

Global Challenges and their Impact on International Humanitarian Action

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Humanitarian stakeholders are increasingly concerned about the impacts of current or emerging global challenges, such as climate change, the food crisis and financial crises, extreme poverty, urbanization, water scarcity, energy security, migration and population growth, on the caseloads that humanitarian agencies work with and the operational environments they will have to work in. While anticipating the evolution of these challenges – propelled by various political, economic, legal, demographic, environmental, and technological factors – is a complex task at best, it is clear that their individual and combined impacts are already shaping, and will continue to shape international humanitarian action.

2. Yet, most international humanitarian actors are still not sufficiently focused on the future implications of these challenges both individually and collectively, even though in many cases they may be, by default or design, the actors called upon to adapt and respond to them.

3. In order for international humanitarian actors to be able to plan and react accordingly, they should consider two main questions:

- **Caseloads**: In what ways do today’s global challenges impact emerging humanitarian needs?
- **Operational Environment**: How will today’s global challenges impact the environments in which international humanitarian actors will operate?

Finally, in order for OCHA to be able to stay ‘fit for purpose,’ it should then consider the question:

- **Humanitarian Coordination**: What will these impacts on caseloads and operational environments mean for international humanitarian coordination?

4. The following occasional paper provides a preliminary analysis that aims to address these three questions. In doing so, it emphasizes three main conclusions for further discussion and debate:

(1) The humanitarian community may need to broaden its notions of vulnerability and risk, reconsider what drives a humanitarian emergency and, subsequently, what triggers an international humanitarian response. A new type of humanitarian emergency may emerge: one not caused by a definable event or process, but rather by the confluence of global challenges;

(2) While traditional inter- and intra-state conflicts will continue, insecurity will also stem from instability and violence driven by the intersection of non-traditional threats from natural resource scarcities, volatile markets, and structural trends, such as urbanization and extreme poverty tipping-points; and,

(3) There will increasingly be a need to transcend traditional definitions of what is ‘humanitarian’ and what is ‘developmental’ to advance toward more integrated country plans and partnerships that look to simultaneously promote actions that increase resilience in the short-term and reduce overall vulnerability in the long-term.

5. As a next step, OCHA should examine the validity and significance of these projected impacts and conclusions on the organization's overall adaptability and resilience to respond, mitigate, and, where possible, capitalize on the changes these global challenges portend for the humanitarian landscape.

II. GLOBAL CHALLENGES

What are global challenges?

6. For the purposes of this paper, 'global challenges' will be defined as any major trend, shock, or development that has the potential for serious global impacts and thus to create humanitarian needs and change the environments in which humanitarian actors will operate in coming years. Below is a non-exhaustive list of global challenges we have identified:

- **Climate change:** With a predicted increase in temperature that will indirectly lead to the disappearance of territory, spark widespread (and, in many cases, permanent) displacement (already 20 million people are estimated to have been temporarily displaced by climate-related disasters in 2008, a comparable number to the 26 million conflict-related IDPs in the same period), change morbidity disease patterns, and promote a monumental shift in global policies, climate change will fundamentally transform the way humanity approaches global security and livelihood sustainability.
- **Extreme poverty and inequality:** With a marked increase in extreme poverty and profound inequalities of income and wealth plaguing most nations (as approximately half the world's population lives on less than 1% of its wealth), extreme poverty and inequality continue to leave whole communities and households in an almost irreversibly devastating state of vulnerability and need.
- **Financial and economic crisis:** With the world economy now predicted to contract by 1.7%, remittances which accounted for some 2% of the major developing countries' GDP in 2007 having decreased to 1.8% in 2008 and falling by an additional 0.9% this year, private capital flows dropping by some \$700 billion compared to previous years, and an additional 90 million people being pushed into poverty, the financial and economic crisis is leading to unemployment, an increase in poverty, and the curtailment of critical safety-nets, thereby threatening an even larger caseload in need of humanitarian assistance.
- **Food crisis:** With over 1 billion people worldwide (one-sixth of the world population) suffering from hunger, over 30 cases of food-related unrest having erupted around the world since 2008, 25,000 children dying daily from malnutrition, 2 billion people currently suffering from micro-nutrient deficiencies, local food prices in most developing countries being too expensive for hundreds of millions of people, disputes over depleting land resources, and projections that by 2025 food production will not be able to increase by the necessary 50% over current levels to keep up with population growth, the food crisis will continue to threaten lives and livelihoods worldwide.

