposed to IDPs).

Over the past three years, UNHCR has undertaken several actions to align its policies and systems with the IASC Transformative Agenda. It has helped to strengthen co-ordination and collaboration with and among its cluster system partners to improve field level responses in different contexts; produced

strategies, guidance papers and tools for the clusters it leads or co-leads; commissioned research studies; continued to develop and deliver training and learning programmes such as the Protection Cluster Coordination Learning Program which provides protection cluster partners in-country with technical and soft skills training to draft the cluster strategy; developed or improved global cluster websites to facilitate information sharing with partners and stakeholders; and has engaged in several initiatives aimed at enhancing cluster surge capacity including a Rapid Response Team created in 2013 which deploys experts to all new emergencies. Also, the Joint UNHCR-OCHA Note on Mixed Situations: Coordination in Practice (OCHA & UNHCR, 2014 [01]), issued 24 April 2014, goes a long way toward clarifying roles in refugee and mixed IDP/refugee responses and should help improve collaboration between agencies.

At a national level in DRC, the only country that was part of the 2014 MOPAN assessment in which UNHCR plays a leading role in the cluster system, survey respondents affirmed UNHCR's strengths in providing sufficient overall leadership, and in ensuring that pertinent information is circulated within the clusters that it leads or co-leads.

While UNHCR has made efforts to enhance its contribution to the inter-agency cluster approach since 2011, surveyed MOPAN donors at HQ rated it adequate for the effectiveness of its practices and systems to act as global cluster lead or co-lead. Many UNHCR measures are quite recent (since 2013) and are being implemented progressively; it will likely take time before they lead to demonstrable improvements in cluster performance. Available evaluative/research evidence points to on-going challenges. For instance, the study on protection funding in complex humanitarian emergencies (Murray & Landry, 2013) indicated that the global protection cluster is constrained by under-resourcing of its co-ordination function, and that its sub-structure, which involves multiple areas of responsibility each led by different agencies, has hidden the multidimensional character of protection and inhibited development of a unifying strategic approach.

KPI 17: Harmonising procedures

Finding 18: **Overall, UNHCR's procedures to co-ordinate with other programming partners throughout the humanitarian programme cycle are considered adequate, although co-ordination issues remain a top concern for many survey respondents. Recent steps taken to formalise the accountability interface between UNHCR's co-ordination of a refugee response and OCHA's co-ordination of the broader humanitarian response are promising.**

Given the number of different actors typically engaged in addressing humanitarian situations, the extent to which procedures throughout the entire programme cycle are well co-ordinated and harmonised are critical to the effective and efficient delivery of services to refugees and other persons of concern.

Surveyed stakeholders and the document review rated UNHCR adequate overall in how it harmonises arrangements and procedures with other programming partners. However, co-ordination with partners and duplication of work were the most frequently cited areas for improvement identified in stakeholders' responses to open-ended survey questions (mentioned by 27% of all respondents, 53% of donors at headquarters, 35% of direct partners and 35% of donors in-country).

All respondent groups, with the exception of peer organisations, rated UNHCR strong for its contributions to inter-agency plans and appeals; the document review concurred and noted UNHCR's contributions

to and participation in consolidated appeals up to 2013 as well as its participation in the strategic response plan process introduced by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in 2014 to replace the consolidated appeal process. In addition, UNHCR has been an active member of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle Steering Group, a body composed of a few senior staff members with special expertise in operations management drawn from UN agencies and NGO consortia.

Illustrative survey respondent views: UNHCR's co-ordination with partners cited as an area for improvement

"Improvement in joint monitoring of humanitarian response need to be established and enhanced" (Peer organisation respondent)

"They [UNHCR] should strive to allow integrated approach through the line ministry or department as opposed to scattered efforts." (Host government respondent)

"UNHCR needs to become better at working with partners. Being a strong organisation with a strong mandate in itself, UNHCR has a tendency to broaden its mandate and aim to perform tasks themselves rather than maximizing outputs by working genuinely inclusively with partners. This applies to UN reform, UNHCR's own coordination responsibilities, as well as working with implementing partners and development partners." (Donor at HQ respondent)

"Inter-agency coordination remains an important issue, which should be further addressed by UNHCR, particularly in large operations." (Donor at HQ respondent)

UNHCR "needs to change its approach to working with partners, to be more genuinely collaborative, respectful and transparent." (Direct partner respondent)

With respect to its collaboration with partners in the humanitarian programme cycle, survey respondents considered UNHCR strong overall. Reviewed documents indicate that UNHCR regularly collaborates with its main operational partners such as the World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and International Organization for Migration (IOM), in carrying out country needs assessments and planning and implementing joint programmes. There is also evidence that UNHCR monitors and reports on its co-ordination efforts at the global level (e.g. in its annual Global Report publications and its Updates on Coordination Issues reports that are annually submitted to the Executive Committee) and at the country level (through Global Report publications and Focus software). The document review, which rated UNHCR adequate for its collaboration with these key operational partners, noted the absence of a comprehensive analysis of UNHCR's co-ordination efforts at the country level in annual Global Reports and variations in the adequacy or clarity of monitoring and evaluation arrangements with its partners. For example, while it has established joint monitoring and evaluation procedures for its collaboration with WFP (through an official Memorandum of Understanding signed in January 2011), its arrangement with UNICEF relies on a two-page joint letter signed by UNHCR High Commissioner and UNICEF Executive Director in October 2011 that does not include clear procedures and parameters and does not seem as binding. In general terms, evaluations that analyse UNHCR's role in joint programmes and other operations signal that there is room for improvement in monitoring joint programming, following up on the recommendations of joint assessments, and strengthening its capacity and commitment to co-ordinate with partners and especially with UN sister agencies (UNHCR & WFP, 2012 [03]; UNHCR & WFP, 2011 [01]; UNHCR & WFP, 2012 [04]; Crisp, et al., 2013) and especially with UN agencies. In terms of sharing information and avoiding duplication with others, UNHCR was rated adequate overall by survey respondents.

In terms of leading and co-ordinating comprehensive responses for refugees with all concerned, survey respondents rated UNHCR adequate overall. While there is clear evidence that UNHCR dedicates technical expertise, funding, and staffing for the co-ordination of refugee responses, recent evaluation reports highlighted areas for improvement. For example, the 2013 evaluation of the Syrian refugee emergency noted "a widespread perception that UNHCR did not provide effective co-ordination in the earlier

stages of the [Syrian] emergency", that "UNHCR was at times more concerned with managing its own operations than co-ordinating the overall refugee response" and that "UNHCR has a tendency to focus on its relationship with its implementing partners, rather than dealing with all agencies on an equal basis, irrespective of their size or contractual relationship" (Crisp, et al., 2013, pp. 7-8). In its management response to the evaluation, UNHCR agreed with recommendations to clarify and strengthen its approach to co-ordinating the Syrian refugee emergency, proposing actions at regional and country levels (UNHCR, 2013 [64], pp. 2-4). UNHCR is currently conducting a follow-up evaluation which should help gauge the success of measures taken.

Since 2012, UNHCR has also worked to establish clearer models to explain its different approaches to co-ordination in refugee-only or mixed situations (i.e. when refugees are assisted alongside internally displaced persons and the IASC cluster system is active). This culminated in 2014 with a note prepared jointly by OCHA and UNHCR that formalises the accountability interface between UNHCR's co-ordination of a refugee response and OCHA's co-ordination of the broader humanitarian response. The agreement represents a significant step toward enhancing co-ordination and ensuring it is further "streamlined, complementary and mutually reinforcing, and to avoid duplication at the delivery level" (OCHA & UNHCR, 2014 [01]).

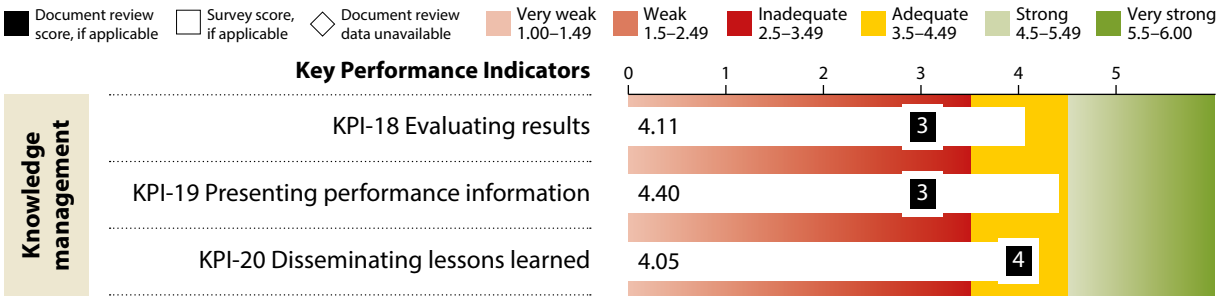
3.5 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

3.5.1 Summary

Survey respondents rated UNHCR adequate in all areas of knowledge management. While the document review found UNHCR adequate in disseminating lessons learned, it noted room for improvement in evaluating results and presenting performance information.

