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Evaluation of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Summary

The mandate of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is to ensure the timely, coherent, coordinated and principled response of the international community to disasters and emergencies and to facilitate the transition from emergency relief to rehabilitation and sustainable development. OCHA has five core mandated functions, namely, coordination, policy, humanitarian financing, information management and advocacy.

The present evaluation by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) of the advocacy role of OCHA from 2013-2016 was guided by evaluation questions in the following areas:

- (a) **Relevance.** Extent to which advocacy work was aligned with the mandate and specific advocacy needs;
- (b) **Effectiveness.** Extent of the effects of advocacy efforts on knowledge and attitudes conducive to humanitarian goals and action;
- (c) **Efficiency.** Extent to which human and financial resources and other inputs were managed to maximize the benefits of advocacy efforts;
- (d) **Cross-cutting issues.** Extent to which OCHA advocacy incorporated humanitarian principles and cross-cutting issues relating to gender and human rights.



During the evaluation period, OCHA undertook a wide range of public and private advocacy at all levels of the Office, both to advance its own mandate and on behalf of the humanitarian system. Through those efforts, it sought to influence awareness, attitudes, decisions and other actions among various stakeholder groups in order to assist and protect those affected by humanitarian crises. The wide range of humanitarian issues and specific humanitarian crises covered, the allocation of resources dedicated to advocacy and the establishment of tools to help OCHA to manage the advocacy function underscore the relevance of those efforts. Moreover, external and internal stakeholders indicated that specific OCHA advocacy activities addressed the most critical areas requiring advocacy, with no major coverage gaps — save, perhaps, a disproportionate focus on high-profile crises and less attention to “forgotten” crises. External stakeholders further acknowledged the unique value-add that OCHA brings to advocacy compared with other humanitarian actors.

There is evidence that specific advocacy efforts have positively influenced knowledge, awareness and decision-making. The Inspection and Evaluation Division of OIOS uncovered robust evidence of positive effects in two areas in particular: (a) influencing normative discussion and debate by intergovernmental bodies; and (b) negotiating humanitarian access. Other results, although more mixed, were also highlighted: the role of the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator as chief advocate in speaking out on specific crises; influencing Security Council deliberations on crises and cross-cutting issues; obtaining financing to meet the full scope of humanitarian needs; and the World Humanitarian Summit. In those cases, external as well as internal factors hampered the full attainment of targeted results. All told, however, the aggregate effects of the overall OCHA advocacy efforts are unknown.

A series of structural and managerial challenges, meanwhile, have hampered OCHA in achieving maximum results for its advocacy investment. At Headquarters, a key senior-level post, Chief of the Strategic Communications Branch, has been occupied by four temporary replacements since the post was vacated in 2012; the recruitment process to fill the post has not yet been completed. More fundamentally, advocacy is the only one of the five mandated functions of OCHA that lacks a coherent, cohesive framework around which to convene the Office in the pursuit of shared corporate advocacy objectives. Although it invested in the development of a suite of tools to help it to manage the advocacy function, OCHA did not sufficiently roll them out. It has no internal coordination mechanism in place through which to set advocacy priorities, jointly plan and connect complementary advocacy efforts across the entirety of its operations, manage internal and external challenges and risks and monitor and report on those efforts, under the leadership of its chief advocate, the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator.

OIOS makes three important recommendations, namely, that OCHA:

- Complete the recruitment of the Chief of the Strategic Communications Branch
- Consolidate its core Headquarters-based advocacy functions under the leadership of the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator, whose office should further establish and manage an advocacy coordination mechanism;

- Revisit and update as necessary its 2006 Policy Instruction on OCHA Advocacy, 2006 Guidelines on OCHA Advocacy and 2013-2017 Advocacy Strategy, and roll them out, also under the leadership of the Office of the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator.

This analysis aligns with the conclusions of the OCHA-commissioned Functional Review (2016), which recommended that OCHA should become more efficient and streamlined at a broad organizational level.

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I. Introduction

1. The Inspection and Evaluation Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) identified the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) for evaluation on the basis of a risk assessment undertaken to identify Secretariat programme evaluation priorities. The Committee for Programme and Coordination selected the programme evaluation of OCHA for consideration at its fifty-seventh session, to be held in June 2017.¹ The General Assembly endorsed the selection in its resolution 70/8.

2. The general frame of reference for OIOS is set out in General Assembly resolutions 48/218B, 54/244, and 59/272, as well as ST/SGB/273, which authorizes OIOS to initiate, carry out and report on any action that it considers necessary to fulfil its responsibilities. OIOS evaluation is provided for in the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (see ST/SGB/2016/6, regulation 7.1).

3. The overall evaluation objective was to determine, as systematically and objectively as possible, the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the advocacy role of OCHA for the coordination of humanitarian affairs from 2013 to 2016. The evaluation topic emerged from a programme-level risk assessment described in the evaluation inception paper.² The evaluation was conducted in conformity with the norms and standards for evaluation in the United Nations system.³

4. Comments by OCHA management were sought on the present report and taken into account. The formal response by OCHA is set out in annex I.

II. Background

History and mandate

5. The mandate of OCHA is to ensure the timely, coherent, coordinated and principled response of the international community to disasters and emergencies and to facilitate the transition from emergency relief to rehabilitation and development.

6. This mandate derives from General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 1991, in which the Assembly created the position of the Emergency Relief Coordinator in the person of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. The Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator serves as the United Nations focal point responsible for all emergencies requiring United Nations humanitarian assistance (see ST/SGB/1999/8, sect. 3). To assist with this coordination, the Assembly established, in the same resolution, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee under the leadership of the Emergency Relief Coordinator. The Committee is the primary inter-agency humanitarian coordination mechanism.

¹ See the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on its fifty-fifth session (A/70/16), June 2015.

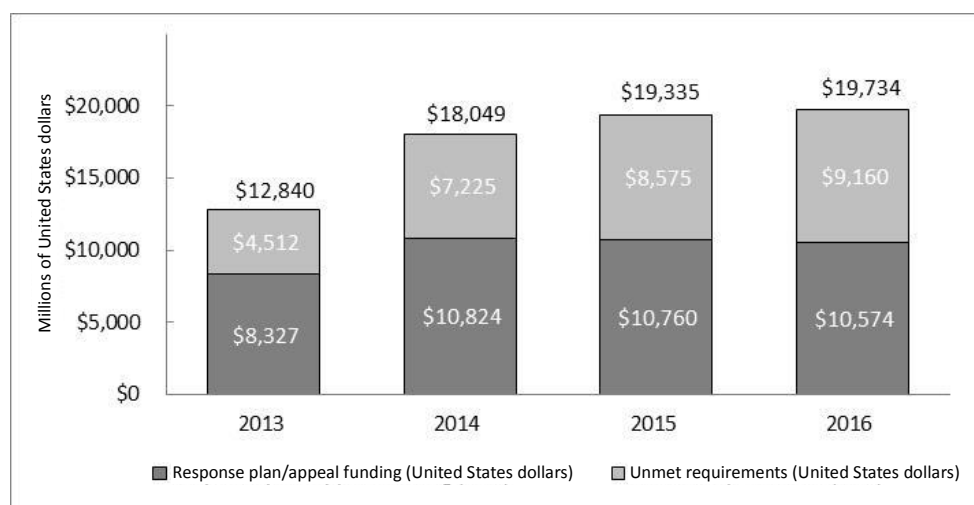
² IED-16-011, OIOS-IED Inception Paper: Evaluation of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

³ These norms and standards are set by the United Nations Evaluation Group.

7. OCHA has five mandated functions, namely, coordination, policy, humanitarian financing, information management and advocacy. Its broad programmatic objectives and strategies are articulated in the proposed strategic framework for the period 2016-2017 (see A/69/6 (Prog. 23)) and the OCHA Strategic Framework for the period 2014-2017.⁴

8. Since the OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division last evaluated OCHA, in the period 2012-2013 (E/AC.51/2013/3), there have been six Inter-agency Standing Committee-designated level 3 emergencies,⁵ three of which occurred concurrently. As indicated in figure I, along with that growth, humanitarian funding requirements increased significantly.⁶ However, despite record donations from Member States, the scale of unmet needs (i.e., funding shortfalls) continued to grow.

Figure I
Humanitarian funding requirements and unmet needs, 2013-2016



Source: OIOS compilation of OCHA Financial Tracking Service data.

Advocacy role

9. OCHA has integrated its advocacy mandate into all aspects of its programme of work. Advocacy appears in its strategic framework, the subprogramme structure, the Policy Instruction on OCHA Advocacy and Guidelines on OCHA Advocacy of 27 December 2006, a 2015 corporate advocacy action plan and the 2013-2017 Advocacy Strategy. In the policy instruction, it is noted that advocacy means using information strategically to influence the policies or practices of key actors with the

⁴ See the OCHA Strategic Plan 2014-2017, available from <https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/OCHA%20SF%202014-2017%20Strategic%20Plan.pdf>.

⁵ Namely, the Philippines, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Iraq and Yemen. Declaration of an Inter-Agency Standing Committee level 3 response activates a system-wide mobilization of capacity (leadership, staffing and funding) to enable accelerated and scaled-up delivery of assistance and protection.

⁶ See <https://ftsbeta.unocha.org/appeals/overview/> for 2013-2016.

aim of assisting and protecting those in need (see para. 8.2 of the instruction). OCHA expounds on this role as follows:

To OCHA, advocacy means communicating the right messages to the right people at the right time. These people include humanitarian agencies, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, national Governments, local and international media, parties to conflict, companies, donors, regional bodies, communities affected by emergencies and the general public. The aim is that they increase urgent funding or support, change their policies or keep to their commitments.⁷

10. OCHA distinguishes between its public advocacy (for example, press conferences, media interviews, editorials, awareness-raising campaigns, remarks before open sessions of intergovernmental bodies and speeches) and its private advocacy (for example, private conversations, meetings, briefings, consultations and e-mails).

11. While advocacy was nominally located in subprogramme 5 (humanitarian emergency information and advocacy), with substantive responsibility for public advocacy falling under the Strategic Communications Branch, it is also included in all other subprogrammes as a transversal theme. Many staff in the other subprogrammes and at all levels of OCHA reported either directly engaging in public and/or private advocacy or significantly supporting such efforts (see paras. 21-23 below). At the global level, the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator served as chief advocate on behalf of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee membership as well as for OCHA and was supported by all OCHA divisions in that capacity (see [ST/SGB/1999/8](#), sect. 3). OCHA undertook advocacy on specific humanitarian crises and on thematic humanitarian issues. It also supported advocacy by humanitarian coordinators and humanitarian country teams and at high-level events and donor conferences. Advocacy at all levels was shaped by country-level information gathered by OCHA and partners.

12. Within that context, and using that definition, the evaluation was aimed at answering the following main questions:

(a) **Relevance.** How closely aligned have OCHA advocacy efforts and specific messages been with its mandate and with specific advocacy needs at the global, regional and country levels?