- **Water scarcity:** With the number of people who do not have access to safe water rising just over 1 billion to 2 billion by 2025 (roughly one third of the world population), water scarcity represents a major political, economic and human rights issue driving vulnerability and conflict.
- **Energy security:** With the projected one and a half times increase in energy demand by 2030, energy security could cause supply-side gluts stoking fears of scarcity and reigniting geopolitical rivalries, whilst also providing the impetus to invest in renewable energies.
- **Migration:** With the potential for hundreds of millions of people forced to uproot their lives and rebuild them across borders, continents and oceans, migration will be one of the biggest challenges both within and across borders.
- **Population growth and demographic shift:** With a population that will grow from 6.7 billion today to over 8 billion by 2025, and the number of people aged over 65 rising from 390 million now to 800 million in the same time frame, population growth and demographic shifts will put massive strains on global resources and institutions. Localized demographic trends will also be a source of challenges: the number of 15 – 24 year olds in the Middle East and North Africa region is unprecedented and set to rise as a proportion of population. (In an extreme case, the Palestinian Territories are set to see an 84% increase in youth population between 2005 and 2025.) This trend, combined with the MENA region claiming the highest youth unemployment rates in the world, may be a source of further regional insecurities.
- **Urbanization:** With an urban population that will double in Asia and increase by 150% in Africa between now and 2050, urbanization will create massive social inequities and risks as well as tangible health problems, malnutrition rates, unemployment, and income deficits, which represent an almost permanent threat to the security of billions.
- **Health pandemics and infectious diseases:** With projections that any large-scale influenza pandemic could result in from 2 up to 60 million potential deaths, and the discovery that infectious diseases that have been controlled historically are now demonstrating increased virulence, changing incidence, and shifting vectors of transmission, health pandemics and infectious diseases threaten to further degrade the lives of many, potentially increasing feelings of injustice and amplifying the pressures on weak and fragile states.

How do global challenges interconnect?

7. As seen in the above litany of anticipated global challenges, individually, these challenges are already exacerbating vulnerability and increasing humanitarian needs. But it is the intersection of any number of these challenges and their interconnectedness that is likely to even more significantly affect vulnerability and humanitarian needs. As recent crises in the outskirts of Harare, Mogadishu or Port-au-Prince have already illustrated, rapid urbanization, climate-related disasters, environmental degradation, and price spikes of fuel and basic food staples, when occurring simultaneously, can dangerously combine to severely undermine the economic, food, health and environmental security of communities, thus creating new vulnerabilities and new needs for emergency or life-saving assistance. Therefore, these challenges can no longer be

viewed in isolation, nor can solutions be promoted that help address one challenge, but exacerbate the negative effects of another. Responses must take full account of the interdependence of these global challenges and their impact on the vulnerable.

8. Of major concern is that these challenges will also create massive volatility, insecurity and instability. Countries, regions, and even the global community as a whole may lack the capacity, knowledge, financial resources, institutional frameworks and governance systems to respond to multiple and competing challenges. Indeed, these challenges do not occur in isolation and effects on the ground cannot always be accurately attributed to one or several of these challenges alone. But it is the compounding of several challenges which increases vulnerabilities to crises and requires a multi-dimensional and well-coordinated response.