Figure 3.4 shows the overall survey and document review ratings for the three KPIs in the knowledge management performance area, which examine an organisation's feedback and reporting mechanisms as well as learning strategies that facilitate the sharing of knowledge and performance information.

Figure 3.4 | **Performance area IV: Knowledge management, survey and document review ratings**



3.5.2 Findings on each key performance indicator

KPI 18: Evaluating results

Finding 19: **Surveyed stakeholders considered UNHCR adequate in evaluating results and the review of documents suggested that there are still considerable challenges in ensuring independence, appropriate coverage, and quality assurance of the evaluation function. While UNHCR has embraced recommendations to address some of these shortcomings, adequate financial support, management buy-in as well as greater structural independence for the function may also be required.**

Evaluation independence, coverage, quality assurance and stakeholder involvement are important evaluation principles identified by the United Nations Evaluation Group. The Policy Development and Evaluation Service (PDES) is responsible for the evaluation function in UNHCR.

Surveyed donors at headquarters were asked if UNHCR has a structurally independent evaluation unit and if it uses evaluation findings to inform decision making. They rated UNHCR adequate overall, but more than one-quarter lacked knowledge to respond to these questions. Respondent groups at the country level (direct partners, host governments and peer organisations) were asked if UNHCR involves beneficiaries/ stakeholders in evaluations. They rated UNHCR adequate.

Both the 2011 and 2014 MOPAN reviews noted that UNHCR adequately involves direct beneficiaries and stakeholders in its evaluation processes. However, the evaluation coverage and quality were considered inadequate in 2011, and weak in 2014. These elements were examined only by the document review.

On the basis of reviewed documents, UNHCR received an inadequate rating overall. A 2013 peer review of UNHCR's evaluation capacity, conducted by the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), raised concerns about the evaluation unit's independence (given that it has responsibility for both evaluation and policy matters) and also noted shortcomings in evaluation coverage of UNHCR programming and the absence of a quality assurance mechanism to oversee decentralised evaluations (OIOS, 2013 [02]). (The UN Board of Auditors had also recommended in 2010 that UNHCR clarify expectations regarding decentralised evaluations.) The OIOS peer review acknowledged that while the UNHCR evaluation function has insufficient resources, the PDES has served a useful function especially by providing useful information and advice on key policy issues, publishing key research papers, and publishing evaluation reports that analyse issues and good practices of relevance to UNHCR country offices (OIOS, 2013 [02]).

UNHCR agreed fully or partly with the majority of OIOS recommendations, including the need to develop a regular and systematic process for follow up on evaluation recommendations and the need for a strategy for strengthening decentralised evaluation in the field. In a January 2014 UNHCR document summarising actions being taken in response to the 2010 recommendations of the UN Board of Auditors, UNHCR highlighted the importance of commissioning and budgeting for programme and project evaluations. The organisation also reports that it is developing a strategy to strengthen decentralised evaluation, but notes that implementation will take time as it will require increased resources and enhanced expertise as well as capacity for quality control and monitoring of field evaluations (UNHCR, 2014 [17]).

In response to OIOS recommendations, UNHCR also explained the positive features of its current demand-driven approach to evaluation, stressing that its evaluation office benefits from methodological

independence in designing evaluations, and noting that evaluation and policy are closely interlinked functions, with co-location favouring use of evaluation findings and recommendations to inform policy-making (OIOS, 2013 [02]). It also pointed to the need for additional internal dialogue and reflection to chart the way forward, noting that the evaluation function is structured quite differently across UN agencies.

In interviews, UNHCR staff acknowledged shortcomings, while underlining the importance of buy-in from management (for responding to, implementing and tracking progress on evaluation recommendations), the need for some shifts in cultural attitudes about evaluation (described as needing to move from a culture of oversight to a culture of insight) and the need for adequate financial and human resources to address recommendations.

UNHCR has drafted a revised Evaluation Policy that addresses many of the shortcomings mentioned above, for example, by proposing to eliminate dual reporting lines and offer a balanced coverage of evaluations. The policy has been submitted to the High Commissioner for approval.

KPI 19: Presenting performance information

Finding 20: **UNHCR's Global Report provides little information on its organisation-wide results over time. Its country-level reporting is more detailed and comprehensive and is now shared with the donor community.**

UNHCR's reporting on organisation-wide and country-level performance is critical for demonstrating efficiency and effectiveness and ensuring public accountability (i.e. that the organisation publicly discloses and takes responsibility for its decisions). The 2011 MOPAN review found that UNHCR reports did not comment explicitly on results at all levels (especially outcomes and how its activities are affecting the outcome area).

UNHCR presents information on its organisation-wide performance through its Global Report, an annual publication that is produced primarily for governments, private donors and partners but that is also shared publicly (UNHCR, 2014 [27]). This report summarises UNHCR's organisational achievements during the year, providing information on the wide ranging nature of UNHCR interventions and highlighting challenges encountered in implementing the organisation's strategic plan (i.e. the Global Appeal). It presents a wealth of information on activities and outputs and includes regional, sub-regional and country-level chapters on "achievements and impact". The country chapters describe progress and explain gaps between planned and actual results.

Although UNHCR indicates that the Global Report provides a basis upon which to gauge the effectiveness of its work (UNHCR, 2014 [27]), there are still several key areas that require improvement. Notably, the report includes little organisation-wide aggregate information on performance at the outcome/impact levels: such information is presented only in the section on Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs), and only partially covers the themes in the operational GSP statements (see section 4.3 for additional details). The Global Report does not present information on performance over time. For example, while the Global Appeal for 2012-2013 (corporate strategy) established global engagement targets for the biennium (UNHCR, 2013 [06]), the values reported in the Global Report are annual only, which obscures overall progress made during the strategic planning cycle (UNHCR, 2014 [22]). Variances between expected and actual results are not explained. In addition, the report hinges almost entirely on self-reported data, with few or no references to independent feedback such as evaluation findings, which diminishes the credibility of the information shared.

At the country level, UNHCR's main vehicle for reporting on performance is the Global Focus platform, which allows country offices to share many sections of their internal reports with the donor community twice yearly: subsequent to the mid-year review and the end-year/annual programme review (UNHCR, 2014 [31]). This is a new practice introduced since the 2011 MOPAN assessment. Such transparency should be commended as it is rare among multilateral organisations.

UNHCR's Global Focus documents are rich in detail, explaining the context in which UNHCR operates at the country level, the rationale for the chosen programming (by noting gaps identified through needs assessments), and reporting on progress against performance indicator targets for planned outputs and objectives. The reports often provide some explanation of variances between planned and achieved results. Nevertheless, there is some variability in the quality of the reports prepared across country offices. One issue is that sections from earlier reports are often copied (particularly in the context and planning sections) and may no longer be accurate (e.g. elections that took place two years earlier). In addition, after the reports are produced there are significant delays before their release to the donor platform. UNHCR indicates that this is to ensure a review of the reports and a quality check by the Regional Bureaux.

While UNHCR's performance reporting has improved noticeably in recent years and the organisation continues to make adjustments, the document review rated UNHCR's performance reporting inadequate overall in light of the above issues identified for improvement. Surveyed donors at headquarters were more positive and rated UNHCR strong for the usefulness of its reporting on its organisation-wide strategy. They considered UNHCR's reports to its governing bodies adequate in providing clear measures of contribution to outcomes, and adequate in reporting on country strategies.

KPI 20: Disseminating lessons learned

Finding 21: **While UNHCR performs adequately in fostering learning through training, more work needs to be done to both capture and utilise lessons learned to inform organisational work processes and programmes.**

The results of both the stakeholder survey and the document review indicate that UNHCR does an adequate job in encouraging learning and sharing of lessons.

The 2011 MOPAN review indicated that UNHCR could enhance its transparency by sharing more of its documents. Since that assessment, UNHCR issued a learning policy and guidelines to operationalise the organisation's learning framework (UNHCR, 2012 [29]), which aim to help optimise "the quality and volume of learning that UNHCR is able to provide to its staff and partners and, ultimately, the quality of protection and other assistance that UNHCR provides to other persons of concern". UNHCR's learning approach is heavily focused on formal training, with less focus on other types of learning.