(b) **Effectiveness.** To what extent has OCHA advocacy had its overall intended effect of developing knowledge and attitudes conducive to the goals of the Office and the goals of the wider humanitarian system, ultimately enhancing humanitarian action?

(c) **Efficiency.** How efficiently has OCHA managed its human and financial resources and other internal and external inputs into its advocacy work, to maximize the benefits of that work?

(d) **Cross-cutting issues.** To what extent has OCHA advocacy incorporated humanitarian principles and cross-cutting issues relating to gender and human rights?

Result A below covers relevance issues, results B and D cover efficiency issues and result C covers effectiveness and cross-cutting issues.

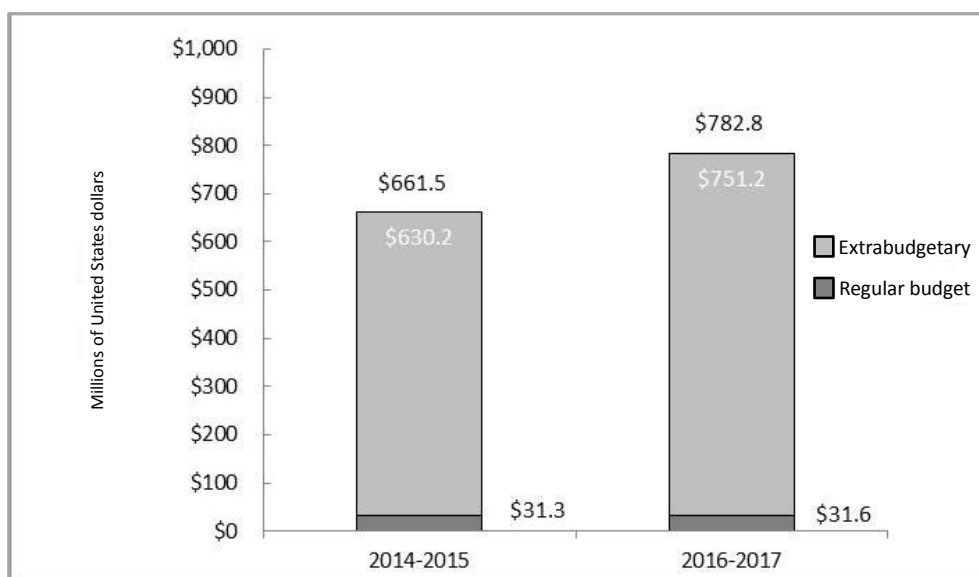
⁷ See <http://www.unocha.org/what-we-do/advocacy/overview>.

13. The evaluation was also aimed at identifying the key internal and external factors that have influenced the performance of OCHA in the area of advocacy and how effectively it has managed those factors.

Budget, offices and human resources

14. The OCHA budget is subsumed under part VI (human rights and humanitarian affairs) of the United Nations Secretariat programme budget. In 2016-2017, OCHA received 0.56 per cent of the total regular budget of the United Nations Secretariat (see [A/70/6](#) (Introduction), table 2). As indicated in figure II, the overall OCHA budget has grown, primarily through increased extrabudgetary resources, which account for approximately 95 to 96 per cent of its funding. While it was not possible to calculate the precise resources allocated by OCHA to advocacy, staff reported, in interviews and surveys, that advocacy-related activities occupy a sizeable proportion of their time, from 25 to 100 per cent.

Figure II
OCHA proposed programme budget, 2014-2015 and 2016-2017



Source: OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division compilation of budgetary data from [A/70/6](#) (Sect. 27) and [A/68/6](#) (Sect. 27).

15. OCHA maintains headquarters in New York and Geneva. It also comprises 6 regional offices, 29 country offices, 3 liaison offices and 20 humanitarian adviser teams.⁸ As noted in para. 11, staff at all of those levels, and in most of the offices reviewed, undertake various forms of advocacy.

16. Table 1 shows that in 2016, OCHA had 2,271 staff. In 2017, budget cuts led to the elimination of 218 posts.

⁸ OCHA presence map, October 2016. Humanitarian adviser teams comprise one or more advisers, who support countries that have no OCHA country office but are deemed to be at risk and therefore need a humanitarian presence.

Table 1
Distribution of OCHA staff, 2016

<i>Office location</i>	<i>Number of staff</i>	<i>Percentage of total</i>
Headquarters	528	23.2
Regional offices	191	8.4
Liaison offices	24	1.1
Field offices	1 528	67.3
Total	2 271	100.0

Source: OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division compilation of data from the OCHA Plan and Budget (2016), available from <http://www.unocha.org/node/212326>.

III. Methodology

17. The evaluation employed a mixed-method approach featuring the following data sources:

(a) **Interviews and focus group discussions at OCHA headquarters in New York and in Geneva:** 41 OCHA staff;

(b) **Desk-based interviews:** 12 humanitarian coordinators, 31 heads, deputy heads and key staff of regional and country offices and 17 humanitarian adviser teams;⁹

(c) **Case studies of field offices:** Interviews and focus groups of 123 OCHA staff, partners and stakeholders in seven offices;¹⁰

(d) **Bellwether (i.e., external thought leader) analysis:** Interviews with 18 reputable external (i.e., non-United Nations) humanitarian thought leaders;¹¹

(e) **Structured document reviews:** Creation of a database of all 1,002 public advocacy outputs (for example, statements, speeches and remarks, and press releases) known to have been published from April 2013 to October 2016 and media analytics of press coverage of OCHA from 2013 to 2016;

(f) **Surveys:** Web-based surveys of OCHA field staff;¹² a random sample of OCHA partners;¹³ and all representatives of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Emergency Directors Group.¹⁴

⁹ Of the 19 established at the time of the evaluation. In 2017, the number increased to 20.

¹⁰ African Union and Brussels liaison offices; regional offices for Southern and Eastern Africa and for West and Central Africa; Ethiopia, Mali and Somalia country offices. The OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division selected case studies, with inputs from OCHA, based on size, duration, budget, substantive focus and number of United Nations entities in the country.

¹¹ Bellwether interviewees were selected independently by the OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division and a humanitarian evaluation consultant, based on desk reviews and snowball sampling.

¹² 25.0 per cent response rate.

¹³ 17.3 per cent response rate.

¹⁴ 87.0 per cent response rate.

18. In 2015, OCHA commissioned a functional review to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of OCHA by ensuring that it had the optimal structure, resources and capacities to deliver on its mandate and commitments.¹⁵ The Functional Review did not aspire to evaluate OCHA performance, nor did it cover advocacy in depth.¹⁶ The OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division maintained liaison with the Functional Review team during the evaluation and thoroughly reviewed its report. Wherever appropriate, relevant conclusions are cited from the Functional Review which, although aimed at broader organizational issues, corroborate the Division's conclusions surrounding advocacy specifically.

19. The evaluation encountered four limitations: the inherent difficulty of measuring the effects of advocacy, particularly private advocacy; the lack of a comprehensive staff list; the limitation of the staff survey to field staff; and the low response rates for the partner and staff surveys. The Inspection and Evaluation Division addressed the first limitation by obtaining examples of key private advocacy efforts during interviews and focus groups and substantiating claims of the effects or non-effects of those efforts through documentary as well as perceptual evidence wherever possible, taking into account external constraints. It addressed the third limitation by triangulating field-level feedback with non-field staff interview data, and the final limitation by undertaking non-respondent bias analysis to ensure a sufficient level of representativeness of the population to allow the inclusion of the survey data in the present analysis. It was impossible to address the second limitation given that, by definition, it was unknown which staff and partner information was missing.

IV. Evaluation results

A. OCHA advocacy efforts were recognized as being aligned to the OCHA mandate and as adding value to humanitarian action while addressing a wide range of humanitarian crises and issues, although sustaining attention to lower-profile crises proved challenging

OCHA undertook a wide range of advocacy activities at all levels

20. Given that private advocacy interventions were largely undocumented and therefore difficult to measure or verify, most evidence in respect of such efforts came from anecdotal self-reports by OCHA staff at all levels; however, some accounts could be verified through documentary evidence, and multiple interviewees added to the credibility of those claims. In addition, OCHA conducted an extensive advocacy mapping exercise at the outset of the evaluation to demonstrate the extent of the advocacy efforts. By contrast, there were extensive data on public advocacy efforts, which were catalogued and assessed (see para. 17 (e) above).

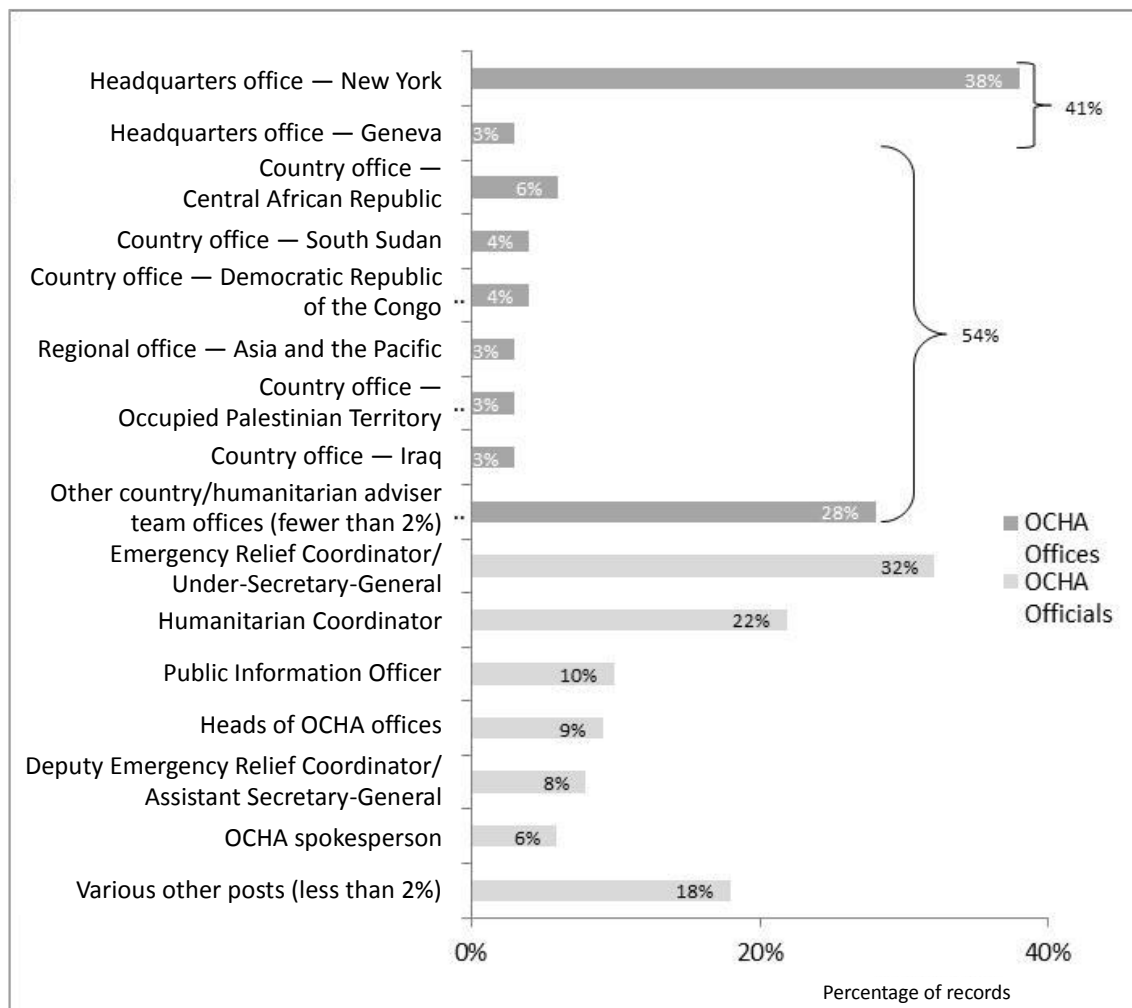
21. The many press releases and statements generated by OCHA were produced extensively across the Office. Figure III summarizing the distribution of known

¹⁵ Boston Consulting Group and MANNET, OCHA Functional Review: Final Report, 29 July 2016.

