This is OCHA

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OCHA mobilizes humanitarian assistance for all people in need

OCHA helps prepare for the next crisis
To reduce the impact of natural and man-made disasters on people, OCHA works with Governments to strengthen their capacity to handle emergencies.

OCHA assists UN Member States with early warning information, vulnerability analysis, contingency planning and national capacity-building and training, and by mobilizing support from regional networks.
OCHA delivers its mandate through...

**COORDINATION**

*OCHA brings together people, tools and experience to save lives*  
OCHA helps Governments access tools and services that provide life-saving relief. We deploy rapid-response teams, and we work with partners to assess needs, take action, secure funds, produce reports and facilitate civil-military coordination.

**ADVOCACY**

*OCHA speaks on behalf of people affected by conflict and disaster*  
Using a range of channels and platforms, OCHA speaks out publicly when necessary. We work behind the scenes, negotiating on issues such as access, humanitarian principles, and protection of civilians and aid workers, to ensure aid is where it needs to be.

**INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

*OCHA collects, analyses and shares critical information*  
OCHA gathers and shares reliable data on where crisis-affected people are, what they urgently need and who is best placed to assist them. Information products support swift decision-making and planning.

**HUMANITARIAN FINANCING**

*OCHA organizes and monitors humanitarian funding*  
OCHA’s financial-tracking tools and services help manage humanitarian donations from more than 130 countries.

**POLICY**

*OCHA provides guidance and clarity on humanitarian policy*  
OCHA identifies and analyses trends and helps the humanitarian community develop common policy based on human rights, international law and humanitarian principles.
A brief history

1971
UN General Assembly (GA) resolution 2816 creates the Disaster Relief Coordinator position and establishes the Office of the UN Disaster Relief Coordinator in Geneva.

1991
GA adopts resolution 46/182 to strengthen the UN response to complex emergencies and natural disasters.

1998
Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) position created to serve as a focal point and voice for humanitarian emergencies.
Secretary-General assigns the ERC the status of Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Humanitarian Affairs.
The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), consolidated appeal process (CAP) and Central Emergency Revolving Fund are created as key coordination mechanisms and tools of the ERC.

2005
Secretary-General introduces humanitarian reforms to ensure more predictability, accountability and partnerships in international humanitarian response.
Secretary-General establishes the Department for Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) with offices in New York and Geneva to provide the USG/ERC with institutional support.
2006
The Central Emergency Revolving Fund is upgraded to include a US$450 million grant facility and renamed the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

2009
The GA establishes World Humanitarian Day to be held annually on 19 August. It increases public understanding of humanitarian assistance activities worldwide.

2011
IASC organizations agree on a set of transformative actions to improve the international humanitarian response system.

2016
The UN Secretary-General will convene the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit, which will map out a humanitarian approach that is more effective, inclusive and better representative of the needs and challenges of our changing world. The summit will set the future agenda for humanitarian issues, with a focus on effectiveness, reducing vulnerability, managing risk, meeting the needs of conflict-affected people and promoting innovation.
Coordination

OCHA is responsible for bringing together humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent response to emergencies. We play a key role in assessing situations and needs, monitoring progress, and mobilizing funds and other resources.

KEY ACTORS

OCHA works with partners to assist Governments in mobilizing international assistance when the scale of a disaster exceeds the national capacity for response.

CLUSTER SYSTEM

The cluster system aims to strengthen partnerships and responses to emergencies by clarifying the division of labour among aid organizations.
INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE

OCHA carries out its coordination function primarily through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which includes UN agencies, NGOs and other humanitarian organizations.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

OCHA rapidly deploys experts to crisis-affected areas, ensuring the right people are on the ground when new or escalating emergencies require additional support. OCHA maintains an Emergency Response Roster, with staff ready to undertake six-month rotations. Additional capacity is provided through the OCHA-managed Associates Surge Pool and the Stand-By Partnerships Programme, both of which mobilize external expertise at short notice. In addition, OCHA coordinates the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC).
PEOPLE

OCHA’s strength lies in the diversity and dedication of more than 2,100 staff working in over 50 country, regional and headquarters locations. Our staff come from almost 100 countries, bringing flexibility, local knowledge and commitment to humanitarian partnerships and response efforts.

Field coordination is the frontline of our operations. It ensures that national and international partners work better together during emergencies. This helps aid reach the right people when they need it most, with fewer gaps and duplications.

Photo: OCHA/Jennifer Bose

Disclaimer: The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu & Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu & Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined.
Advocacy

OCHA speaks out on behalf of people worst affected by humanitarian crises. We raise awareness through media interviews, speeches, press briefings, web stories and social media campaigns. We also work behind the scenes, engaging in diplomacy with Governments or negotiations with armed groups to bring about change, secure humanitarian access and build support.
Information management

OCHA offices collect and analyse information to provide an overview of protracted and acute emergencies. OCHA’s information products include maps, graphics, situation reports, humanitarian bulletins, films and photo galleries.

OCHA is the steward of several humanitarian tools and services that help our partners make better-informed decisions and ensure a more predictable approach to preparedness and response. These include ReliefWeb—an award-winning website providing 24-hour coverage of disasters, conflicts and crises for the international aid community.
Humanitarian financing

OCHA coordinates efforts to plan humanitarian action, obtain funding and monitor progress in the aftermath of sudden disasters and during protracted crises. Funding requests are based on a thorough needs evaluation. They are underpinned by strategic response plans that lay out the common humanitarian response and make a compelling, evidence-based case for assistance. This collaborative process enables humanitarian actors to coordinate, carry out and monitor their responses and to appeal for funds as a group. This makes aid more effective, efficient and predictable.

All funding reported by donors and recipient organizations is recorded in the Financial Tracking Service, which is a global, real-time database of all reported humanitarian aid.
OCHA manages three types of pooled funds: CERF, common humanitarian funds (CHFs) and emergency response funds (ERFs). They all provide rapid funding for life-saving activities.

**CERF**
Under OCHA’s stewardship, CERF provides rapid initial funding at the onset of humanitarian crises and critical support for underfunded emergencies worldwide.

**CHFs**
CHFs provide predictable country-based funding for the most critical humanitarian needs during large-scale, prolonged emergencies. CHFs range from $50 million to $150 million.

**ERFs**
ERFs provide initial funding for sudden-onset emergencies to quickly deliver essential aid and meet urgent needs. Funds predominantly go to NGOs. ERFs range from $2 million to $5 million.
OCHA helps the international humanitarian system adapt to global challenges—such as climate change and demographic shifts—by exploring new policies, technologies and partnerships to improve the delivery of assistance.

OCHA helps set the agenda of policymakers, rallying humanitarian actors around current and emerging concerns. We engage with Member States to strengthen the legal bases for humanitarian action. OCHA also provides expert advice on issues including the protection of civilians, international humanitarian law, displacement and gender equality.
“Anybody remotely interested in humanitarian affairs should follow @UNOCHA”

– Tweet from a Lebanese student