UNHCR has several entities and platforms that facilitate learning for staff including its Global Learning Centre (GLC), the PDES Policy Development and Evaluation Service; the Learn & Connect platform (which also offers services to UNHCR partners and members of other UN agencies) (UNHCR, n.d. [87]); the UNHCR Regional Centre for Emergency Preparedness (eCentre) (UNHCR, n.d. [74]); RefWorld (UNHCR, n.d. [80]); and Operational Data Portals (UNHCR, n.d. [88]). The document review suggests that UNHCR has improved its training (both in terms of approach and offerings, with a single centre responsible for mapping training to career development and use of online distance learning methods) – an important dimension of learning.

Although UNHCR has taken steps to unify its learning strategy and strengthen its practices and systems for learning, a recent review by the OIOS noted that the organisation still has some way to go to systematise production and dissemination of lessons learned from evaluations (OIOS, 2013 [02]), noting that it lacks formal mechanisms for extracting lessons learned from commissioned evaluations and integrating lessons into organisational work processes and programmes. The evidence available does not allow for an assessment of the extent to which UNHCR has become a learning organisation, given that in-depth organisational change calls for learning strategies that operate at multiple levels and go beyond training courses.

4. Evidence of UNHCR's relevance and results

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section presents the results of the 2014 Common Approach assessment on evidence of the relevance of UNHCR's work and of its contributions to results. It includes three key performance areas:

- Section 4.2: Evidence of the multilateral organisation's relevance (KPI A).
- Section 4.3: Evidence of the multilateral organisation's progress towards its organisation-wide results (KPI B).
- Section 4.4: Evidence of the multilateral organisation's progress towards its stated country-level results (KPI C).

The assessment of this component uses the same "traffic light" colours used in the organisational effectiveness component. However, the overall rating is based on a simplified four-point scale and reflects the assessment team's judgment after considering all of the evidence from documents, survey, and interviews. (See detailed methodology in the Technical Report, Volume II, Appendix I.)

4.2 EVIDENCE OF UNHCR'S RELEVANCE (KPI A)

This section presents an analysis of the relevance of UNHCR's work, based on documents reviewed and survey data.

Figure 4.1 | **Evidence of UNHCR's relevance, overall rating**

Weak | Inadequate | Adequate | Strong

Overall rating:	STRONG
Justification of the rating for UNHCR	Although there are few evaluation reports available that examine issues pertaining to UNHCR's relevance, MOPAN perception data and documents consulted on UNHCR's practices present evidence that UNHCR is strongly pursuing results that are relevant to its mandate, aligned with global humanitarian trends and priorities, and that respond to the needs and priorities of beneficiaries (3 of the 4 dimensions assessed through this KPI).
MOPAN description of this rating	There is clear evidence of the congruence/alignment between the organisation's stated results and partner country priorities, beneficiary needs and priorities, global trends and priorities in the development or humanitarian field, and the organisation's mandate. Consistent data emerges from corporate (organisation-wide) and country-level sources.

Finding 22: **UNHCR results are relevant to stakeholders in the complex environments in which it operates. UNHCR has adapted over time to ensure the protection and rights of the growing numbers of refugees and other persons of concern. It has a valued reputation for leadership in convening NGOs, UN sister agencies, experts, and states to help set global priorities.**

Overall, survey respondents rated UNHCR strong for pursuing results in areas relevant to its mandate, aligning its results with global humanitarian trends and priorities, and ensuring it responds to the needs

and priorities of beneficiaries. The organisation was rated adequate overall by survey respondents for adapting its work to the changing needs and priorities of the country. In written responses to open-ended survey questions, however, 18% of all respondents identified UNHCR's operational capacity and responsiveness (i.e. its flexibility and adaptability) as strengths.

As evidenced on its website, UNHCR's mandate confers it a highly relevant and unique protection function for refugees:

> Using the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention as its major tool, UNHCR's core mandate is to ensure the international protection of 31.7 million uprooted people worldwide. It promotes the basic human rights of refugees and that they will not be returned involuntarily to a country where they face persecution. It helps them to repatriate to their homeland when conditions permit, integrate into states of asylum or resettle in third countries. UNHCR promotes international refugee agreements, helps states establish asylum structures and acts as an international watchdog over refugee issues.

While evaluations assessing UNHCR's relevance are not available, a recent (2014) scholarly research review published by the Oxford University Press describes UNHCR as "a unique organization which has adapted and changed over time in order to balance its own institutional interests, the interests of states, the protection of refugees and the need to uphold its normative agenda." It goes on to argue that "the expansion of UNHCR's programme and persons of coverage has allowed the organization to grow and maintain its relevance to interests of key donor states and to some host states in the south." (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Loescher, Long, & Sigona, 2014). The study also points to the increased relevance of UNHCR's work on durable solutions, given the increased number and duration of protracted refugee situations.

UNHCR plays a key role in helping set global priorities for refugees and other persons of concern. It carries out an annual consultation with more than 400 non-governmental organisations with participants from small, large, national and international assistance and advocacy organisations, which UN sister agencies also attend. As noted in the Global Appeal 2014-2015, the annual consultation includes topics such as human rights, urban refugees, refugee law, post-primary education for teenagers and youth, internally displaced people, protection of women and children at risk, and monitoring of refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants in detention (UNHCR, 2013 [06]; UNHCR, n.d. [05]). There is evidence that these discussions inform: joint assessment, analysis, prioritisation and strategic planning; the development of advocacy positions and strategies of mutual concern; and the strengthening of capacity for collective action (UNHCR, 2013 [36]).

UNHCR also plays a convener role at the regional level, organising conferences to discuss humanitarian protection with states, NGOs, and experts (UNHCR, 2013 [47]; UNHCR, 2011 [18]). UNHCR provides leadership and/or support in both the international and national debate regarding migration, displacement and refugee issues, being a respected authority in its field as well as a repository of information. Its advice and positions on a range of related subjects are sought by the organs of the UN (General Assembly, including ECOSOC), by academia, by the media, as well as by the public at large. UNHCR also tables themes for international attention, the focus on statelessness being a current example (UNHCR, 2012 [25]; UNHCR, n.d. [55]). UNHCR is also a member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and its working groups, where it is playing an important role in the humanitarian system-wide reform process to improve worldwide humanitarian response.

4.3 EVIDENCE OF UNHCR'S PROGRESS TOWARDS ORGANISATION-WIDE RESULTS (KPI B)

This section provides an assessment of evidence of progress towards UNHCR's organisation-wide results between 2012 and 2013. The assessment is based on UNHCR's annual global reports for 2012 and 2013, which report on UNHCR's Global Strategic Priorities.

Figure 4.2 | **Evidence of UNHCR's progress towards organisation-wide results, overall rating**

Weak Inadequate Adequate Strong

Overall rating:	INADEQUATE
Justification of the rating for UNHCR	MOPAN respondents consider that UNHCR is making positive contributions to the majority of the corporate results areas assessed. However, partial reporting on UNHCR's corporate results, incomplete theories of change and insufficient global evaluation reports constrain the conclusions that can be drawn on UNHCR's effectiveness in contributing to organisation-wide humanitarian outcomes or impacts.
MOPAN description of this rating	The organisation does not provide evidence that it is meeting or moving toward most of its stated results. In addition, the theories of change are not well articulated. The exploration of different sources of data (including perceptions of key stakeholders) does not provide consistent evidence with regard to the achievement of results at either the output or outcome level. While the organisation presents some data on progress towards its expected results, the evidence base is weak.

Finding 23: **MOPAN survey respondents and UNHCR Global Reports indicate that UNHCR has made progress towards its organisation-wide results. However, the document review found that UNHCR's primary report to stakeholders does not provide a comprehensive, evidence-based picture of its achievements in a given period or over time.**

Over the past two years, UNHCR and the entire international humanitarian system have been taxed by simultaneous major crises, while at the same time responding to numerous protracted situations affecting refugees and internally displaced persons. As noted in UNHCR's 2013 Global Report, more people were forced to flee their homes in 2013 than ever before (UNHCR, 2014 [22]; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Loescher, Long, & Sigona, 2014). In this context, which has particularly taxed the capacity of the organisation and its partners, it is notable that MOPAN survey respondents perceive that UNHCR is making adequate or strong contributions in each of the areas that correspond to its mandate.