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 3 and 10.

public advocacy outputs and figure IV illustrating the types of advocacy releases per year corroborate the claim that advocacy was a significant, and OCHA-wide, endeavour.

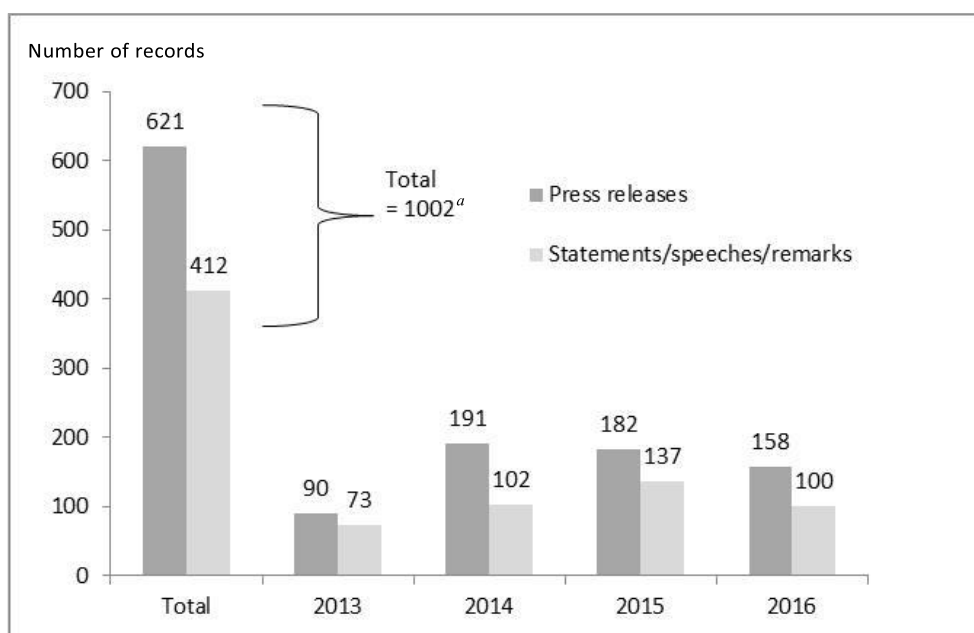
Figure III
Percentage of press releases and statements, by OCHA office and officials, 2013-2016



Source: OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division database of OCHA press releases and statements, 2013-2016.

Note: Base = 1,002 (all records); totals do not sum to 100 per cent due to rounding and to multiple responses being accepted.

Figure IV
Number and type of public advocacy press releases and statements, 2013-2016

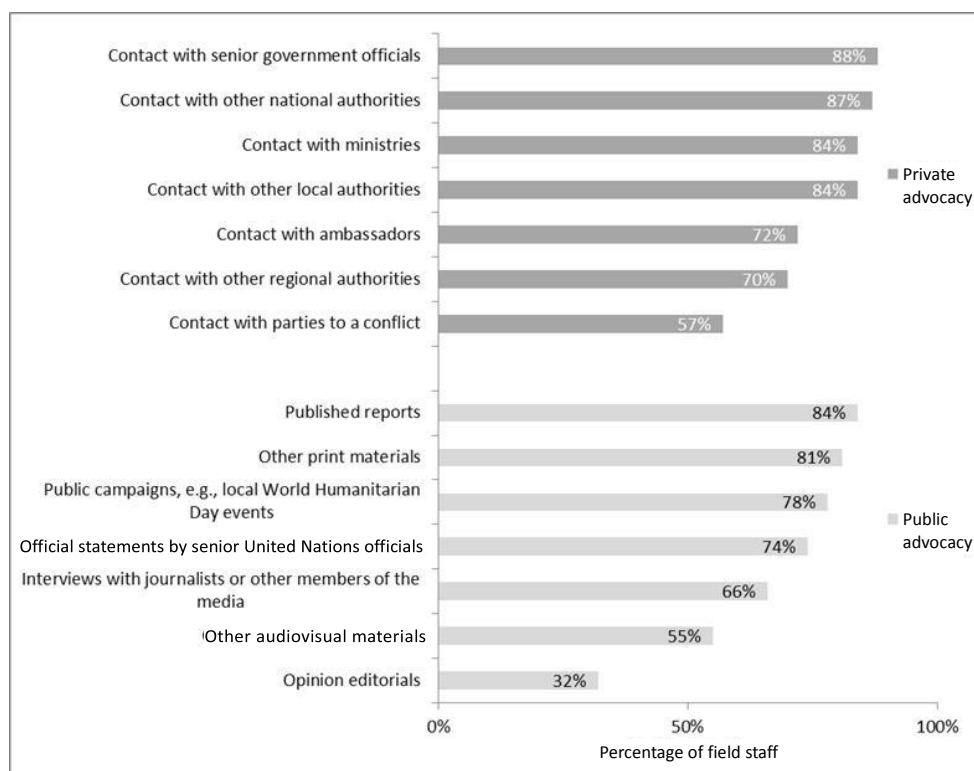


Source: OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division database of OCHA press releases and statements, 2013-2016.

^a While 1,002 records were coded, the chart does not sum to 1,002 owing to multiple categories applying to some records.

22. Advocacy activity was widespread, although private advocacy was likely more prevalent than public advocacy. One OCHA official at Headquarters summarized the perception of numerous OCHA interviewees: “For every public advocacy piece that is counted, there is several times that in private advocacy.” That claim is well-supported by interview data and case study analysis, with interviewed staff in all OCHA field offices, humanitarian adviser teams and headquarters locations providing concrete, often numerous, examples of private advocacy. Similarly, Figure V shows that among field staff alone, large majorities engaged in both public and private advocacy, with the most frequent activities being private.

Figure V
OCHA field staff self-reported public and private advocacy activities, 2013-2016



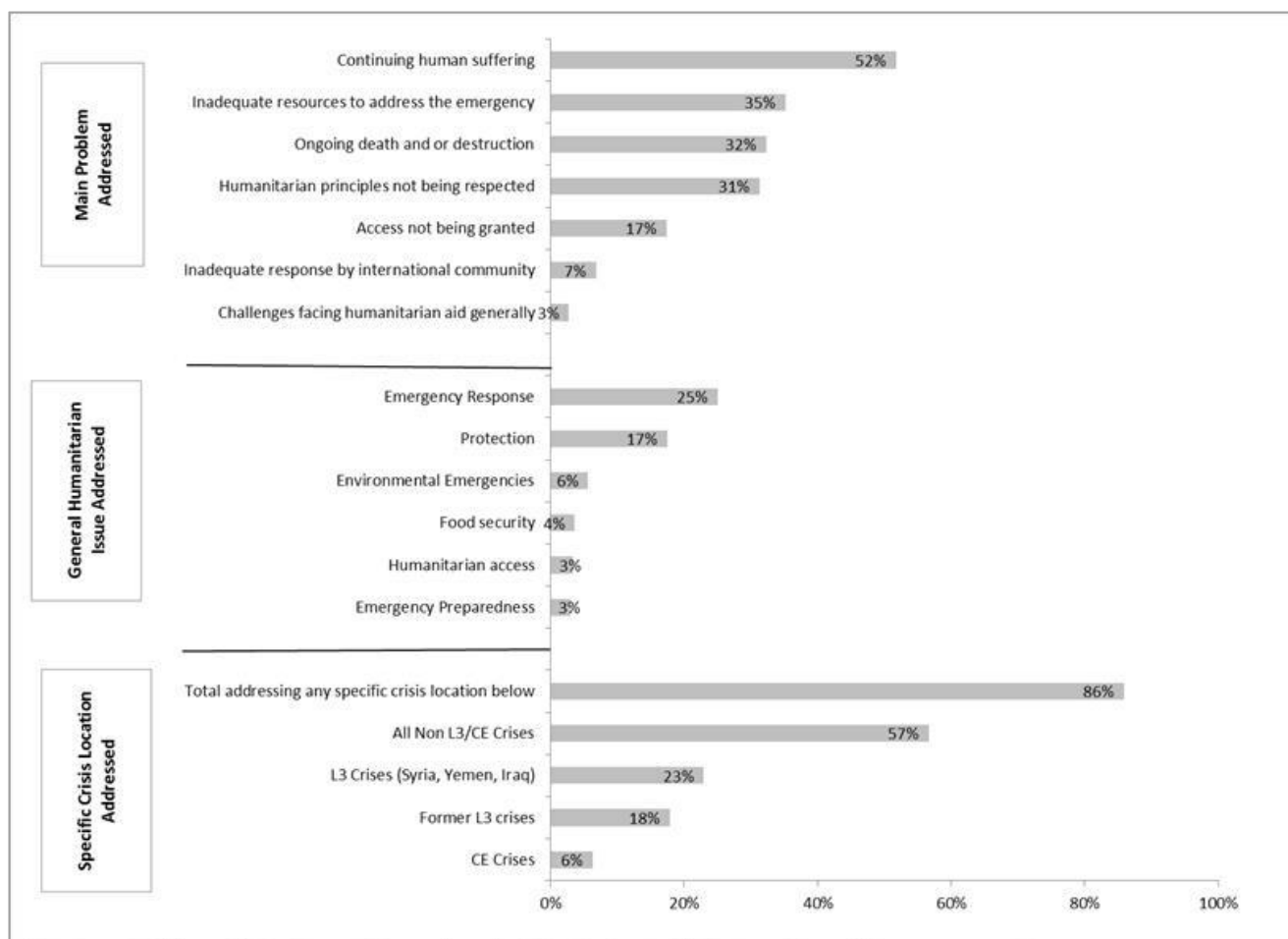
Source: OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division compilation of survey data.

23. This Office-wide advocacy effort entailed the allocation of significant time and resources (see paras. 9-11 above). Moreover, case studies and field office interviews suggested that advocacy was an integral component of the achievement of the broader objectives of these offices.