9. The need to recognize and to assess compounding effects of the intersection of these challenges becomes even more apparent as we look at their evolution over the next decades. By the year 2025, the world's population is forecasted to reach 8 billion, with this population growth occurring in already less developed regions. This demographic expansion, coupled with changing consumption patterns, will necessitate a corresponding increase in global food production by an estimated 50%. Noting that agriculture currently consumes 70% of the world's fresh water supply, an increase in food production would imply a rise in water usage, which could further aggravate water shortages that already affect some 1 billion persons (a number expected to reach 2 billion in 2025 if present trends continue). Simultaneously, some predict a 50% increase in energy demand by the end of that decade, with fossil fuels still accounting for 80% of the demand. Furthermore, by 2025, some 5 billion people (about two-thirds of the world's population) are likely to be living in an urban or peri-urban setting (compared to 3.17 billion in 2005). The rapid formation of slums in urban areas promises to lead to limited access to basic services such as food and clean water, while increasing the risk of disease outbreaks. Compounding these problems will be population pressures exerted by growing youth unemployment and by groups migrating to cities in search of better living conditions and economic opportunities. Parallel to these demographic changes, the impacts of the food, fuel and economic crises may continue to stunt GDP growth and slow recovery in many poor countries, forcing cuts to vital social safety nets, causing increased unemployment, pushing the poor further into extreme poverty, particularly in rural areas with acute humanitarian needs, and increasing the risk of social unrest and violence.

10. Using sub-Saharan Africa as an example, this could mean that by 2025 the region's population would double from its 1998 level to over 1 billion people (notwithstanding the effects of HIV/AIDS). The earliest global effects of climate change, including water shortages and scarcity, may mean that by that same year up to 700 million people may be living in stressed water situations. Over one-half of the population would be under age 24, and many would likely be seeking economic opportunity or physical safety via cross-border migration to escape the effects of conflict, climate change, or widespread unemployment. The realization of this projection would almost certainly secure sub-Saharan Africa's current position as one of the most vulnerable regions on earth.

What are the factors influencing the impacts of global challenges?

11. In most cases, these challenges are not unfolding *sui generis*. A number of underlying economic, legal, social, environmental, and technological factors, as well as geopolitical developments, will influence or mitigate the impacts of the challenges on states, communities, and individuals. For example: politically, we are now witnessing a widening of power with the rise of the BRIC nations, and a shift in the direction of U.S. foreign policy; economically, we are seeing larger gaps in inequality, continued commodity price volatility, changing patterns of trade and donor relations, and the widening of economic governance beyond G8 countries; legally, there are new norms and laws being developed; socially, we are seeing rising demands from a growing middle-class and new calls for corporate responsibility and accountability; environmentally, there is increasing natural resource degradation and loss of soil fertility; and, finally, technologically, there is growing entrepreneurialism and technological innovation. These challenges and factors are by no means an exhaustive list or all necessarily equal or entirely distinct. Some of them are subsets of others, some are temporary and others permanent, while some are definite and others still predictive.

12. Overall, however, it is clear that the relationship between the challenges and factors is a complex one whereby each contributes to shaping and influencing the other. In some cases, these factors demonstrate how populations can adapt and strengthen already existing coping mechanisms to address these global challenges. However, it must also be anticipated that the speed and sheer magnitude of some of these challenges, their current confluence, and their often cumulative effects will progressively widen the gap between coping mechanisms and humanitarian impacts, thereby contributing to a net increase in vulnerability globally, but particularly in those countries already affected most by a lack of capacity and resources and incidences of conflict or disaster.

What are the opportunities?

13. Yet, it is also important to recognize that the effects of global challenges will not necessarily be all ‘doom and gloom.’ Technological innovations, policy shifts, and new partnerships prompted by responses to these global challenges may all provide the world with unexpected new tools and capacities.

14. Technology is already expanding the opportunities to provide more efficient and effective humanitarian responses. For instance, the rising use of cell phones in Africa is alerting people earlier to hazards. Inventions such as low-cost computers, water purifying drinking straws, and innovations in therapeutic feeding and vaccines are already and will continue to assist many more people. Moreover, the use of satellite imagery and improved telecommunication mapping systems has increased the ability to assess humanitarian caseloads that are beyond immediate reach earlier and with heightened accuracy. Being able to respond to these global challenges will hopefully lead to even greater technological strides and innovations.

15. Even some trends traditionally seen as large challenges may have impacts that mitigate the effects of other trends. For example, the increasing demand for food may drive the long overdue push for support to marginalized small-holder farmers, alternative trade relations or market developments, infrastructure investments, and even governance reforms at the national, regional, and international level.

16. As many of these challenges are also truly global in nature, new partnerships, political alliances and groupings at the regional and international level may also emerge. The current climate change negotiations and a widening of economic governance to G20 nations are evidence of this.