UNHCR's Global Report for 2013 notes progress towards each of its global strategic priorities (GSPs). In the review of documents, therefore, the assessment team attempted to analyse UNHCR's contributions to the GSPs. At an organisational level, however, it was difficult to gain a comprehensive understanding of UNHCR contributions to humanitarian results due to limitations in a number of UNHCR's practices in the areas of strategy and results-oriented planning and reporting on results. (These are further explained in the Technical Report, Volume I, section 3.2.2 on KPI B.) For example:

- As noted in the analysis of UNHCR's strategy, the GSPs represent composites of ideas and their associated impact indicators and global engagements do not always incorporate all the dimensions of the GSPs. This presents a challenge for tracking and reporting progress towards results.

- UNHCR's Global Reports present only a partial view of its organisational results. The reports for 2012 and 2013, for example, present aggregate programming data for seven of the operational GSPs that is based on 15 impact indicators; these correspond to 15 of the 35 programming objectives in the corporate results framework (i.e. 37% of corporate objectives).[8] In addition, the Global Report does not yet include the contributions to humanitarian results that are made by UNHCR's global programmes.

- The bulk of data in UNHCR Global Reports is country-specific, focused mostly on activities and outputs. The 2013 Global Report does not illustrate cumulative progress for the biennium, although the global engagements had been set for the biennium.

- Finally, the Global Report is based on self-reported information from country offices. UNHCR in general lacks evaluative evidence or other types of evidence (e.g., feedback from persons of concern) – on its contributions to improving the circumstances and well-being of persons of concern.

As a result, UNHCR's performance report to stakeholders does not provide an evidence-based account of progress on the full range of results that UNHCR is achieving at an aggregate level. The GSPs, impact indicators, and global engagements do not help to illustrate the magnitude of the contribution that UNHCR may have made in beneficiaries' lives at the aggregate level. UNHCR does not yet provide a clear and comprehensive picture of its achievements in a given period.

UNHCR is not unique with regard to the challenges it faces in providing evidence-informed reporting. The whole of the humanitarian system struggles with generating credible evidence, given the complexity of the situations in which they work. Organisations in this field consistently have difficulties in gathering useful data due to a variety of factors including weaknesses in secondary data that exist in many of the areas where humanitarians work (Knox Clarke & Darcy, 2014).

8. For the 2014-2015 biennium, UNHCR's Global Appeal includes 8 operational GSPs and 20 impact indicators.

4.4 EVIDENCE OF UNHCR'S PROGRESS TOWARDS STATED COUNTRY-LEVEL RESULTS (KPI C)

This section presents a high-level summary of UNHCR's progress in achieving its stated country-level results in each country that was part of the MOPAN 2014 assessment. More detailed analysis is provided in Chapter 5 below on country level performance.

Figure 4.3 | **Evidence of UNHCR's progress towards stated country-level results, overall rating**

Weak Inadequate Adequate Strong

Overall rating:	ADEQUATE
Justification of the rating for UNHCR	MOPAN respondents in four of the five countries sampled viewed UNHCR's contributions to high-level results as strong overall. Documentary evidence across the sample of five countries indicates that UNHCR is achieving its planned results at the output level and making partial progress towards expected objectives.
MOPAN description of this rating	The organisation is demonstrating progress towards most planned results in all countries assessed (taking into account their context). Although the organisation does not yet have a strong evidence base that describes progress or contributions towards all outcomes, it does clearly explain where progress has been significant or where progress has been slower, as well as the factors that have affected that progress. The organisation provides evidence, which is supported by reliable data, of its contributions to the majority of planned outcomes. Theories of change exist in different areas and are understandable. There may be some inconsistency across data sources.

Finding 24: **In contrast to its reporting on organisational progress, UNHCR provides richer data and narratives on the contributions it makes at the country level. MOPAN survey respondents also rated the organisation adequate or strong for its contributions in all areas.**

Country-level respondents generally perceived UNHCR as strong in contributing to a favourable protection environment, to fair protection processes and documentation, to security from violence and exploitation, and to meeting the basic needs and services of refugees / other persons of concern, and rated UNHCR adequate overall in providing durable solutions at the country level.

According to the data presented on its online global Focus platform (2012 end-year reports and 2013 mid-year reports), UNHCR made strong progress towards targeted outputs and partial progress towards objective-level results in the five assessed countries. At the country level, the reporting is based on the results framework and allows the reader to understand the context in which UNHCR operates, the rationale for the programming, and progress against performance indicator targets at output and objective level. There are, however, very few evaluation reports to corroborate the contributions in different areas. Focus enables an assessment of progress over a one year period, but the information on performance is not presented cumulatively across years, which is particularly important in tracking the organisation's contributions in protracted situations.

5. UNHCR performance at the country level

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The sections below provide an overview of UNHCR's organisational effectiveness and evidence of results and relevance, in each of the countries participating in the MOPAN assessment. Detailed country data is presented in the Technical Report, Volume I.

5.2 BANGLADESH

CONTEXT

Though not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, Bangladesh hosts 32 000 registered refugees in camps and more than 300 000 unregistered Rohingya outside the camps. In 2013, Bangladesh adopted a National Strategy on Myanmar Refugees and Nationals of Myanmar, which focuses on strengthening border control and providing humanitarian services to address human rights violations. The strategy is considered a positive step forward.

CHALLENGES

- Since the early 1980s, many Rohingya from Myanmar have sought refuge within Bangladesh. However, UNHCR has not been allowed to register new Rohingya as refugees since 1992.
- Today, more than 70% of in-camp refugees in Bangladesh were either born there or arrived at a young age; they demonstrate a strong dependency on aid and poor self-reliance.
- Currently, neither resettlement nor local integration is possible for these refugees, and modalities of assistance continue to resemble those of an emergency situation.

UNHCR'S STRATEGY IN BANGLADESH

- UNHCR operations in Bangladesh focus primarily on improving living conditions in refugee camps, in addition to providing health care, education, and legal services to the refugee population.
- UNHCR is committed to being able to extend its protection activities to Rohingya outside the camp.

UNHCR's organisational effectiveness – highlights from the MOPAN survey

This section identifies the issues that stand out in the survey results on each of the performance areas of the MOPAN assessment.

Strategic management

- Strong: Survey respondents perceived that UNHCR was providing strong direction for the achievement of humanitarian results (KPI 1). Managers reportedly show leadership in results management, and UNHCR has a value system that focuses on the achievement of results. A strong rating was also given for corporate strategies and plans that clearly focus on UNHCR's mandate.

- Adequate: Survey respondents rated UNHCR adequate for the application of results-based management, as well as for using reliable assessments of needs as the basis for its operations and involving beneficiaries and partners in the design of these operations. It was also considered adequate for having contingency plans in place.

Operational management

- Strong: UNHCR was rated strong for providing timely funding to operations (although 75% of respondents were unable to answer when asked if the Agency adopted measures to enable timely delivery of funding). UNHCR was also rated strong for the effectiveness of procurement procedures, human resource management (KPI 10), delegation of management decisions appropriate to the context (KPI 11), and adherence to humanitarian principles and practices and systems to provide protection responses (KPI 13).

- Adequate: Survey respondents considered UNHCR's practices and systems for using performance information to plan new areas of co-operation at the country level to be adequate. UNHCR was also rated adequate for having measures to ensure staff security.

Relationship management

- Strong: UNHCR was rated strong for appropriately harmonising arrangements and procedures with other partners (including contributions to inter-agency plans and appeals, collaborative analysis/assessments, sharing relevant information with partners, building on other actors' initiatives, and coordinating responses for refugees with concerned stakeholders).

- Adequate: UNHCR was rated adequate for taking into account local conditions and capacities (KPI 14), more specifically for using local resources and ensuring capacity development of local partners, as well as for adding value to policy dialogue with its humanitarian partners (KPI 15).

Knowledge management

- Adequate: UNHCR was rated adequate on all aspects of knowledge management, more specifically for involving key partners and beneficiaries in evaluation processes (KPI 18), and for documenting and disseminating lessons learned (KPI 20).

UNHCR's relevance and contribution to humanitarian results – highlights from the assessment

This section provides an overview of the survey data and examples of where there is greatest documented evidence of results.

Relevance

- Overall, respondents in Bangladesh considered UNHCR strong in terms of: i) pursuing results relevant to its mandate; ii) aligning its results with global humanitarian trends and priorities; and iii) aligning its operations with the needs and priorities of beneficiaries.