Advocacy addressed a wide range of humanitarian crises and issues

24. Interviews, desk reviews and media search data indicate that both public and private advocacy efforts addressed a wide range of humanitarian crises and issues. Among public advocacy efforts, 86 per cent addressed specific humanitarian crises, with level 3 emergencies receiving more attention than other crises. Figure VI identifies the main categories of public advocacy.

Figure VI
Main problems, issues and crises addressed by OCHA press releases and statements, 2013-2016



Source: OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division database of OCHA press releases and statements.

Notes: Base = 1,002 (all records); figure presents top mentions only; totals do not sum to 100 due to rounding and to multiple responses being accepted; Former L3 = former Inter-Agency Standing Committee level 3 emergency during 2013-2016.

Abbreviations: CE, corporate emergency; L3, Inter-Agency Standing Committee level 3 emergency.

Alignment of advocacy to OCHA mandate and value-add of OCHA advocacy were widely recognized

25. The structural arrangements, normative framework and investment of time and resources to undertake or support advocacy speak to the close alignment with this core aspect of the OCHA mandate. Internal and external stakeholders recognized the importance and appropriateness of the advocacy aspect of the OCHA mandate, which they viewed as a “public good” for the wider humanitarian system in addition to aiding OCHA. Although it did not explore advocacy in depth, the 2016 Functional Review echoed that sentiment.¹⁷

¹⁷ See p. 4.

26. External interviewees acknowledged that OCHA occupied a unique advocacy niche, specifically in the following ways:

(a) **Systems-level focus.** Whereas United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were focused on specific populations or issues in humanitarian crises, OCHA, uniquely, collected and analysed information at a holistic, systems-level and used it to advocate on behalf of the humanitarian system, while also sharing the information with the other United Nations agencies and NGOs for use in their own advocacy and programmatic work;

(b) **Unbiased motivation.** Given that OCHA is not an operational entity, its information products (for example, maps, reports, analyses) were viewed as unbiased, which: (i) enabled the humanitarian community, and those to whom they advocate, to consistently use shared information; and (ii) safeguarded the relationships of operational actors with host Governments, given that OCHA had no direct operations to risk;

(c) **High-level access.** The field presence of OCHA staff was viewed as helping OCHA to build and sustain relationships with host country officials, NGOs, United Nations agencies, diplomatic staff and parties to conflict,¹⁸ and its access to senior levels of Member States and the Security Council, through the Office of the Under-Secretary-General, was viewed as a valuable channel for conveying vital information on shared humanitarian concerns.

27. Accordingly, partners reported using OCHA information products for advocacy and other purposes. Evidence from interviews and case studies suggested that OCHA products and analyses were well-used and its briefings well-attended by the humanitarian and diplomatic communities. Humanitarian coordinators frequently indicated that their advocacy efforts were well-supported by OCHA information products, for example, in regional outlooks, country updates and maps of humanitarian needs.¹⁹ The Functional Review similarly concluded that OCHA information products were perceived as useful.²⁰

Advocacy efforts were deemed relevant, notwithstanding challenges in sustaining attention to protracted crises

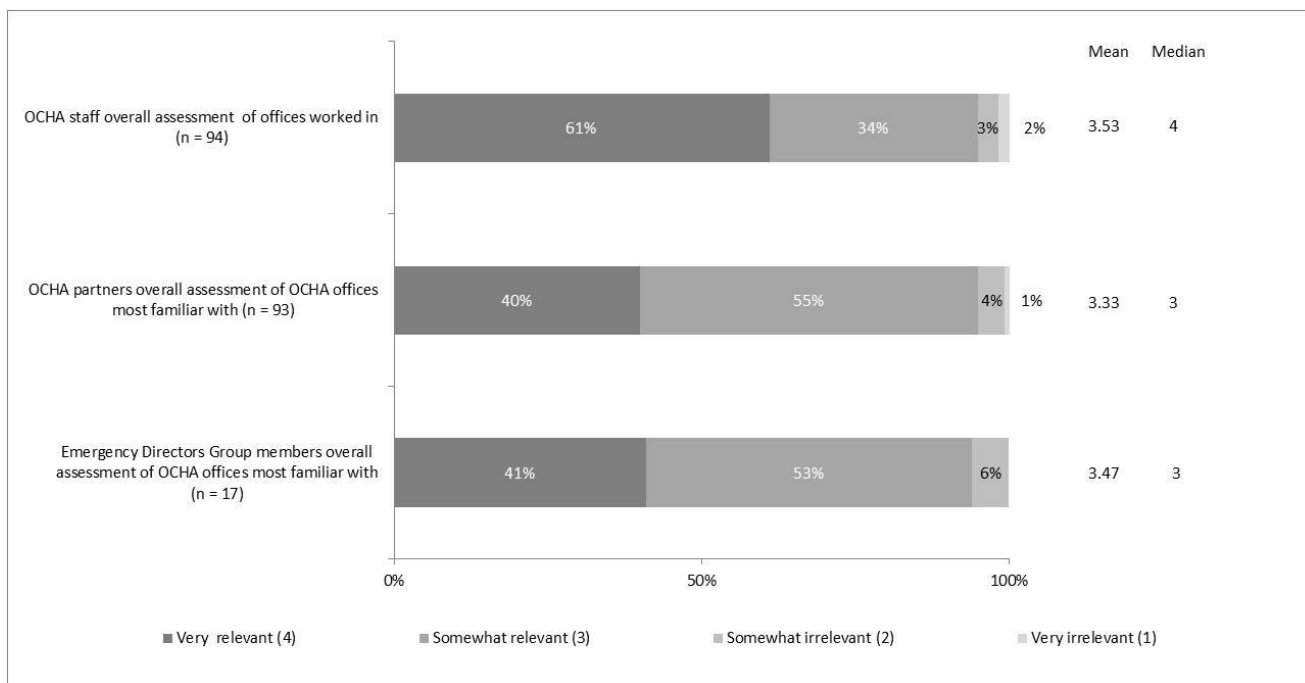
28. All groups perceived OCHA advocacy on humanitarian issues and on specific crises as relevant. Partners in all case study locations, interviewees from OCHA offices and external stakeholders largely considered OCHA to be providing timely and relevant advocacy on key humanitarian issues (for example, funding for emergencies, access, protection of aid workers and respect for international humanitarian law and norms). Specific examples included work to restore humanitarian access in Jordan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, using common data on the blockade in Gaza and denouncing the targeting of aid workers in the Central African Republic. However, OCHA partner and Emergency Directors Group survey respondents were more likely than field staff to consider OCHA advocacy as “somewhat” rather than “very” relevant (see figure VII).

¹⁸ Field presence is not a source of value-add unique to OCHA, given that many other entities have a field presence.

¹⁹ Others included the Lake Chad Basin: Crisis Overview; Sahel: A Call for Humanitarian Aid; Mali Access/Security Plan; and El Niño material used in Ethiopia, Fiji and elsewhere.

²⁰ See p. 21.

Figure VII
Field staff and partner assessments of the relevance of OCHA advocacy, 2013-2016



Source: OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division surveys of OCHA staff, partners and Emergency Directors Group members.

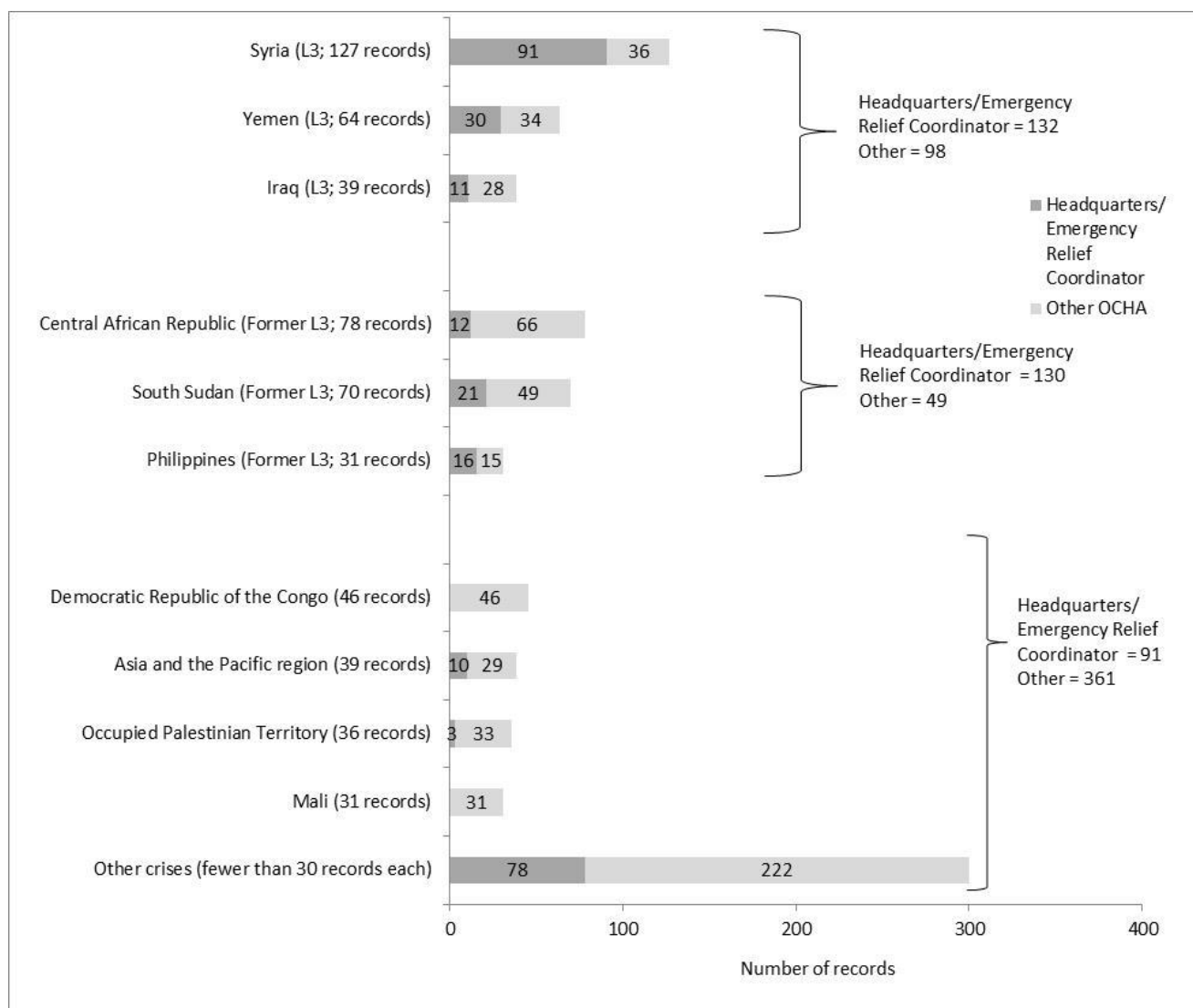
29. One dimension of relevance that was frequently highlighted was the delicate balance that OCHA often aimed to strike in linking the public and private aspects of its advocacy work towards a given goal. In that respect, interviewees painted a mixed picture. On the one hand, they frequently cited the complementarity that OCHA staff achieved between the two types of advocacy, carefully thinking through which type would work best in a given country or situational context and when to use the other. Private advocacy, built on relationships developed between OCHA and key stakeholders, including senior governmental officials, was noted as the preferable option in most cases, given that it was likely to preserve the trust between OCHA and those actors.