III. IMPLICATIONS OF GLOBAL CHALLENGES ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN ACTION?

17. As with the breadth and diversity of global challenges and their underlying factors, it is an almost impossible task to accurately forecast their implications (positive or negative). Nevertheless, there are key themes – common to most – that appear to be emerging in terms of the potential humanitarian implications on caseloads (the populations who will need international humanitarian assistance), and operations (the environments in which international humanitarian actors will be tasked to prepare for and operate within).

What are the potential implications on caseloads?

- ***Caseloads may increase:*** Due to population growth alone, the absolute number of people at risk in emergencies is projected to increase. These challenges will call for the humanitarian system to help more people in more places (but, most likely, with fewer resources given the financial shortfall). The depth and incidence of caseloads in existing humanitarian contexts may increase. At the same time, the incidence of caseloads may spread to new contexts as vulnerability becomes acute in what are otherwise considered traditional “developmental” contexts.
- ***Caseloads may be harder to define and more diverse:*** The progression of these global challenges may lead to the emergence of new types of vulnerable caseloads of people with severe life-saving or emergency needs, no different from those in traditional humanitarian contexts. The need for humanitarian assistance may become driven as much by extreme poverty as by conflict or disaster making it difficult to draw lines between those who need and do not need the assistance of the international humanitarian community. The poor in New Delhi, Port-au-Prince, or Mexico City may actually be in more critical need of ‘life-saving’ humanitarian assistance than IDPs in Kenya or flood-affected populations in the Philippines.
- ***Caseloads may emerge among new demographics:*** Rapidly changing demographics may create risk and humanitarian need among populations that we have less experience assisting – for example, urban and elderly populations. By 2025, about two-thirds of world’s population will be living in urban or peri-urban settings, and the numbers of people aged over 65 will more than double from 390 million today to 800 million.
- ***Caseloads may not have legal or policy frameworks that support them:*** Caseloads will also emerge where there is still a lack of legal frameworks or policy guidance, such as within the area of climate change-induced migration and displacement. The scope of this could be enormous as a recent study indicates that at least 20 million were displaced by climate-related disasters in 2008 (a figure comparable to the 26 million internally displaced globally due to conflict in the same period).
- ***Caseloads may emerge in countries thought of as ‘stable’ or ‘with adequate response capacity’:*** The economic crisis and extreme weather events may call for humanitarian assistance for caseloads in countries or during emergencies (e.g., Hurricane Katrina in the U.S., potentially Latin American and Asian countries) not typically supported by traditional international humanitarian actors. In some cases, however, interventions may also now be possible due to better perceptions of humanitarian action by states not receptive in the past.
- ***Caseloads may be harder to reach (but in some cases more visible):*** A range of access constraints from more complex security environments, bureaucratic blockages, or hostile environments may make it increasingly difficult to provide humanitarian assistance, yet the plurality of media outlets, as well as the rise of the internet, and other vectors of information may make these needs more visible and the absence of response more apparent. However, it will also be the case that in many instances it will be the millions of hungry rural poor who

may not be visible and a few thousand vocal urban who are. Humanitarian stakeholders will, therefore, still struggle with responding according to need and not media pressure.

- ***Caseloads may consistently be food-insecure:*** Given that food insecurity is a resulting impact of the majority of the global challenges, the need for food and nutrition assistance will increasingly dominate humanitarian appeals and lead to parallel national appeals, limiting funding for other critical interventions and also complicating coordination and assessment of humanitarian need.

What are the potential implications on international humanitarian operational environment?

