

# OCHA on Message: Public Private Partnerships



OCHA

## What are Public Private Partnerships in humanitarian response?

Partnerships are at the centre of effective humanitarian response. Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) are collaborative agreements between State-run or public entities, such as the United Nations, and private sector<sup>1</sup> organizations. By working with private entities, the humanitarian community can benefit in many ways, such as making better use of technological innovation and expertise.

During a humanitarian response, PPPs contribute funds, in-kind donations, employee mobilization, cause-related marketing or expert services. Private sector donors are strongly encouraged to give cash rather than in-kind donations, since cash donations allow humanitarian actors to determine where and how to best allocate resources based on the most pressing needs. In-kind donations can also be beneficial, but must be well matched to a specific need and implementing partner.

Businesses can facilitate individual contributions and enhance their impact by adopting employee giving programmes that include matching contributions and fund-raising activities. Cause-related marketing programmes targeting customers are also a unique opportunity to build awareness of a particular humanitarian crisis and demonstrate to customers the company's commitment to humanitarian relief efforts.<sup>2</sup>

Private organizations can provide services in their area of expertise to complement and assist humanitarian actors in relief and rehabilitation efforts. They may also second highly specialized technical staff to United Nations agencies that can accept such resources.

## What is OCHA's role?

OCHA has a responsibility to make the best use of resources provided by the private sector. OCHA does this mainly through three actions: promoting the channelling of cash donations through established mechanisms and funds, including the Consolidated Appeal, Central Emergency Response Fund and country-based pooled funds; leveraging specific PPPs that aim to improve the humanitarian response system as a whole; and guiding private sector parties interested in partnering with humanitarian organizations to the most relevant counterpart.

OCHA has formed partnerships with a number of private sector organizations to improve its coordination systems, information management and humanitarian fund-raising. It has established the following long-term partnership agreements for the provision of specific pro bono services during emergency response:

1) In 2001, Ericsson and OCHA established a partnership agreement for the provision of emergency telecommunications services during disaster response. A new agreement was signed in 2008 to expand the partnership. It now covers the provision of emergency telecommunications services, in-kind donations in the form of Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) telephones and network, and deployment of WIDER technology, a wireless, local-area network connecting all United Nations agencies and NGO

*“The United Nations and business need each other. We need their innovation, their initiative, their technological prowess. But business also needs the United Nations. In a very real sense, the work of the United Nations can be viewed as seeking to create the ideal enabling environment within which business can thrive.”*

- United Nations  
Secretary-General  
Ban Ki-moon

<sup>1</sup> Private sector partners are understood here mainly as corporations and their philanthropic foundations, small- and medium-sized enterprises, cooperatives and business associations. When referring to the private sector as a humanitarian donor, the definition also includes private individuals, NGOs and not-for-profit organizations, and public charities.

<sup>2</sup> For example, the Pampers® “1 Pack = 1 Life-Saving Vaccine” cause-related marketing campaign. Since 2006, P&G has been a partner of UNICEF's campaign against maternal and neonatal tetanus. The UNICEF logo appears on the Pampers® packaging with a disclaimer that the agency does not endorse the product. Sales have resulted in 200 million tetanus vaccines around the world. See [www.business.un.org](http://www.business.un.org) for more information

partners. Ericsson provides equipment and expertise as part of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster. Through the Ericsson Response Volunteer programme, employees can be involved in disaster response efforts around the world.

2) Deutsche Post/DHL formed a partnership with OCHA in 2005. It supports relief efforts by providing logistical expertise for incoming air shipments of relief goods during an emergency. DHL has trained 200 employee volunteers as part of its Disaster Response Teams to help ensure an uninterrupted and effective supply chain at the airport closest to the scene of the disaster. These teams are ready to deploy anywhere in the world within four days of a disaster, upon agreement with the affected host Government. The teams work closely with the Logistics Cluster. As part of each deployment, DHL teams transfer knowledge to local partners before their departure.

3) An agreement with the United Nations Foundation and the Vodafone Group Foundation led to OCHA establishing a long-term partnership with the humanitarian NGO Télécoms Sans Frontières (TSF) in 2006, which provides funding for the deployment of telecommunications experts. TSF has four teams available on standby, ready to deploy alongside United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination teams. They provide United Nations, NGO and government responders with reliable voice, Internet, fax and video connections using satellite, WiFi and GSM equipment.

4) OCHA and Microsoft began working together on information management and information technology in early 2006. Microsoft committed to develop, host and support a pilot collaborative inter-agency website designed to enhance humanitarian coordination within the cluster approach. This pilot website was based on requirements identified by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Working Group and the Cluster Lead Agencies. It supports and manages the exchange of operational information in emergencies at country level, and was used in 2010 in response to the earthquake in Haiti and the floods in Pakistan. In 2010, the IASC Task Force on information management will review the pilot website to determine if it should be adopted globally as a standard response platform.

OCHA also helped establish the UN-Business Partnership Gateway [www.business.un.org](http://www.business.un.org). Companies wishing to contribute to the United Nations humanitarian and development activities can browse through a catalogue of needs and partnership opportunities, or simply submit ideas for collaboration. The site flags potential matches to a specific United Nations agency for further contact and exchange. OCHA launched this initiative in early 2010, in partnership with the Global Compact and the NGO Global Hand. The site also provides guidelines developed by OCHA and its partners to better guide private sector partners and the UN in working together.

## What does OCHA say?

- The private sector's engagement in humanitarian action must be in line with humanitarian principles and be solely philanthropic in nature.
- Partnerships work best when there is a good strategic fit between specific needs in the response and the partner's expertise to address them.
- PPPs for humanitarian action should be established as long-term, trust-based relationships, with clear agreements on roles and responsibilities, rather than through ad-hoc arrangements made during the relief operation phase.
- The most effective way for private sector organizations and individuals to support international humanitarian relief efforts is through a cash donation channelled through the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) or pooled funds.

## To find out more

- UN & Business Partnerships website: [www.business.un.org](http://www.business.un.org)
- Website for CERF private donations: [www.rapiddisasterrelief.org](http://www.rapiddisasterrelief.org)
- General Assembly resolution A/RES/56/76 "Towards Global Partnership"
- *Guidelines on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector* (updated Nov. 2009)
- *Guiding Principles for Public-Private Collaboration for Humanitarian Action* Prepared by OCHA and the World Economic Forum

### Guiding Principles for Public-Private Collaboration for Humanitarian Action (developed by OCHA and the World Economic Forum)

Private sector partners who abide by these principles agree to:

- 1) Do no harm
- 2) Coordinate with humanitarian actors
- 3) Comply with humanitarian principles and standards
- 4) Respect beneficiary communities and humanitarian actors
- 5) Provide goods and services at no cost to the recipient(s)
- 6) Be accurate and truthful, especially when speaking to the media about their contributions

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