30. On the other hand, stakeholders highlighted instances where OCHA had made trade-offs in its public and private advocacy by softening or withholding public advocacy messages more than some partners would have liked. In two case studies, the political context prompted OCHA to carefully choose the issues on which it would advocate to the Government. OCHA field staff and humanitarian adviser teams described a constant tension in determining how far they should advocate publicly versus what the humanitarian community would like them to say in public. They explained that OCHA was as bold as it could be in public in most cases, adding that more forceful public messaging risked alienating OCHA, and its partners, from the host Government, with potentially harmful consequences for affected populations. In other scenarios, OCHA undertook forceful private advocacy to compensate for lighter-touch public advocacy, which those involved claimed

went largely unseen by the rest of the humanitarian community. OCHA field interviewees and external experts suggested that, in some of those cases, Headquarters could undertake more forceful public and private advocacy on specific field-level issues without jeopardizing the working relationships in the host country.

31. Interviewees cited few significant gaps in coverage: they generally viewed OCHA as having advocated on the crises and issues where its messaging was most needed. That was consistent with the positive but mixed overall appraisal of relevance highlighted earlier. However, one criticism centred on the disproportionate allocation of OCHA attention and resources to the major crises at hand. As shown in figure VIII, Headquarters and Emergency Relief Coordinator press releases and statements focused heavily on the Syrian Arab Republic and other level 3 emergencies. Nearly all interviewees conceded that that focus was justifiable, given the seriousness of the crises. However, they also noted that the focus was at odds with the Office's role of bringing attention to all salient crises — both extant “forgotten” crises and emerging crises not sufficiently salient to key stakeholders.

Figure VIII
Public advocacy outputs, OCHA headquarters and Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator and rest of OCHA, top 10 crises, 2013-2016



Source: OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division database of OCHA press releases and statements.

Note: L3 = Inter-agency Standing Committee level 3 emergency; Former L3 = former Inter-agency Standing Committee level 3 emergency during 2013-2016.

32. A minority of staff interviewees, as well as external thought leaders and members of the Emergency Directors Group, suggested discontent over a perceived lack of public advocacy for forgotten crises, claiming that OCHA did not appear to have a systematic approach to sustaining public or donor interest in such crises. The 2015 OCHA Corporate Advocacy Strategy does not include this issue area among its goals. Some staff were aware of the issue and indicated that future efforts would address the gap. A handful of concrete examples of OCHA publicly drawing

attention to forgotten crises did, however, emerge in the present evaluation. For example, in the 2016 OCHA Year in Review, it is stated that in order to draw attention to the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin, OCHA organized an event during the General Assembly that resulted in \$163 million in pledges from world leaders.²¹ The appointments of the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Sahel and the Special Envoys of the Secretary-General on El Niño and Climate were noted as positive developments that promised to bring attention to those crises. The country-based pooled funds and the Central Emergency Response Fund have also sought to draw and sustain attention to forgotten crises.

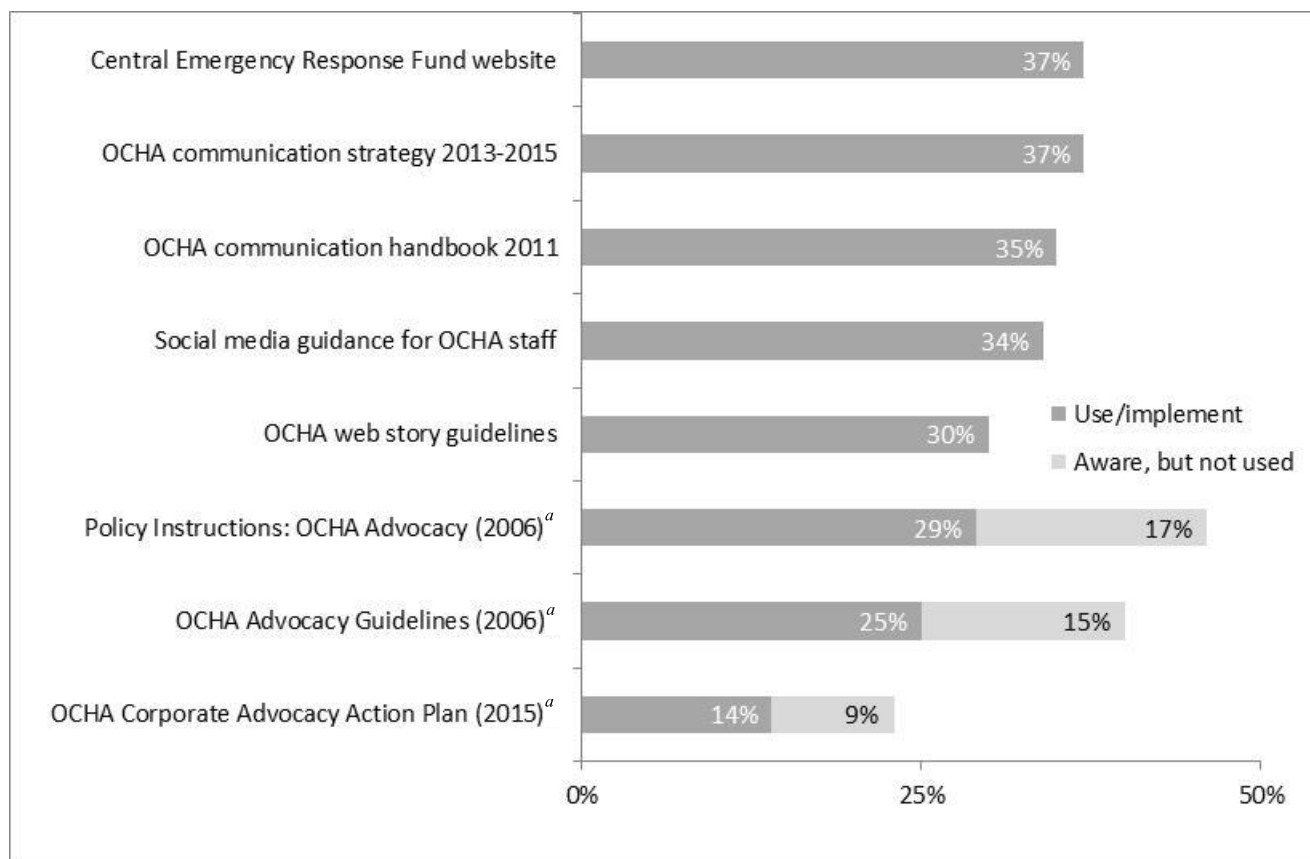
B. Corporate policy, strategy and guidance documents existed to help OCHA to carry out its advocacy mandate, but awareness and use of those documents were low, contributing in part to uncoordinated advocacy efforts within and across levels of the Office

Awareness and use of corporate policy, strategy and guidance documents were low

33. OCHA headquarters developed numerous corporate documents to help to carry out its advocacy work (see para. 9 above). However, awareness and use of these seminal documents were low at all levels of the Office. When probed in interviews, very few staff involved in advocacy-related work at any level of OCHA reported knowing about, much less relying on, these sources for guidance. Figure IX summarizes this low awareness — and even lower use — of key advocacy-related documents among field staff.

²¹ See “OCHA 2016 Year in Review”, January 2017, available from http://www.unocha.org/2016_year_in_review/?utm_source=OCHA+Global+Product+List&utm_campaign=e3ee92c035-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2016_12_23&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fdc5b4f7e9-e3ee92c035-320330489#top.

Figure IX
Percentage of OCHA field staff involved in advocacy reporting awareness and use of advocacy guidance



Source: OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division compilation of OCHA staff survey data.

Note: Base = 82 (all staff respondents).

^a Asked about awareness and use.

34. Some of the guidance was either dated (for example, the 2006 Policy Instruction and Advocacy Guidelines) or not sufficiently rolled out throughout the Office.²² In November 2016, the Coordination and Response Division disseminated guidance to the field (i.e., humanitarian country team advocacy strategies, October 2016), but staff interviewees, including those with significant advocacy roles, were largely unaware of even that recent guidance. Asked to pinpoint why awareness and use might be low, numerous interviewees cited ineffective roll-out at Headquarters, where they raised concerns about a lack of internal organizational cohesion among the divisions, and their leadership, in managing the advocacy function.

35. Beyond Headquarters, staff cited the lack of uniform distribution of corporate guidance by OCHA heads of office. The Functional Review echoed that feedback,

²² Since the issuance of the 2006 Policy Instruction and Advocacy Guidelines, significant changes have occurred in the humanitarian system in which OCHA plays a leading role, in the funding environment and in technology.

citing management-level issues as a wider challenge²³. Not surprisingly, while the humanitarian response plan and the humanitarian needs overview were used to varying degrees to help to guide advocacy, there was little evidence of specific advocacy strategies (outside of communication plans) within field offices. In fact, a recent OCHA analysis indicated that only 5 out of 29 country offices were implementing humanitarian-endorsed advocacy strategies.²⁴ Similarly, humanitarian adviser teams reported not working with specific advocacy strategies.

OCHA advocacy efforts were characterized by insufficient internal coordination

36. Advocacy is not a stand-alone function, but rather one intended to reinforce other areas of the OCHA mandate. OCHA, as an entity with a coordination mandate, needed to connect the disparate strands of advocacy being undertaken at a given time — and within and across levels of the entity, the disparate advocacy efforts — in a cohesive, coherent and complementary manner. The need for this coordinated approach was further underlined by the continuing resource constraints under which OCHA operated: in the face of scarcity, it is vital that OCHA allocate its resources judiciously to avoid inefficiency (see General Assembly resolution [69/264](#)). Feedback at all levels suggested that there was no formal mechanism in place to coordinate those disparate advocacy efforts.

37. The lack of a formal coordination mechanism characterized the relationship among the various levels of OCHA (i.e., vertical coordination), as well as within individual levels (i.e., horizontal coordination). Feedback on each of those levels centred on the following issues:

(a) **Vertical coordination.** These mechanisms relied on some direct reporting requirements between field offices and desk offices at OCHA, but were based mainly on the strength of personal relationships between individuals;

(b) **Horizontal coordination.** Interviewees were concerned about a lack of internal coordination at Headquarters, which they believed had hindered the ability to amplify their messages from country offices.