- ***Exit and entry strategies may be harder to identify/unclear triggers for humanitarian response:*** In addition to ‘peaks of crisis,’ the new dynamics of humanitarian emergencies may be witnessed in having constant, prolonged, and protracted crises, with acute needs persisting for longer periods than accustomed. This may result in protracted, ‘long-term’ humanitarian presence with additional confusion and uncertainty about triggers for international humanitarian response and poorly defined exit strategies. Many crises such as those in some countries of West Africa as well as the DPRK, Haiti, or Tajikistan are unlikely to be quickly ‘resolved.’ They will most likely persist unabated rather than explode. Although this is not a new concern per se, it is not at the forefront of current thinking and demands consideration.
- ***The number and diversity of ‘humanitarian actors’ may increase:*** There may a need to enable coordination between a wider range of actors, as well as a greater effort to understand the perspectives of non-traditional actors, particularly those in the global South. Regional organizations may also begin to play a much larger role in humanitarian operations.
- ***Emerging technology may change response interventions:*** Technology may provide new tools to mitigate and address humanitarian crises. Humanitarian actors will need to stay aware of and capitalize upon these developments.
- ***Early warning systems may need to be strengthened:*** There will be a need for increased targeting and continuous monitoring around the impacts of these global challenges and the emergence of humanitarian emergency needs.
- ***Use of information and knowledge may need to be optimized:*** Information will become more plentiful, but may not necessarily become more useful. The humanitarian system may need to increase its ability to collect, analyze and disseminate information (from an ever increasing number of actors) to promote optimal humanitarian action. Increasingly, there will be a greater need for information ‘for’ populations versus information ‘about’ populations. There may also be new centers of knowledge with more local participation. Finally, instant media coverage will increase the public’s awareness, but will detrimentally shorten the time-frame in which decisions will need to be made.

- ***Standards and norms may need to be amended:*** As humanitarians are more frequently called to operate in increasingly ‘non-traditional’ emergencies or more complicated security environments, there may be a need for a new or amended set of standards, rules, codes, and norms to guide these interventions. The definitions of ‘humanitarian caseload’ or ‘humanitarian need’ may even need to be reassessed.
- ***Recruitment standards and organizational structure may need to be adjusted:*** There may be a need for more humanitarians that have economic, meteorological, environmental and basic developmental expertise. Cross-fertilization of staff may be needed with World Bank, UNDP, and other financial, legal, and developmental organizations. There is also evidence that the average qualification level and longevity of experience of the field worker have decreased and that organizations are being structured (whether intentionally or unintentionally) to shift authority and responsibility away from the field. Given the complexity of operating environments, these trends may need to be reversed.

IV. IMPLICATIONS OF GLOBAL CHALLENGES ON HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION

18. Over recent decades, an increasing emphasis has been placed on the importance of the coordination of humanitarian response. These efforts were based partly on the assumption that no actor could afford to work in isolation if we wanted to reach the population in need as efficiently as possible. These efforts have yielded certain results, even though they may be imperfect. The humanitarian response system is now arguably more structured and more accountable than it was before. To a certain extent, the challenges outlined in the paper clearly identify the need for the humanitarian response system to adapt to a new environment. Possibly the most important aspect of this process will be to encourage an attitudinal shift.

19. Humanitarian coordination must move past focusing on ‘reactive,’ ‘event-driven’ analysis and do away with the somewhat artificial dichotomy of preparing for and responding to humanitarian needs versus responding to developmental needs, as this approach often no longer aligns with global realities of what, when, and how people need emergency assistance. Now that a more responsive, more or less well-functioning system is in place, it may be time for coordination to look ahead and become more flexible. This will include:

A. Coordination to ensure broader wider analytical, risk management and risk reduction capacity:

- Coordination will be needed to help the international humanitarian system step up to its capacity to synthesize and to act on a wider base of knowledge and information on drivers of emergencies.
- Focus must be put on undertaking analysis of existing vulnerabilities and susceptibility to the types of inter-related challenges and shocks that the world is likely to continue to experience. This will include the assessment of the "resilience" of vulnerable populations to the transmission channels of these various types of shocks could help in the design of policies intended to increase resilience (on the short-term end of the spectrum), and to reduce overall vulnerability (moving toward the longer-term, more developmental end).

- Whereas the humanitarian system is currently primarily response-driven, the challenges outlined above will necessitate better preparedness with greater emphasis on risk reduction.
- There will be a need to focus more on building, strengthening and coordinating response capacity at the local, national and regional levels.