Contribution to humanitarian results

- According to survey respondents, UNHCR was considered strong for contributions made in four of its five rights groups and received a rating of adequate for the remaining group (i.e. durable solutions, C5).

- With regard to the establishment of a favourable protection environment (C1), UNHCR has deployed efforts to train staff on human rights, statelessness, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) response, as well as child and refugee protection. Refugees and cases of SGBV received legal assistance and counselling in 2012-2013. In this group, outputs were met, but the attainment of the overall objective remains partial due to gaps in the Bangladeshi judicial system.

- The highest overall survey rating was given to the second rights group, fair protection processes and documentation (C2). However, both outputs and objectives in this group are only partially met. Indeed, government restrictions have prevented refugee registration in all but two camps.

- Regarding the third rights group on security from violence and exploitation (C3), all output indicators for the SGBV objective were reached, though evidence of results achievement is still not entirely conclusive (C3.1). Efforts have also been deployed to identify vulnerable children in camps (C3.2), though some gaps in this identification process were noted by UNHCR. To overcome them, a new child protection strategy is being developed.

- Of the nine objectives in the basic needs and services rights group (C4), all outputs and objectives were met except in three cases, where they were partially met: access to optimal education (C4.2), establishment of shelter and infrastructure (C4.7), and services to persons with specific needs (C4.9). Successes of particular note include access to health care, the provision of antenatal care and zero maternal deaths in the first half of 2013, as well as a 75% recovery rate among severely malnourished children. Children's latrines were constructed for the first time, and more than 8,500 women and girls received sanitary materials. Furthermore, the supply of good quality water was increased by 20,000 m^3 in Nayapara.

- The final rights group, durable solutions (C5), was not prioritised given that UNHCR solutions are not available to the population of concern given governmental stipulations: neither resettlement nor local integration is an option at present.

5.3 DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

CONTEXT

DRC is party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, as well as to the 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Problems of Refugees in Africa.

In January 2014, DRC counted nearly 3million internally displaced persons (IDPs), over 113 000 refugees, nearly 1 500 asylum-seekers, and over 600 000 returned refugees and IDPs.

Refugees in DRC come from Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Rwanda, the Republic of Congo, and Sudan.

CHALLENGES

- In many parts of DRC, administrative and legal structures are weak.
- The humanitarian situation has deteriorated due to conflict in Eastern and North-Eastern DRC: clashes between local armed groups, foreign armed groups, and national army troops have led to widespread violence and violations of human rights, sexual violence, and internal displacement, in addition to hampering humanitarian access.

UNHCR'S STRATEGY IN DRC

- UNHCR operations in DRC focus primarily on improved livelihoods and self-reliance, while continuing to address the basic needs of refugees and IDPs (particularly monitoring, access to social structures, and life-saving activities).
- Durable solutions, particularly local integration and voluntary repatriation, are also a priority.

UNHCR's organisational effectiveness – highlights from the MOPAN survey

This section identifies the issues that stand out in the survey results on each of the performance areas of the MOPAN assessment.

Strategic management

- Strong: UNHCR was rated strong by survey respondents for providing direction to achieve humanitarian results (KPI 1) and for having corporate strategies and plans that are clearly focused on its mandate (KPI 2). UNHCR's mainstreaming of gender equality was also rated strong.

- Adequate: The clarity of UNHCR's mandate to protect internally displaced persons was considered adequate, as was the Agency's promotion and integration of environmental sustainability and emergency preparedness and response in its work. UNHCR was also rated adequate for using reliable assessments of needs as the basis for its operations.

Operational management

- Strong: Survey respondents considered UNHCR strong for its effective procurement procedures, various aspects of its human resources (i.e. staff security, code of conduct, and length of deployment of international staff), as well as for ensuring adherence to humanitarian principles and having practices and systems to provide protection responses for refugees.

- Adequate: UNHCR was rated adequate for its timely funding decisions and delegation of decisions in a manner appropriate to the context. UNHCR was rated adequate for its use of performance information in country-level planning, but strong in terms of addressing poorly performing programmes.

Relationship management

- Strong: Survey respondents viewed UNHCR strong in its ability to add value to policy dialogue with partners (KPI 15), as well as its ability to appropriately harmonise arrangements and procedures with other partners (KPI 17) (including contributions to inter-agency plans and appeals, collaborative analysis/assessments, sharing information with partners, and building on others' initiatives).

- Adequate: Respondents rated UNHCR adequate for having procedures that take into account local conditions and capacities (more specifically, its easily understandable procedures and the length of time of these procedures , as well as its operational agility, use of local resources, and development of local partners' capacities).

Knowledge management

- Adequate: UNHCR was rated adequate on all aspects of knowledge management, more specifically for involving key partners and beneficiaries in evaluation processes (KPI 18) and for documenting and disseminating lessons learned (KPI 20).

UNHCR's relevance and contribution to humanitarian results – highlights from the assessment

This section provides an overview of the survey data and examples of where there is greatest documented evidence of results.

Relevance

- Survey respondents in DRC rated UNHCR strong when asked: i) whether UNHCR pursues results in areas within its mandate; and ii) whether its results align with global trends and priorities in the humanitarian field.

Contribution to humanitarian results

- In DRC, UNHCR was given a rating of adequate by surveyed stakeholders for all except one of the rights groups (i.e. fair protection processes and documentation, C2), which received a strong rating.

- Many outputs and objectives of the first rights group, favourable protection environment (C1), were unmet or insufficiently documented. Some sensitisation activities on refugee hosting were conducted, which helped partially meet objectives around improving public attitude towards persons of concern (C1.4).

- The strong survey rating given to fair protection processes and documentation (C2) is supported by successes in the civil registration and status documentation objective (C2.2). Sensitisation and lobbying activities were conducted among senior officials and authorities, and assistance was provided to individuals in need of a birth certificate.

- Due to conflicts and the deteriorating security situation in DRC, UNHCR efforts around protection from the effects of armed conflict (C3.1) did not have the desired results. However, foster families were set up for some refugee children (C3.2) and training/awareness campaigns around SGBV reached at least 200,000 people (C3.3).

- Two key objectives were met with regard to basic needs and services (C4), in DRC. First, all refugees were given access to primary care, and medication was offered free of charge: among refugees that maintain their refugee status and are situated in an accessible area, the general health status is reported to have improved (C4.1). Second, year-end reports indicate that up to 100% of refugees and asylum-seekers received sufficient basic and domestic items (C4.3).

- Under the durable solutions rights group (C5), the potential for voluntary return (C5.1) has been partially met thanks to awareness-raising campaigns, the creation of welcome centres, as well as the provision of NFI kits and funds to cover transportation costs, among others.

5.4 ECUADOR

CONTEXT

Ecuador is party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, its 1967 Protocol, the 1954 Convention on the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. It is also a signatory of the Cartagena Declaration on Refugees of 1984, and has adopted a Constitution that is favourable to the integration of displaced populations. The country hosts the largest displaced population in South America, 98% of which are Colombians fleeing internal conflict.

Persons of concern are in urban contexts (among local populations) or in Northern border regions (with limited access to UNHCR and basic services).

CHALLENGES

- Refugee inflows are quite high (i.e. over 1 000 asylum-seekers each month), but recognition rates are low. While 160 000 persons have requested asylum in Ecuador over the last decade, as of September 2013, only 55 000 refugees had been granted official refugee status.
- Illegal armed groups near the Colombian border threaten the security of refugees and local populations, and protection needs have increased as a result of the Colombian conflict in Northern border provinces. In border areas, "invisible refugees" also pose issues for security and protection.
- Local populations perceive refugees and asylum-seekers negatively (associating them with crime and insecurity, and often considering them economic migrants that are misusing the asylum system).
- Effective access to public health and education services is proving to be a challenge for refugees.

UNHCR'S STRATEGY IN ECUADOR

- In Ecuador, UNHCR aims to re-expand protection space and implement a comprehensive solutions-oriented strategy that is aligned with the national policy on refugees.
- The Agency also works to eliminate discrimination and negative perceptions of its persons of concern.

UNHCR's organisational effectiveness – highlights from the MOPAN survey

This section identifies the issues that stand out in the survey results on each of the performance areas of the MOPAN assessment.

Strategic management

- Strong: Survey respondents rated UNHCR strong for providing direction to achieve humanitarian results (KPI 1), as well as for having organisation-wide plans that clearly focus on its mandate (KPI 2).