38. Advocacy is the only one of the five mandated functions of OCHA that lacks a specific framework around which to convene the entity in pursuit of shared corporate advocacy objectives: the broad advocacy objectives it will pursue during a given strategic planning cycle (both in its own right and in support of the four other mandated functions), how the various divisions and levels of the entity will work together towards those goals, which operational units will be accountable for specific aspects of implementation, and how OCHA will know whether it has achieved its advocacy objectives quantitatively and qualitatively throughout the implementation period. Headquarters interviewees referred to several efforts to create advocacy strategies that had been hampered by disagreement over which organizational unit should lead the effort, the need for extensive internal consultation and changing priorities of senior managers. While some internal interviewees referenced senior management committees that coordinate OCHA advocacy, there was no clear authority on advocacy.

²³ See pages 6 and 40.

²⁴ See OCHA, Information Product Overview Report Cycle 9, 2015, p. 8.

39. External interviewees and surveyed Emergency Directors Group members frequently suggested a need for a forum where OCHA could discuss and coordinate its advocacy efforts across the Office, or at least on specific issues. Those stakeholders, along with OCHA staff, noted significant organizational silos between branches at Headquarters as the main impediment to connecting efforts. The Functional Review corroborated those observations, suggesting that they might be emblematic of a broader need for strengthened coordination, including a clearer delineation of roles and responsibilities in other areas of the Office's work.²⁵ It also concluded that the OCHA management model was in need of restructuring to make the entity more efficient and effective, noting that it was lacking key components and interconnections and the leadership team did not work well together.²⁶

Demand existed for enhanced strategic direction under the leadership of Headquarters

40. A small minority of senior-level Headquarters interviewees expressed scepticism that a more formalized approach to guidance and internal coordination would strengthen the advocacy efforts of OCHA. Those stakeholders pointed to the ongoing success of OCHA advocacy (see paras. 47-48 below), despite no formal strategic direction from Headquarters, as an indication that its relatively minimalist approach was fit for purpose. In addition, they claimed that a more formal framework of guidance and coordination would introduce an unnecessary — and heavy — layer of bureaucracy that might further overburden staff and undermine the advocacy effort. That scepticism persisted notwithstanding countervailing evidence. For example, OCHA continued to maintain and to produce related policy, strategy and guidance documents up until 2016; advocacy remained the only one of the five mandated functions deliberately lacking the aforementioned framework, with no clear or explicit rationale for being the exception to the rule; the Functional Review highlighted insufficient internal coordination as a key hindrance to organizational performance (see paras. 49 and 53 below); and ongoing resource constraints underline the need for OCHA, like any entity facing such constraints, to be as prudent and deliberate as possible in allocating its limited human and financial resources (see para. 36 above).

41. Feedback from others involved in advocacy presented a more amenable perspective, indicating that enhanced strategic direction, both in the form of strengthened coordination and clearer guidance, might be welcomed. External and internal stakeholders alike observed many opportunities to improve coordination. Examples include:

- The Policy Development and Studies Branch does not have enough direct access to field offices, which has led to the observation from the field that policy analyses are not always sufficiently linked to field issues
- Input from Central Emergency Response Fund and country-based pooling fund managers not always sought on broader advocacy efforts through which those funds could be promoted

²⁵ See Functional Review of OCHA, p. 40.

²⁶ See *ibid.*, p. 6

- Field office heads have not been sufficiently updated on Emergency Management Committee meeting decisions.

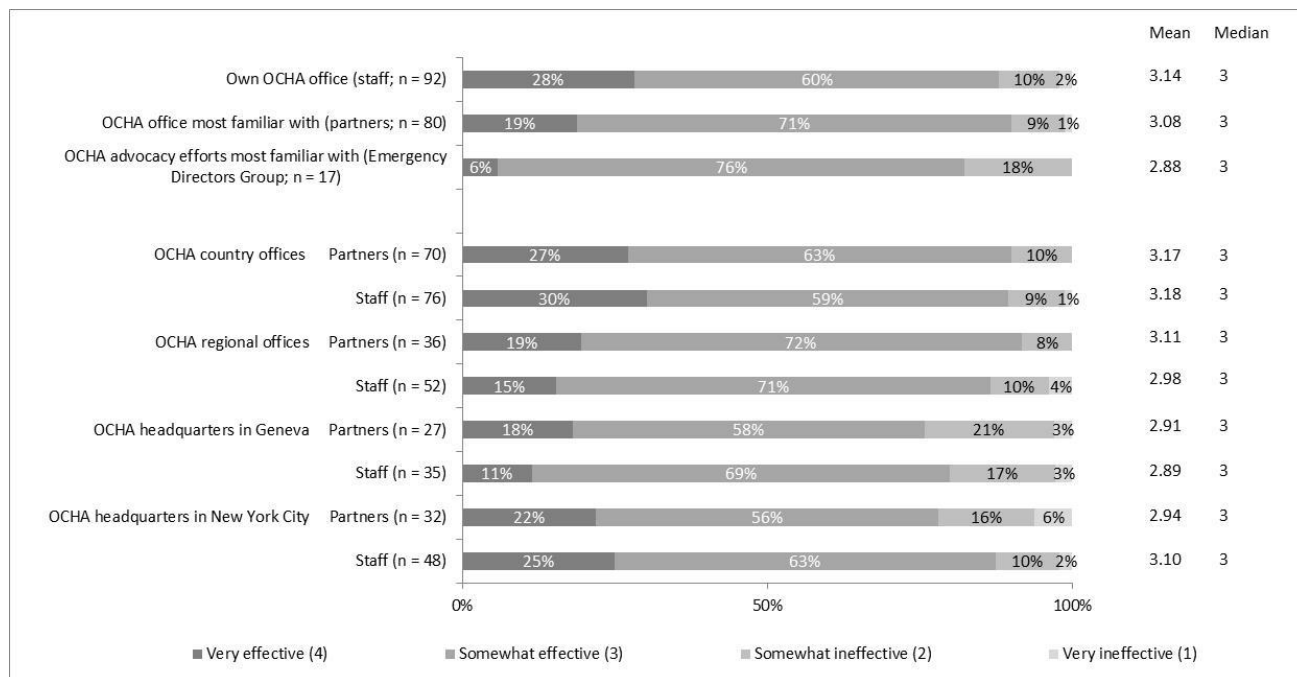
42. OCHA advocacy efforts were supported by a combination of experienced staff and strong relationships within the Office. There was a risk that where relationships were less formalized and as staff changed roles, the interconnectedness of advocacy efforts across OCHA could break down.

43. Similarly, with regard to guidance, those involved in advocacy suggested that a policy, strategy, guidance and capacity development were still needed. Field staff interviewees, humanitarian adviser teams and humanitarian coordinators, including those whose roles were marked by a high level of engagement in advocacy, described the core skills required to be a successful advocate. Such core skills, they asserted, were not necessarily those sought or cultivated in the standard Humanitarian Affairs Officer profile under which most staff were classified. Such specialized skills included persuasive and customized writing, diplomacy, negotiation and relationship-building, often targeted to senior-level actors. Accordingly, they claimed that while such skills were partially self-taught, some also needed to be developed through greater capacity-building among key staff expected to successfully advocate. OCHA field interviewees and case studies indicated very little guidance in that area. However, when Headquarters advocacy support was requested, it was generally provided, considered useful and appreciated.

C. There was some evidence that specific OCHA advocacy efforts positively influenced knowledge, awareness and decision-making

44. Figure X shows that the majority of OCHA field staff, partners and Emergency Directors Group members surveyed perceived OCHA advocacy efforts at all levels to be relatively effective. That said, these assessments of the overall advocacy effect and those of specific offices were much more likely to be moderate than strong.

Figure X
Perceived effectiveness of OCHA offices by staff, partners and Emergency Directors Group members, 2013-2016



Source: OCHA staff, partner and Emergency Directors Group surveys.

45. As noted previously, measuring the effectiveness of OCHA specific advocacy efforts, especially those of private advocacy, is inherently difficult. Low awareness and use of existing strategies and policies, coupled with the uncoordinated approach to implementation, rendered such measurement even more difficult. Without a clear, consolidated and documented overview of who had undertaken which advocacy efforts on a given humanitarian crisis or issue at a given time, the results of such actions could not be monitored or measured. The Strategic Planning, Evaluation and Guidance Section of the Office planned to review OCHA advocacy in 2015, but that review was cancelled.

46. Despite this measurement gap, indicative examples of the effects of OCHA advocacy were culled, and the causal linkages between OCHA advocacy and its effects verified, through a combination of stakeholder interviews and, wherever possible, documentary evidence. This analysis yielded examples of effective advocacy that contributed to the enhancement of humanitarian action as well as examples of mixed results where external and internal factors had hampered the full attainment of targeted results.

47. Examples of OCHA advocacy positively enhancing knowledge, awareness and decisions clustered around two main areas:

(a) **Influencing normative discussion and debate on humanitarian issues.** OCHA public and private efforts to incorporate normative standards into key

intergovernmental policies and legislation yielded positive results in several instances. Examples include the African Union Humanitarian Policy Framework; the European Union Trust Fund for Africa and the ongoing work supporting the European Commission for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection on humanitarian policy; and the memorandum of understanding between the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and OCHA on cooperation on humanitarian affairs issues;

(b) **Negotiating humanitarian access with key actors.** Case studies and field interviews provided examples of effective OCHA-led advocacy approaches to negotiate, maintain and monitor humanitarian access. In particular, the Mali country office access strategy and plan were widely viewed as key to facilitating humanitarian access. Humanitarian access advocacy was similarly widely viewed as having been successful in Ethiopia, Somalia and the Sudan. Efforts in the Syrian Arab Republic contributed to the Security Council resolution on humanitarian access in that country (see para. 48 (b) below).

48. Examples of OCHA advocacy having mixed results in enhancing knowledge, awareness and decisions clustered around four main areas:

(a) **Role of the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator as chief advocate in boldly speaking out on more crises (see ST/SGB/1999/8, sect. 3.2 (e)).** Partners, Emergency Directors Group members,²⁷ and external thought leaders, as well as the Functional Review,²⁸ pointed to the pivotal role of the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator in enabling OCHA and the wider humanitarian system to achieve their goals. That role was seen as effective when a strong stance was taken on humanitarian crises, international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles, for example, attacks on aid workers in South Sudan and violations of international humanitarian law in the Syrian Arab Republic. However, those efforts were viewed as lacking in some instances. For example, external thought leaders noted the need for a stronger stance by OCHA, given the continuing erosion of respect for international humanitarian law, concerns in respect of the protection of civilians, and continuing access challenges in some countries. Given the role and stature of the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator as chief advocate, those efforts were invariably received clearly (if not always positively) by target audiences, including Member States. This perception is consistent with the admonition by stakeholders that OCHA should speak up more boldly, not just on the most urgent crises, but also on “forgotten” crises (see paras. 31-32 above);

(b) **Informing Security Council deliberations.** The access of OCHA to the Security Council was widely viewed as critical to informing deliberations and decisions at the highest levels of the humanitarian system. As a result of briefings by the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator from 2013 to 2016, for example, on South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq and Yemen, Council resolutions were adopted on those crises, notably resolution [2165 \(2014\)](#) on the Syrian Arab Republic. The Functional Review,²⁹ the evaluation of the OCHA

²⁷ A total of 53 per cent of respondents noted that there had been missed opportunities with respect to assuming a stronger voice in advocacy efforts.