B. Coordination systems that include more diverse actors and strategic partnerships:

- The structures, agendas and membership of our international humanitarian coordination systems will need to be assessed (e.g., IASC, cluster approach).
- The international humanitarian community may need to find ways to work more strategically with non-traditional partners (e.g., development, scientific, financial, legal, governance agencies; regional organizations; religious groups; private sector; armed opposition groups and militaries). In many cases, these actors are increasingly becoming larger stakeholders in international humanitarian response with whom we may need to develop more formalized relationships.
- In addition, many of these actors (development, financial, and economic agencies) have the expertise and capacity to analyze longer-term structural trends and to operate in the emerging non-traditional humanitarian environments and with new and emerging caseloads (e.g., the urban poor, the elderly, highly-insecure environments, etc.). Similarly, these partnerships will help the international humanitarian system stay aware and be able to take advantage of technological developments.
- The nationalities and affiliations of the international humanitarian partners considered to be key stakeholders may also need to be broadened as humanitarian actors from advanced developing countries increase their contributions in monetary and in-kind terms. They will more actively look for new roles as well as demand recognition and respect as a *sine qua non* condition for cooperation.

C. Coordination to support shifting relations with a wider group of member states.

- The range of governments with whom humanitarians work is likely to expand and traditional models of working with governments may be challenged.
- International humanitarian agencies will increasingly need to work alongside the expanding national capacities of many governments.
- In addition, the economic crisis and extreme weather conditions may call for working with governments not typically supported by international humanitarian coordination systems (e.g., floods in India, earthquake in China, Hurricane Katrina in the U.S., disasters in many Latin American countries).
- In some cases, interventions may also now be possible due to better perceptions of humanitarian action by governments who in the past were not open to international support, or who may be engaged under a multilateral umbrella (e.g., Myanmar).
- Conversely, increasing skepticism about the neutrality and impartiality of the UN as a whole and the negative impacts of the “war on terror,” compounding already existing polarization between North and South and Muslims and non-Muslims, and the growing G77/G8 divide may also challenge how humanitarians work with various member-states (not to mention the types of security risks international aid workers may face).
- The rising influence of developing nations participating in the G20, and thus accepting a responsibility for global finance, is a positive step in building a stronger multilateral

system. However, it is not clear at all how these new developments around G20 could affect the multilateral humanitarian system. We should work together to seize this opportunity to expand political and funding support for multilateral humanitarian action by engaging these countries.

D. Coordination of ad-hoc ‘single-challenge’ approaches:

- As individual global challenges come to the forefront in the media or in policy debates, ad-hoc single-issue coordination structures, contingency plans, reporting requirements, appeals, and pledging conferences may emerge, a phenomenon that may be counter-productive and also strain capacity and donor attention as was the case for the ‘siloes’ responses to the food and financial crisis.
- The solutions found in response to one crisis may actually exacerbate a different crisis. For example, the call for bio-fuel development by some experts to mitigate climate change is in opposition to the solutions advocated to respond to the food crisis.

E. Coordination to facilitate strategic planning between emergency, recovery, and development responses:

- New discussions will need to be coordinated to assess and to define triggers for humanitarian action and exit and entry strategies.
- The way forward should be informed by other best practices; some could be distilled from conflict prevention and response models.
- Humanitarian strategies and appeals may also need to ensure that they have a way to be more closely linked to, or run alongside longer-term, development strategies (UNDAFs, PRSPs) and appeals, while not being weighed down by lengthy processes.

F. Coordination to adapt to more complicated resource mobilization dynamics:

- Ongoing currency fluctuations, adverse economic conditions, insurance necessities, and price spikes for commodities used in humanitarian operations – such as fuel – may strain budgets.
- Some donors may also increasingly question whether the work done by aid agencies could more effectively be done by the private sector or by the military.
- The emergence of new large-scale mechanisms (climate change adaptation fund, food security financial coordination mechanism for small-holder farmers, financial crisis vulnerability fund, etc.) being run by ‘non-humanitarians’ like regional banks or IFIs present a huge opportunity. This opportunity could be pursued in three areas: 1) access to new sources of funding for humanitarian action; 2) coordination with multilateral humanitarian planning (CAPs and CAP-type documents) and funding mechanisms (global and field based pooled funds: CERF, CHFs, ERFs); 3) closer interaction with development and environment protection partners in designing and implementing responses to the new global challenges.