- Adequate: Respondents considered UNHCR adequate in its ability to promote and integrate environmental sustainability and emergency preparedness and response in its work (KPI 4) (gender mainstreaming was considered strong, however), in its involvement of beneficiaries and partners in the design of its humanitarian response, as well as for having contingency plans in place.

Operational management

- Strong: UNHCR was rated strong in all aspects of operational management, including timely funding decisions (KPI 6); follow-up on financial irregularities and effective procurement procedures (KPI 8); use of performance information for decision-making (KPI 9), human resources management, more specifically staff security, length of deployment of international staff, and code of conduct (KPI 10); delegation of decisions in a way appropriate to the context (KPI 12); and adherence to humanitarian principles and effective practices and systems to provide protection responses (KPI 13).

Relationship management

- Strong: Survey respondents considered that UNHCR was strong in most aspects of relationship management, more specifically for having procedures that take into account local conditions and capacities (KPI 14) and for adding value to policy dialogue with partners (KPI 15).

- Adequate: Respondents perceived UNHCR as adequate in terms of its ability to appropriately harmonise arrangements and procedures with other partners (KPI 17), notably its contributions to inter-agency plans and appeals, sharing of relevant information, building on others' initiatives and leadership/co-ordination of responses with stakeholders.

Knowledge management

- Adequate: Respondents perceived UNHCR as adequate in all aspects of knowledge management, notably for involving key partners and beneficiaries in evaluation processes (KPI 18), as well as for documenting and disseminating lessons learned (KPI 20).

UNHCR's relevance and contribution to humanitarian results – highlights from the assessment

This section provides an overview of the survey data and examples of where there is greatest documented evidence of results.

Relevance

- Survey respondents gave UNHCR ratings of strong when asked whether (a) UNHCR pursues results in areas within its mandate; (b) its results are aligned with global trends and priorities; (c) its results respond to the needs/priorities of its target groups; and (d) it adapts its work to changing needs and priorities in-country.

Contribution to humanitarian results

- In Ecuador, UNHCR received a strong rating for all but one of its rights groups (i.e. basic needs and services, C4), for which it received a rating of adequate.

- When it comes to creating a favourable protection environment (C1), UNHCR did not meet its objective of developing and strengthening law and policy (C1.1). However, output-level results were partially achieved through lobbying and conducting studies on refugee law. Today, 40% of asylum-seekers are refused, and refugees risk being sent back to their country of origin.

- Similarly, output-level results were partially achieved for the fair protection processes and documentation rights group (C2). To help enhance access to status determination procedures (C2.1), UNHCR provided transportation to some asylum-seekers, and it aims to improve civil registration and status documentation (C2.2) through collaboration with government departments. While the usefulness of the data collected on refugees and asylum-seekers remains to be strengthened (C2.3), over 12 000 asylum claims were registered in 2012 and mobile brigades were launched to help renew refugee profiles and visas.

- Objectives in the security from violence and exploitation rights group (C3) were both partially met. The availability of resources and funding limited progress in both strengthening child protection (C3.1) and reducing the risk of sexual and gender-based violence (C3.2).

- Access to education (C4.1) has been improved through the construction of facilities and the provision of supplies and uniforms to some vulnerable children. A national decree guaranteeing access to education for refugees has also been implemented. Outputs related to improving the health status of the population (C4.2) and establishing shelter and infrastructure (C4.3) were realised through the provision of equipment, medicine, shelters and safe houses, but health service access issues and difficulty maintaining shelters hampered the achievement of these objectives.

- The objective around resettlement (C5.2) has been fully realised, with 87% of cases submitted for consideration having been accepted.

5.5 KENYA

CONTEXT

Though not signatory to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons or the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, Kenya is developing the 2011 Citizenship and Immigration Act to define statelessness and help stateless individuals register as Kenyan citizens.

Kenya hosts just over 400 000 refugees in the Dadaab Refugee Camp, 95 000 refugees in Kakuma camp, and approximately 56 000 refugees in urban areas.

CHALLENGES

- Due to restricted space in Dadaab, resources and access to basic services are limited, which has increased vulnerability to violence and criminal activity and engendered many illegal departures from the camp. Government security concerns have also resulted in reduced asylum space, most notably for Somali asylum-seekers and refugees.
- In some districts, kidnapping, bombing, and assassination threats are common.
- The devolution of power to counties and new county borders have generated political alliances, conflict, and displacement, as well as an increased need for close involvement and co-ordination with line ministries.

UNHCR'S STRATEGY IN KENYA

- In Kenya, UNHCR activities focus primarily on preserving current asylum access and protection space for its persons of concern, in addition to resolving security and safety issues.
- The provision of protection and humanitarian assistance to persons of concern in Dadaab, Kakuma and urban contexts is another important component of UNHCR's strategy in Kenya.
- UNHCR's strategy also focuses on the provision of livelihood opportunities to urban refugees.

UNHCR's organisational effectiveness – highlights from the MOPAN survey

This section identifies the issues that stand out in the survey results on each of the performance areas of the MOPAN assessment.

Strategic management

- Strong: The Agency was rated strong in providing direction for the achievement of humanitarian results (KPI 1), for having organisation-wide plans/strategies focused on its mandate (KPI 2), for using reliable assessments of needs as the basis for its operations and for having contingency plans in place. Further, UNHCR was seen as strong for mainstreaming gender equality and integrating emergency preparedness and response in its work.

- Adequate: Respondents rated UNHCR adequate for the extent to which its institutional culture promotes co-operation with partners to deliver results.

Operational management

- Strong: Respondents saw UNHCR as strong in some aspects of its human resources, namely staff security, length of deployment of international staff and code of conduct, delegation of decisions in a manner appropriate to the context (KPI 12), and adherence to humanitarian principles and practices and systems to provide protection responses (KPI 13).

- Adequate: UNHCR was rated adequate for adopting measures to enable timely delivery of funding to operations and quickly following up on financial irregularities identified in audits.

Relationship management

- Strong: Survey respondents considered UNHCR strong at adding value to policy dialogue with partners (KPI 15).

- Adequate: The Agency was rated adequate for establishing procedures that take into account local conditions and capacities (KPI 14), as well as for its ability to harmonise arrangements and procedures with other partners (KPI 17).

Knowledge management

- Adequate: UNHCR was rated adequate on all aspects of knowledge management, more specifically for involving key partners and beneficiaries in evaluation processes (KPI 18), and for documenting and disseminating lessons learned (KPI 20).

UNHCR's relevance and contribution to humanitarian results – highlights from the assessment

This section provides an overview of the survey data and examples of where there is greatest documented evidence of results.

Relevance

- Overall, respondents in Kenya considered UNHCR strong in terms of (a) pursuing results relevant to its mandate; (b) aligning its results with global humanitarian trends and priorities; and (c) aligning its results with the needs and priorities of beneficiaries.

Contribution to humanitarian results

- Survey results for Kenya revealed strong ratings in all rights groups, except for durable solutions (C5), which was rated adequate.

- The objective to develop and strengthen law and policy (C1.1) was deemed partially met, given that the national government must pass certain legislation, such as a new constitution, before it can ratify international instruments around statelessness and refugees.

- In Kenya, the objective to strengthen civil registration and status documentation (C2.2) is considered met, notably thanks to the delivery of 16 485 birth certificates in 2012 as well as the revision and regularisation of registration provisions in camps, which have resulted in reduced wait times for birth certificate issuance. Budget constraints hampered full attainment of the objective around access to and quality of status determination procedures (C2.1), and human resource issues created a backlog of 14 148 unprocessed registrations, which impacted on the ability to improve and maintain the quality of registration and profiling (C2.3).

- Under the security from violence and exploitation rights group (C3), UNHCR met its objective to reduce the risk of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and improve the quality of response (C3.2), notably thanks to 371 dissemination events around SGBV, which reached 46 000 people, as well as the provision of legal, medical, and psychosocial support to 2 343 SGBV survivors. Logistics, funding, and human resource challenges impeded full attainment of the objective around child protection (C3.1), but the objective on protection from crime (C3.3) showed some key advancements given the inclusion of refugee representatives and 610 women in community policing projects as well as peace and protection teams.

- In terms of basic needs and services (C4), two objectives were considered met: the improvement of nutritional well-being (C4.2) and access to reproductive health and HIV services (C4.7). With respect to the first of these objectives, the number of children requiring treatment for acute malnutrition and infections witnessed an impressive drop (i.e. 1 954 in 2013 compared to 9 767 in 2012), which reflects improvement in the general nutrition status of populations. Progress around the second objective was seen in the number of births attended by skilled workers (79% in Dadaab and 95% in Kakuma), as well as in HIV treatment for survivors of sexual violence (i.e. around 97% within 72 hours of assault, in both Dadaab and Kakuma).