²⁸ See pp. 17 and 24.

²⁹ See pp. 19 and 58.

response to the Syrian crisis³⁰ and external thought leaders concurred that OCHA advocacy had contributed significantly to that resolution, even if humanitarian access remained a challenge. In addition, OCHA advocated on such cross-cutting issues as the protection of civilians and the safety of aid workers. OCHA repeatedly briefed the informal protection of civilians expert group and the Council on protection of civilian issues. External thought leaders characterized that advocacy as extremely important, noting that OCHA advocacy informed biannual discussion on the subject. OCHA also advocated on the safety and security of humanitarian aid workers,³¹ with General Assembly resolutions 68/101, 68/102 and 71/129 and Council resolutions 1502 (2003) and 2175 (2014) being adopted on that issue. Emergency Directors Group members noted that such efforts were critical. Owing to political factors outside the control of OCHA, however, the resulting actions following those resolutions did not always lead to the desired outcomes;

(c) **Obtaining financing to meet the full scale of humanitarian needs.** Cognizant of growing humanitarian need and funding requirements, OCHA continued to advocate for adequate financing, despite widely acknowledged donor fatigue. Interviewees largely viewed those efforts as somewhat effective, given that funding requirements had not been fully met. Emergency Directors Group members viewed OCHA advocacy for resource mobilization as either very effective (28.6 per cent) or somewhat effective (71.4 per cent). External thought leaders also saw OCHA advocacy as effective in advancing changes in the humanitarian financing architecture, such as the country-based pooled funds and the Central Emergency Response Fund;

(d) **World Humanitarian Summit.** Various stakeholder groups held mixed views on the effectiveness of OCHA advocacy on this touchstone event. Field-based staff, partners and stakeholders perceived the process leading up to the Summit, including the consultation process and summative reports, as well as the Summit itself, to have been a useful and successful advocacy effort, given that it focused on critical humanitarian issues. Those farther away from the field largely viewed the Summit as less successful, given that the purpose of the post-Summit consultations seemingly shifted and follow-up has been slow, with less tangible outcomes compared with the pre-Summit consultative process and related advocacy. One key outcome touted as a major success of the event, the “Grand Bargain” (i.e., an agreed series of reforms to humanitarian financing), was the result of negotiations launched prior to the Summit; moreover, its ramifications, although not insignificant, were not universally viewed by internal or external interviewees as the highest-level ambition that the Summit could have achieved.³²

³⁰ Available from https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/OCHA%20Syria%20Evaluation%20Report_FINAL.pdf.

³¹ See <https://aidworkersecurity.org/incidents/report/summary>. The highest number of incidents since 2005 occurred in 2013 (265); in 2014, there were 190 and in 2015, there were 148.

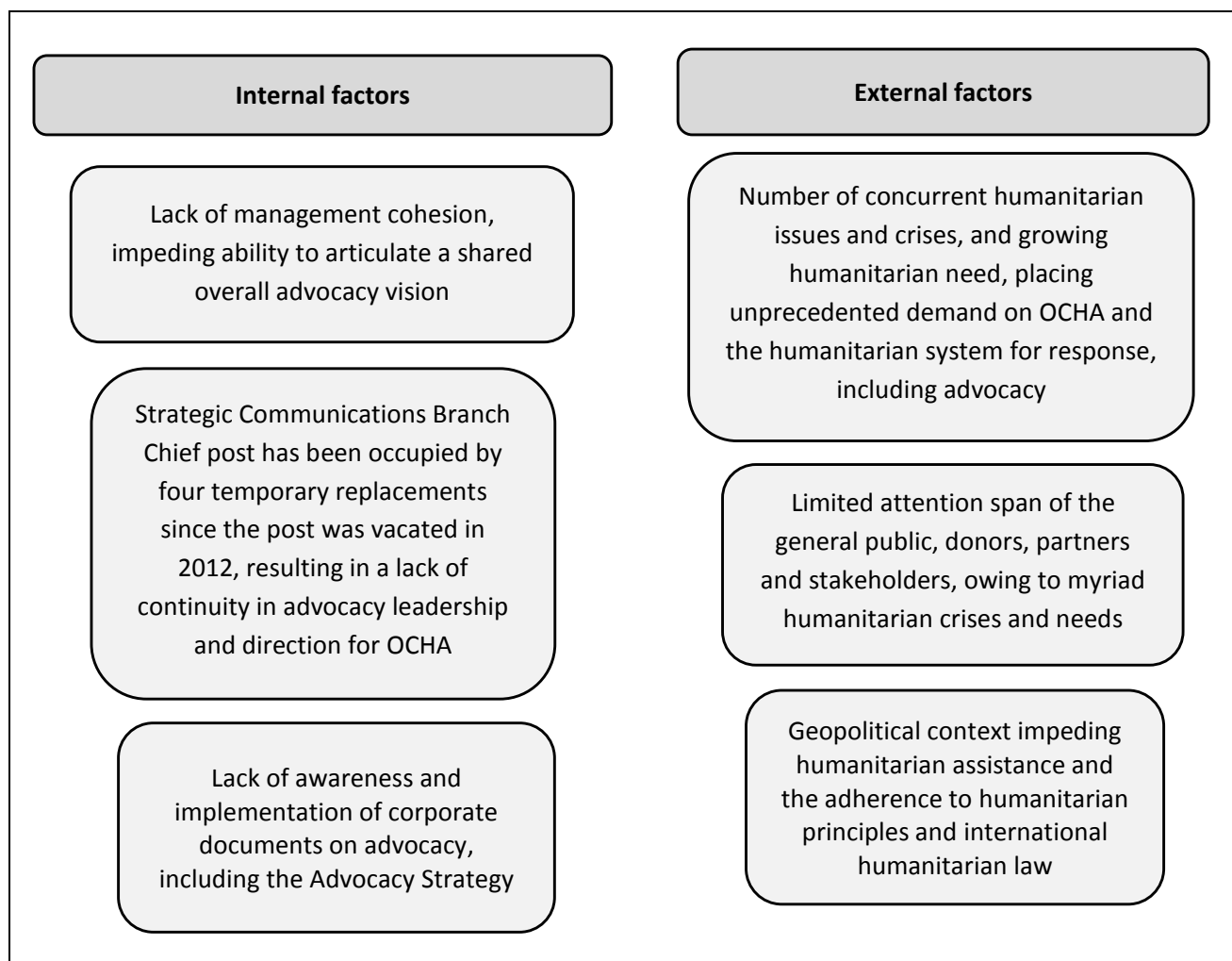
³² *Is the Grand Bargain a big deal?* IRIN News, 24 May 2016. Available from <http://www.irinnews.org/analysis/2016/05/24/grand-bargain-big-deal>.

Numerous factors influenced advocacy outcomes, and the ability to address them was limited, owing to a lack of overarching planning

49. Across all data sources, the effectiveness of OCHA advocacy efforts was perceived to have been affected by numerous factors internal and external to OCHA, as summarized in figure XI below.

Figure XI

Key factors influencing the advocacy effectiveness of OCHA



Source: OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division compilation of interview and open-ended survey responses, desk reviews and case studies.

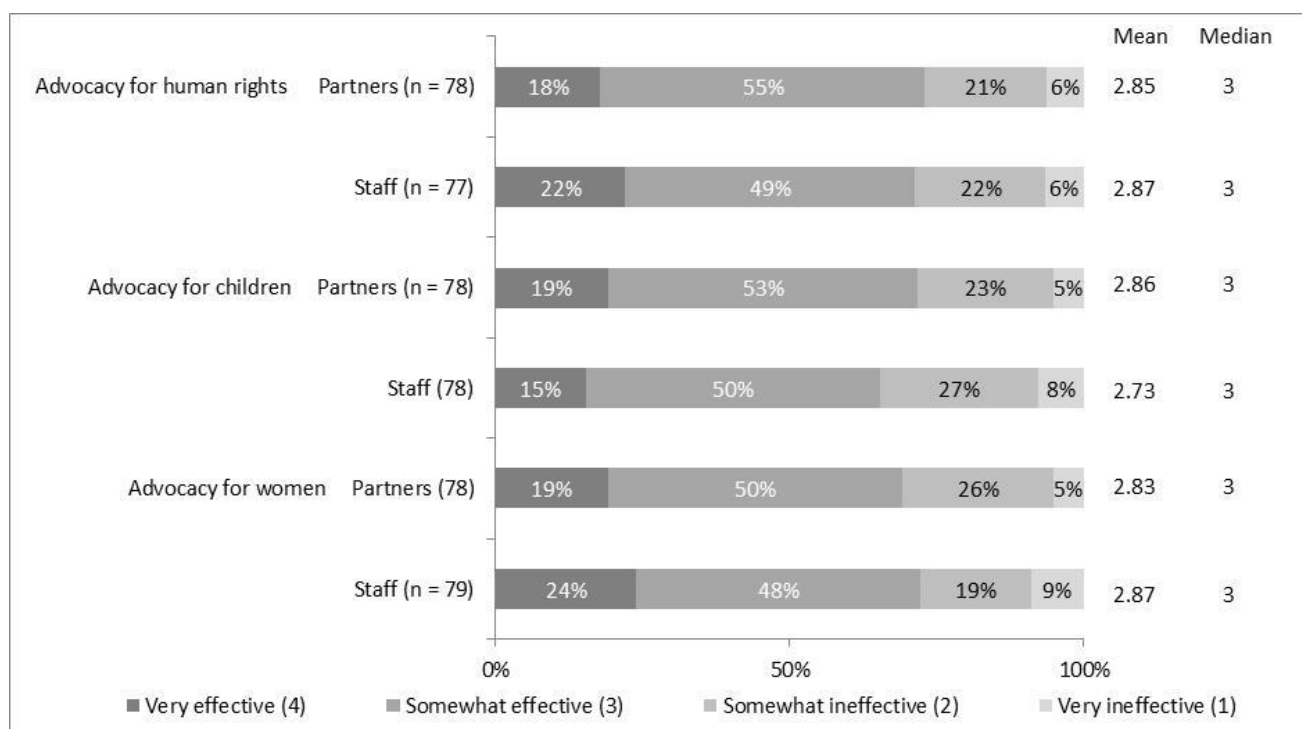
50. OCHA has the most direct control over internal factors given that it is able to plan and change accordingly, to mitigate their impact. Conversely, OCHA has little control over external factors but planning aids in mitigating their impact.

OCHA incorporated humanitarian principles and cross-cutting messaging to varying degrees in its advocacy

51. Among public advocacy efforts, children and gender issues received the most attention. A review of advocacy outputs showed those issues to have been the most frequently noted in public advocacy outputs. Interviewees in field offices and at Headquarters suggested that the incorporation of children's issues was relatively straightforward, but that gender and other issues depended on the support provided to the OCHA office. For example, interviews and case studies suggested that offices with a gender adviser, who could analyse data from that angle and craft appropriate advocacy messages, tended to be more successful in addressing gender issues. External interviewees generally believed OCHA to have successfully incorporated cross-cutting issues when it was asked specifically to do so. Figure XII indicates that survey respondents corroborated those generally positive views.