- As the economic preeminence of traditional members of OECD is gradually matched by the rising economies of Asia, the Gulf and Latin America, new challenges emerge and we should collectively transform them into opportunities.¹
- Technology may also affect funding patterns as the internet and cell phone networks may allow individuals to more easily make donations in a timely but often issue or crisis-specific way. This could increase contributions, but make it more difficult for organizations to collect non-earmarked funds.

V. POTENTIAL USES OF THIS OCCASIONAL BRIEF

20. There are other major global challenges and humanitarian implications that may not have been captured in this document. However, this paper wants to provide a starting point to prompt initial discussion and advance joint analysis among all of OCHA and other key actors, to better understand and project the implications for international humanitarian actors. It will be updated as more knowledge, analysis, inputs from colleagues, and data becomes available.

21. The content has been and will continue to support the already on-going discussions and reviews OCHA and PDSB are engaging in related to this subject, such as the Humanitarian Segment of the Economic and Social Commission (ECOSOC) in which member-states discussed the effects of global challenges on humanitarian relief operations, OCHA's strategic plan for 2010-2013 which has required a background assessment on the effects of emerging mega-trends and challenges, the development of the Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System which will try and bring real-time monitoring and alerts to decision-makers on the impacts of intersecting global crises, and various IASC discussions focusing on the impacts of the individual global challenges.

22. It is also proposed that:

- OCHA continue to assess what additional challenges, factors, impacts, and implications may need to be considered and which ones require further analysis. OCHA should continually engage in both the forecasting and advocating the implications of the evolving humanitarian landscape so that the international humanitarian community can be pro-active, as well as flexibly reactive.
- OCHA increases dialogue within the organization and with other partners and stakeholders on these challenges and related risk assessments.
- OCHA consider developing regional specific scenarios.

¹ Over the 2004-2015 period, OECD economies are expected to grow by about 2% per year. Over the same period, Latin America is expected to see its GDP rise by 2.5% per annum, Gulf countries by about 3%, India by over 4% and China by over 5%, with peaks above 7%.

- OCHA review its current strengths and capacity to adapt and evolve to these implications. OCHA should identify where its flexibility is hindered either practically in terms of gaps in expertise and resources, or structurally in terms of mandates and existing notions of humanitarian operational parameters.

GLOBAL CHALLENGES FACTBOX

Population demographics	<p>Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Today, the global population is 6.8 billion; by 2025, it will reach about 8 billion. (DESA) • Of this increase, the collective population of developing countries is expected to rise from 5.6 billion in 2009 to 7.9 billion in 2050. (DESA) • The majority of the additional population is expected to come from the developing world which will see its population increase by 41% in 2050. Out of the nine countries expected to account for more than half of the population increase, seven are from the developing world: India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania and Bangladesh. (UNESA) • Today, both Europe and Africa are each home to about one eighth of the world population. By 2050 Europe's share of the global population will shrink to about 6.8 and Africa's share will grow to 21.8%. Hence, one century of population growth will completely reverse Europe's and Africa's position: Europe's share of the global population in 2050 will be the same as that of Africa in 1950. (UNESA) <p>Age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of people aged over 65 will rise from 390 million now to 800 million by 2025 - reaching 10% of the total population. (WHO) (The proportion of older people requiring support from adults of working age will increase from about 12.3% to 17.2% in 2025.) • By 2050, one out of ten people worldwide will be 65 years of age or more. (IIASA) • By the year 2025, it is expected that no country will have a life expectancy of less than 50 years. (WHO) • By 2025, increases of up to 300% of the older population are expected in many developing countries, especially in Latin America and Asia. (WHO) • By 2025, the populations of the West Bank, currently about 2.6 million people, and Gaza, now at 1.5 million, will have grown substantially: the West Bank by nearly 40%; Gaza by almost 60 percent. Their combined population in 2025—mostly young and approaching 6 million may introduce further challenges to institutions hoping to generate adequate employment and public services, maintain sufficient availability of fresh water and food, and achieve political stability. (NIC)
Urbanization	<p>Demographic shifts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Today, about 55% of the global population lives in rural areas and 45% in urban areas; by 2025 it will be 41% rural and 59% urban. (WHO) • By 2025, the world will add another eight megacities to the current list of 19—all except one of these eight will be in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Between 2005 and