- Resettlement potential (C5.1) remains a challenging objective for UNHCR in Kenya, notably due to the decreasing number of places offered by resettlement countries.

5.6 TANZANIA

CONTEXT

Tanzania is party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, its 1967 Protocol, as well as the African Union 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. The country is also a signatory of the 2009 African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa.

For more than forty years, Tanzania has hosted one of the largest refugee populations on the African continent. The country is a long-standing UNHCR partner in the search for durable refugee solutions, notably assisting with the voluntary repatriation of around 34 000 Burundians who were no longer in need of international protection.

CHALLENGES

- Persons of concern to UNHCR in Tanzania are primarily Congolese refugees who sought asylum from the 1996 conflict in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as Burundian refugees who arrived in the 1990s or fled conflict in 1972. An important decision was taken by the government in 2010 to naturalise Burundian refugees, but the naturalisation process is now at a standstill.
- Growing security concerns, and public perceptions of asylum as a burden to the country, impede the naturalisation and relocation of more than 160 000 Burundian refugees. Political instability in DRC also makes the voluntary repatriation of over 63 000 Congolese refugees impossible.
- The depletion of wood stocks forces refugees to travel long distances, which is believed to increase their vulnerability to SGBV.

UNHCR'S STRATEGY IN TANZANIA

- UNHCR's operations in Tanzania are in line with the outcomes of the 2011-2015 United Nations Development Assistance Programme (UNDAP) "Delivering as One" approach.
- UNHCR's interventions focus on local integration of newly naturalised Tanzanians, including their access to basic services.
- Assistance, protection, and durable solutions for refugees in camps are also important components of UNHCR's strategy.
- UNHCR's activities also include the expansion and strengthening of the Tanzanian asylum system.

UNHCR's organisational effectiveness – highlights from the MOPAN survey

This section identifies the issues that stand out in the survey results on each of the performance areas of the MOPAN assessment.

Strategic management

- Strong: Survey respondents considered UNHCR strong at providing direction for the achievement of humanitarian results (KPI 1), thanks to its institutional culture focused on results, managers that show leadership on results management, and application of results-based management across the organisation. The Agency was also rated strong for having a clear mandate and aligning its strategy

with its mandate, as well as for mainstreaming gender equality, and promoting and integrating environmental sustainability and emergency preparedness and response in its work.

- Adequate: Respondents in Tanzania perceived UNHCR as adequate for using reliable assessments of needs as the basis for its operations and involving beneficiaries and partners in the design of these operations. It was also considered adequate for having contingency plans in place.

Operational management

- UNHCR was rated strong in two areas of financial accountability, i.e. quickly following up on financial irregularities and having effective procurement procedures (KPI 8); in aspects of human resources, namely staff security, length of deployment of international staff and code of conduct (KPI 10); and adherence to humanitarian principles and practices and systems to provide protection responses (KPI 13).

- Respondents rated UNHCR adequate when questioned about the timeliness of its transfers of financial instalments to partners (KPI 6), as well as its delegation of operational/management decisions in a way appropriate to the context (KPI 12).

Relationship management

- Strong: The Agency was seen as strong for its value-added to policy dialogue with partners (KPI 15) and for harmonising arrangements and procedures with other programming partners (KPI 17).

- Adequate: UNHCR was rated adequate by respondents for having procedures that take into account local conditions (KPI 14), more specifically for the length of time required to complete its procedures, its use of local resources, and the capacity development of its local partners.

Knowledge management

- Strong: Survey respondents perceived UNHCR as strong for documenting lessons learned from performance information.

- Adequate: UNHCR was rated adequate for involving key partners and beneficiaries in evaluation processes, as well as for disseminating useful lessons learned to stakeholders.

UNHCR's relevance and contribution to humanitarian results – highlights from the assessment

This section provides an overview of the survey data and examples of where there is greatest documented evidence of results.

Relevance

- Survey respondents gave overall ratings of strong when asked whether: (a) UNHCR pursues results in areas within its mandate; (b) its results are aligned with global trends and priorities in the humanitarian field; (c) its results respond to the needs/priorities of beneficiaries; and (d) it adapts its work to the changing needs and priorities of the country.

Contribution to humanitarian results

- UNHCR received strong ratings in the survey for all rights groups in Tanzania.

- The objective around improving and maintaining the quality of registration and profiling (C2.1) was met, notably through systematic updates of registration data and an increase (from 50% to 80%) in

the number of refugees and asylum-seekers registered on an individual basis. The number of asylum-seekers that were refused was reduced by more than half.

- With respect to protection from crime (C3.1), outputs were only partially met, but the overall objective was attained. Indeed, notable progress in police reinforcement (i.e. greater number of patrols, resolved security cases, meetings with the community, and training sessions) helped reduce criminality within the settlements.

- Three of the five objectives included in the basic needs and services rights group (C4) were met. Areas of success include: an under-five mortality rate of 0.7/1000 amongst refugees and asylum-seekers (C4.1); primary school enrolment rates of 99.8% in Nyarugusu camp in 2013 (C4.2); and improved access to potable water (i.e. Nyarugusu camp refugees continued to receive an average of 26 L of potable water per person, per day in 2013) (C4.4). Challenges include limited distribution of shelter material due to funding constraints, as well as the poor state of many current household shelters (C4.3).

- Under the durable solutions rights group (C5), objectives were met around the voluntary return of refugees (C5.3). Indeed, around 34 000 Burundian refugees, found to no longer need international protection, were effectively repatriated over a six-week period, at the end of 2012. However, integration (C5.1) and resettlement (C5.2) of refugees are proving more difficult, notably due to unstable security contexts, limited resettlement locations and a lack of consensus within the Tanzanian government around the naturalisation of refugees.

6. Conclusions

UNHCR is a unique and, in many ways, impressive multilateral agency that is steeped in historical roots going back to 1921, yet up-to-date and authoritative in its field in 2014. UNHCR has evolved since its founding in 1950 and adapted to vastly changed world circumstances and humanitarian needs. The organisation has traditionally drawn on its essentially protection-oriented mandate but is today especially known by the public at large for its considerably expanded world-wide operations. UNHCR's relevance – as the report attests – is certainly not in doubt. However, UNHCR is not immune to the considerable challenges of 21st century organisational development.

This second MOPAN report on UNHCR (first in 2011 and now in 2014 with modified indicators) analyses UNHCR's performance in terms of its organisational effectiveness and results.

These conclusions step away from the specific ratings of the MOPAN assessment and look at the major messages that can contribute to dialogue between individual MOPAN members and UNHCR and its partners.

Since the MOPAN assessment of UNHCR in 2011, the organisation has faced a dynamic operational context that has placed significant demands on the organisation's capacities. It has sought to meet resulting challenges but not without difficulty.

A number of simultaneous large-scale emergency crises in complex political contexts have challenged UNHCR delivery capacity since 2011. The violence, persecution and human rights violations in Syria, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Myanmar, Somalia and Sudan, as well as several natural disasters in the Philippines, have contributed to a situation where displacement figures are the highest ever: almost 51.2 million forcibly displaced individuals (16.7 million refugees, 33.3 million internally displaced persons, and 1.2 million asylum-seekers). In addition, UNHCR continues to face the challenges caused by the fact that most of the world's refugees (6.3 million) are still to be found in protracted situations, with the associated problems that arise from prolonged exile.

This operational context has affected UNHCR's capacity to deliver in several ways. Since 2008, UNHCR's budgetary requirements have tripled from USD 1.85 billion to USD 5.27 billion in 2014. Among other effects, this has put pressure on UNHCR's staff and staffing practices. In 2014, UNHCR reported that the multitude of large emergencies in 2013 absorbed a considerable proportion of the overall contributions, putting pressure on other non-emergency related activities under UNHCR's annual budget.

During this period, UNHCR has been in the midst of several major reform processes aimed at reducing administrative costs and streamlining and decentralising several functions within the organisation very much in line with initiatives taken by most other field-oriented UN organisations. Over the past several years, the organisation has strengthened and expanded the authority of regional offices and plans to continue this in the future.

There have also been important changes in the humanitarian policy context, including the Inter Agency Steering Committee (IASC) Transformative Agenda (2011),[9] as well as in the UN system-wide context, notably the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (2012-16) requiring UNHCR and other humanitarian and UN organisations to respond with appropriate changes to policies and programming while simultaneously responding to emergencies.