Figure XII

Partner and staff perceptions of OCHA integrating cross-cutting issues in advocacy, 2013-2016



Source: OCHA staff, partner and Emergency Directors Group surveys.

D. While OCHA has dedicated resources to the advocacy function, it has not efficiently harnessed those resources to maximize results

52. An assessment of how OCHA has managed the many internal resources involved in advocacy at all levels (see paras. 11 and 20-21) revealed a mixed picture. On the one hand, OCHA dedicated resources to certain aspects of advocacy:

at Headquarters, the Strategic Communications Branch was vested with overall responsibility for public advocacy, and in field offices, Public Information Officers led public advocacy efforts and supported private advocacy efforts. On the other hand, the lack of vertical and horizontal coordination, under the leadership of the chief advocate, constituted an important source of inefficiency, as did the investment in developing policies, strategies and guidance that were not sufficiently rolled out, known or used (see paras. 9 and 34). At both levels, efficiency gaps extended beyond that overarching lack of coordination.

53. At Headquarters, a key senior-level post, Chief of the Strategic Communications Branch, has been occupied by four temporary replacements since the post was vacated in 2012; the recruitment process to fill the post has not yet been completed. Key internal and external interviewees highlighted that the vacancy has resulted in a lack of continuity of leadership in this key advocacy role. The gap could account in part for the insufficient strategic direction on advocacy or in the specific aspects for which the Branch is directly responsible.

54. At the country level, there were 48 Public Information Officers at varying staff levels in all but eight OCHA field presence offices in 2016.³³ In offices without Public Information Officers, public information responsibilities may be undertaken by other OCHA staff. Public Information Officers were viewed by OCHA and partners as valuable resources for supporting advocacy. OCHA staff and partners in the case studies outlined advocacy examples, verifiable by tangible advocacy outputs, that Public Information Officers had led or supported for OCHA and humanitarian adviser teams. However, the Public Information Officers were not linked formally to the Strategic Communications Branch, given that field offices reported to the Coordination and Response Division. Any requests by Public Information Officers for public information support, guidance or direction were made on an ad hoc basis, rather than being structurally linked to the Strategic Communications Branch as the main Headquarters advocacy link let alone to a wider strategy (see paras. 32-43 above).

55. Despite the lack of overall advocacy direction from Headquarters, field offices and humanitarian adviser teams did report employing workarounds that aided them in their efforts. They acknowledged, however, that field-level strategies that linked with, and were guided by, an overall Headquarters plan would aid their work. Case studies and field office interview data outlined the various advocacy tools and mechanisms to coordinate and guide efforts at the local level, for example, communication and advocacy workplans and working groups, defining key messages and creating core advocacy products for use by OCHA and others (such as regional outlooks and OCHA core information products such as bulletins, dashboards, snapshots and situation reports).

V. Conclusion

56. Advocacy constitutes an integral aspect of the OCHA mandate. Accordingly, the Office has developed a suite of tools, from policy and strategy documents to guidance,

³³ Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Turkey and the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

to help it to manage the advocacy function. It has also invested resources, including dedicated public advocacy staff at Headquarters and Public Information Officers at the field level. In addition, many other staff at all levels of the Office undertook a wide array of public and private advocacy activities covering a broad range of humanitarian issues and specific crises. Some of those efforts also yielded well-evidenced results, despite the significant external constraints that OCHA faces in its work.

57. Notwithstanding its importance, advocacy is the one core aspect of its mandate for which OCHA has not implemented a coherent, cohesive framework as the basis for providing overall strategic direction in this vital area. After investing in its suite of tools, it did not adequately roll them out. It has insufficient coordination mechanisms in place through which to set advocacy priorities, jointly plan and connect complementary advocacy efforts across its operations, manage internal and external challenges and risks, and monitor and report on those efforts, under the leadership of its chief advocate, the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator. In addition, a senior-level advocacy post has been occupied by four temporary replacements since the post was vacated in 2012.

58. Some might surmise that, because the current advocacy efforts are largely relevant and some examples have yielded results, nothing in the approach taken by OCHA needs to be altered. However, the evidence in the present evaluation points to several areas in which OCHA might improve. While a more deliberate and strategic approach will not always lead to better results on every advocacy effort, it could help OCHA to become even more relevant, more effective and more efficient within its limited, and increasingly stretched, resources than its current approach affords. This observation is consistent with those of the 2016 Functional Review, which addressed the need for OCHA to become more efficient and streamlined.

VI. Recommendations

59. The OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division makes three important recommendations to OCHA, two of which OCHA has accepted and one of which it has partially accepted. The Division urges OCHA to ensure that recommendations 2 and 3, which entail longer time horizons, will be implemented in close alignment with the forthcoming 2018-2019 strategic framework and the 2018-2021 strategic framework for OCHA.

Recommendation 1 (Result D)

60. OCHA should complete the recruitment for the post of Chief of the Strategic Communications Branch.

Indicators: Recruitment process completed; post filled by qualified candidate

Recommendation 2 (Results B and D)

61. OCHA should consolidate its core Headquarters-based advocacy function under the leadership of, and demonstrating a clear reporting line to, the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator, as chief advocate. Accordingly, the Office of the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator should additionally establish (or subsume under an existing coordination forum) a

mechanism for the coordination of advocacy efforts within Headquarters, and between Headquarters and other levels of OCHA, as well as the implementation of recommendation 3. (This recommendation is consistent with the recommendation of the 2016 Functional Review (see page 80 of the Review)).

Indicators: Organization chart revised to demonstrate reporting lines indicated; internal mechanism established (or subsumed) and utilized to coordinate advocacy

Recommendation 3 (Result C)

62. OCHA should revisit, and update as necessary, its 2006 Advocacy Policy Instruction and Guidelines on OCHA Advocacy and its 2013-2017 Advocacy Strategy, through an internal and external consultation process and consideration of the experience gained since the issuance of those documents. It should then roll out the updated documents, ensure and monitor their implementation, and provide associated training and knowledge management support to ensure their broad use throughout the OCHA. The Advocacy Strategy for 2018 and beyond should include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- A current situation analysis contextualizing advocacy efforts in the years ahead
- Overarching advocacy goals and any specific objectives within those goals
- A plan for undertaking advocacy towards those goals and objectives for the entire range of humanitarian crises and issues (level 3 emergencies, corporate emergencies, protracted or forgotten crises, thematic or cross-cutting issues and international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles)
- An articulation of internal and external coordination mechanisms for how OCHA aims to achieve those goals and objectives
- Indicators for measuring achievement against those goals and objectives, and a monitoring framework for gauging performance against them

Indicators: Consultations; documents revisited and revised as necessary; roll-out and implementation activities; implementation monitored and reported on

(Signed) Heidi **Mendoza**
Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services
21 March 2017

Annex I

Formal comments provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

The full text of comments received from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) on the evaluation by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) is presented below in line with the practice instituted by General Assembly resolution [64/263](#), following the recommendation of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee.

Thank you for your memo of 22 February 2017, transmitting the draft report of OIOS on the programme evaluation of OCHA.

I appreciate the opportunity provided by your staff to contribute informal comments to a previous version of the report, the revisions made to the draft on the basis of those comments, and explanations of how the comments have been addressed.

OCHA would like to provide the following formal comments on the report:

The report provides OCHA's definition of "advocacy". However, it is not clearly specified in the report whether the evaluation is based on this definition. More clarity on the definition used for the evaluation would have been helpful. For example, important aspects of OCHA's advocacy role are advocating for respect for humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law. Advocacy could also include advocacy for humanitarian financing. These are not specified in the definition, and it is not clear whether the evaluation has considered them.

Although OCHA is aware of the limitations imposed by the word limit, further clarity on some of the methods employed to conduct this evaluation would have been helpful, in order to have a solid understanding of the strength of the findings, including: (a) clarification of the Bellwether analysis (how were humanitarian thought leaders selected, given that their opinion is used to substantiate findings in several parts of the report); (b) total number of survey respondents; and (c) details on the non-respondent bias analysis, including whether it considered the bias introduced by limiting the survey to field staff only.

Enclosed please find the plan of action and associated timetable for implementing the report recommendations.^a Of the three recommendations provided in the report, OCHA accepts recommendations 1 and 3, and partially accepts recommendation 2, subject to the finalization of OCHA's Change Management Process currently under way and the recommendation from the Change Management Unit on OCHA's overall organizational design.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your staff, in particular Mr. Robert McCouch, Ms. Emily Hampton-Manley and Mr. Nicholas Kowbel, for their excellent collaboration throughout this process.

^a The plan of action and associated timetable can be found in the files of the Secretariat.

Annex II

Response of the Office of Internal Oversight Services to the comments from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) thanks the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) for its comments and would like to address the two outstanding points raised in the third paragraph of its memorandum contained in annex I.

With respect to the definition of advocacy used in the evaluation, the comments by OCHA management raise two distinct but related issues: (a) whether the definition of advocacy indicated in paragraph 12 was the one used in the evaluation; and (b) whether all the components subsumed under that definition were explored in the evaluation. On the first issue, although it was previously implicit that the definition in paragraph 12 was indeed the one used in the evaluation, OIOS has now added text in paragraph 12 to make that fact explicit. (During the report finalization stage, OIOS indicated to OCHA that it would add that text.) On the second issue, OIOS did explore humanitarian principles and humanitarian financing, in accordance with the definition. Relevant references in the report are found in paragraph 12 (d), which explicitly indicates that humanitarian principles were included. Although international humanitarian law is not referenced as a core focus, paragraphs 28 and 48 (a) do indicate that international humanitarian law was included in the evaluation. On humanitarian financing, the OCHA quote in paragraph 9 (supported by the reference in footnote 7) does explicitly mention funding. Accordingly, paragraphs 32, 41 and 48 subsequently mention examples garnered on the country-based pooled funds and the Central Emergency Response Fund.

On the issue of methodological details, OIOS fully agrees with OCHA that word limitations do significantly curtail the amount of technical detail it can feasibly include in the report. OIOS aims to provide sufficient methodological detail to establish the credibility of its analysis with evaluands, members of the Committee on Programme and Coordination and other stakeholders and to convey that its analyses are based on the best evidence available during the course of its evaluation. OIOS did provide OCHA such details in response to its informal comments on the report and offered to provide further details if OCHA wished. It also sought clarification from OCHA on any specific areas of the analysis that required additional methodological detail in order to strengthen the credibility of the analysis from the OCHA standpoint. However, no further requests were forthcoming.

These comments notwithstanding, OIOS is encouraged by the fact that, in its informal comments and in the management response, OCHA has broadly accepted the evaluation's analysis, results statements and recommendations.