9. The Transformative Agenda is intended to visibly transform the way in which the international humanitarian system responds to a crisis by focusing on (i) improving the timeliness and effectiveness of the humanitarian community's collective response through better leadership, (ii) improved co-ordination structures, and (iii) greater accountability to persons served.

It is important to take these contextual factors into account in reviewing the assessment of UNHCR's practices and systems and evidence of relevance and results.

UNHCR has a relevant, clear and valued mandate that has evolved over time to protect, provide assistance and seek permanent solutions for refugees as well as other persons of concern.

UNHCR has a clear mandate that has been identified by survey respondents as its greatest strength. As a consequence of established, functioning General Assembly mandate review and resolution processes, UNHCR's mandate has evolved and been extended over time to respond to the needs of refugees and other persons of concern in complex environments 'until the refugee problem is solved'. The persons of concern that fall within the High Commissioner's mandate have been clarified and extended over time, first regarding returnees, then stateless persons, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) when the system is activated. UNHCR does not have an exclusive mandate to protect IDPs and can only act upon the request of the Secretary-General or other competent UN organs and with the consent of the concerned State.

UNHCR is recognised for pursuing results in areas relevant to its mandate, aligning its results with global humanitarian trends, and ensuring it responds to the needs and priorities of beneficiaries. Its relevance is further demonstrated by the role it plays in helping set global priorities for protecting and assisting refugees and other persons of concern and its convener role, organising discussions on humanitarian protection with states, NGOs, experts, and other stakeholders. UNHCR's six decades of dedication to a particularly sensitive and difficult humanitarian cause is broadly recognised and valued: few organisations have twice been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

UNHCR's corporate strategy and results frameworks do not fully define, communicate, guide or monitor how its mandate is translated into organisation-wide results. UNHCR has operationalised results-based management (RBM) through a complex system that has several limitations.

While UNHCR has a clear mandate that is valued by stakeholders, its corporate strategy (the Global Appeal) has several technical shortcomings that limit its clarity and utility. UNHCR has a complex results architecture comprising the corporate results framework, the Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs), as well as additional results frameworks for UNHCR's global programmes and headquarters' technical divisions. The multiplicity of frameworks is confusing and creates challenges for UNHCR in tracking, reporting on and analysing its performance on an organisation-wide basis. The short-term nature of UNHCR's corporate strategy (two years) has limitations in addressing protracted refugee contexts within which UNHCR increasingly operates.

UNHCR senior management's endorsement and leadership for results-based management (RBM), and its inclusion in the 2014-15 Global Appeal as one of eight support and management priorities intended to enhance UNHCR's organisational effectiveness, signal the organisation's values with regard to achieving humanitarian results. The application of RBM has been a challenge for all organisations in the humanitarian field, not only UNHCR. While UNHCR has continued to implement RBM over the past few years, this has not been without difficulties. Its Results Framework provides an unwieldy starting point due to the large volume of outputs and indicators that are tracked. In addition, the adoption of RBM has been centred on Focus (an on-line tool introduced in 2006 intended to support results-based planning, monitoring, and reporting on results); the Focus roll-out has experienced technical challenges. It will be important for UNHCR to ensure that its RBM system and associated regime are relevant, useful, and cost-effective.

UNHCR is perceived to make contributions to humanitarian results, but neither its reports nor its performance measurement systems provide a clear and complete picture of how it is improving the circumstances and well-being of persons of concern. UNHCR corporate reports do not yet aggregate results over time, geographic regions, and rights groups. As with other organisations engaged in humanitarian action, there is room for improvement in the use of evidence in decision making and reporting.

The 2014 MOPAN assessment included a component that analysed the evidence of UNHCR's contributions to humanitarian results. Survey respondents, who were asked about UNHCR contributions in each of its "Rights Groups," provided generally positive ratings. Since the last MOPAN assessment in 2011, UNHCR has made significant progress in sharing useful information on its progress in country operations. On the other hand, it has been less effective in collecting and disseminating evidence about its contributions to humanitarian results beyond the activity and output levels, particularly at the organisation-wide level. The above noted limitations in its overall results architecture, monitoring and reporting practices, and evaluation quality and coverage make it challenging to provide a holistic and credible account of UNHCR's overall contributions as an organisation. UNHCR corporate reports do not yet aggregate results over time, geographic regions, and rights groups. This is an area for discussion between UNHCR and MOPAN members.

UNHCR does not yet have an adequate systematic practice of using performance information to inform policy-making, operations planning, or to follow up on poorly performing operations or partners. This gap includes the lack of a process for considering evaluation findings and conclusions, for issuing management responses, and tracking implementation of evaluation recommendations.

The assessment results suggest that UNHCR faces the same challenges as other organisations in the humanitarian field in generating good quality evidence that is used to guide operations and policy-making (Knox Clarke & Darcy, 2014). Meaningful results frameworks, reports and monitoring systems as well as evaluations can play important roles in generating better evidence. There is potential for evaluative evidence to play a greater role in decision making when senior management begins to demand and use performance information and when the evaluation function is adequately resourced and conducts regular systematic evaluations to generate the information.

Over the past few years UNHCR has been working actively to improve its relationships with its implementing and operational partners. Recent developments in co-ordination of mixed refugee situations are promising, but UNCHR is not yet identified as strong in partnering effectively with other humanitarian organisations.

Relationship management is a critical performance area for UNHCR given the broad consensus that is needed for refugee work in general, and given the increasing reliance on partners for programme implementation; in 2013, 39% of UNHCR's expenditures was implemented by 944 partners. It is also important given the increasing emphasis and value placed on collaboration, co-ordination, communication and joint actions by humanitarian assistance actors (implementing and operational partners alike) to respond more efficiently and effectively to the needs of refugees and other persons of concern including internally displaced persons (IDP). Moreover, the importance of and need for improvements in co-ordination and collaboration among humanitarian partners permeates the literature, and is evident in the kinds of decisions, actions and policies taken by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) as well as by the UN General Assembly, UNHCR's Executive Committee and the High Commissioner.

The 2011 MOPAN assessment recognised UNHCR for its contributions to inter-agency processes but noted that it needed to improve its co-ordination with other actors. On the basis of information collected in the current MOPAN review, UNHCR was rated adequate for how it engages with partners in policy dialogue and supports partners' capacity development. While UNHCR is an active contributor to inter-agency plans and appeals and collaborates with main operational partners (such as the World Food Programme), the document review noted variations in the adequacy or clarity of monitoring and evaluation arrangements that UNHCR has with its partners. In their written comments in response to open-ended survey questions, respondents cited UNHCR's co-ordination with partners (including other UN agencies) and duplication of work as areas for improvement.

UNHCR has taken several actions in recent years to address co-ordination with implementing partners, including steps to align its policies and systems with the IASC Transformative Agenda, and, since 2011, to engage regularly with partners in discussions around policy dialogue and capacity building through the High Commissioner's structured dialogue process with NGOs under the umbrella of the Enhanced Framework for Implementing Partners.

Continued UNHCR investment in cluster management and more time are required to realise demonstrable improvements in how clusters are led or co-led by UNHCR, and in how UNHCR co-ordinates with other operational partners. Recent steps taken to formalise the accountability interface between UNHCR's co-ordination of mixed refugee situations and OCHA's co-ordination of the broader humanitarian response are promising.

UNHCR has taken steps to address and apply the tenets of the Transformative Agenda and plans to continue. However, it has made little progress in responding to the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review.

Over the past few years, there have been important changes in UNHCR policy and programming contexts including the Transformative Agenda (2011) and the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (2012-16). UNHCR's performance in responding to these policies is mixed.

In keeping with the Transformative Agenda (which requires all IASC organisations to strengthen leadership, improve strategic planning, strengthen all aspects of programme management from needs assessment to evaluation, improve co-ordination and demonstrate enhanced accountability for collective results), UNHCR has dedicated considerable energy to actions intended to improve cluster co-ordination, performance and participation. Implementing the Transformative Agenda is expected to be an ongoing concern for UNHCR. Under the leadership of the High Commissioner since 2011, UNHCR's engagement in several review exercises and annual consultations with its implementing partners also show promising early results. The Refugee Co-ordination Model for mixed refugee situations, which was adopted in a landmark agreement with OCHA in April 2014, is a further illustration of steps taken to improve co-ordination.

On the other hand, there is limited evidence that UNHCR is aligning its strategy and addressing the implications of QCPR for its operations. The alignment with QCPR is another issue for discussion between MOPAN donors and UNHCR.

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