GLOBAL CHALLENGES FACTBOX

2050, urban population will have increased by 150% in Africa, and doubled in Asia. By 2025, most urban growth, however, will occur in smaller cities of these regions, which are expanding along highways and coalescing near crossroads and coastlines, often without formal sector job growth and without adequate services. **(NIC)**

- As many as 50% of the world's 10.5 million refugees under UNHCR's mandate are now living in cities and towns across the globe. 20 million internally displaced people and returnees are believed to be in urban settings. **(UNHCR)**

Consumption patterns

- In urban areas, people spend an average of 30% more on food than in rural areas, but they consume fewer calories.
- Long distances, poor infrastructure, and urban crowding cause spoilage of 10% to 30% of food supplies in transit to urban areas.
- Significantly adding to the strain on urban water supplies, when people migrate from rural to urban areas, their water consumption patterns are noted to increase from 8 litres/day to 27 litres/day. **(UN-Water)**

Climate change

Temperature increases

- The IPCC predicts an average increase in temperature of 2.8C and an average rise of sea levels between 0.21 and 0.48 meters by the end of this century. **(IPCC)**

Climate-related disasters and hazards

- In the past 18 years, 11,000 extreme events have claimed the lives of 600,000 people and cost US\$1.7 trillion across the globe. **(Climate Risk Index 2010)**
- The number of recorded disasters has doubled from approximately 200 to over 400 per year over the past two decades. **(CRED)**
- Over 97 percent of disaster deaths occur in developing countries **(WB)** and 175 million children will suffer from climate-related disasters in the next ten years. **(UNICEF)**
- Nearly 634 million people – one tenth of the global population – live in at-risk coastal areas just a few meters above existing sea levels. **(IIED)**
- In Africa, higher temperatures and lesser and more seasonal rainfall will also place up to 250 million more Africans under severe water stress by 2020. **(IPCC)**
- Drought and climate unpredictability are already impacting agricultural yields. Agricultural production fed by rainfall is projected to halve in some African countries by 2020 with the most populated regions of the Sahel and Southern Africa among the worst affected. 93 percent of farmed land in sub-Saharan Africa is rain-fed. **(IPCC)**
- Climate-sensitive risk factors and illnesses are currently among the most important contributors to the global burden of disease; these include under-nutrition (which causes over 3.7 million deaths per year), diarrhoeal diseases, (which kill over 1.9 million

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	<p>annually) and malaria (which kills almost 1 million). (WHO)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change could reduce potential agricultural output by up to 30% in Africa and up to 21% in Asia. (FAO)
Extreme poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost half the world, over 3 billion people, live on less than \$2.50 a day, and 1.4 billion of those live in ‘extreme poverty’ of \$1.25 a day. (UNDESA) • At least 80% of humanity lives on less than \$10 a day. (WB) • The African continent has been an outlier in the plight to reduce poverty. Whereas world poverty levels have been trending downwards since the early 1980s, poverty levels in Africa have actually increased – 40% in 1981, 51.2% in 2005. In absolute terms, the number of poor people has nearly doubled, from 200 million in 1981 to 380 million in 2005. (WB) • Women and girls make up 70% of the 1.4 billion people living on under a \$1.25 a day. (UNIFEM) • Of the 2.2 billion children in the world, 1 billion live in poverty. (UNICEF)
Food security	<p><i>Caseloads</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2008, an additional 115 million people joined the ranks of the hungry. By the end of 2009, over 1 billion people worldwide will suffer from hunger and malnutrition, the highest number in four decades. (FAO) • Some 25,000 children die daily from malnutrition, and the majority of these from countries not deemed “humanitarian crises.” (FAO) • Seven children die of hunger every minute. (UN Standing Committee on Nutrition) • 2 billion people currently suffer from micro-nutrient deficiencies, a number that typically increases dramatically during times of crisis. (WHO) <p><i>Prices and production</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food prices on the world market remain high, on average 41% higher than their 2002-2004 levels. At the local level, prices have not markedly decreased from their 2008 peak. In over 12 countries, prices have continued to increase, surpassing their 2008 level by over 40%. • To feed world in 2030, food production must increase by 50% over current levels. (WB) • To feed the world in 2050, food production will have to increase by 70% over the next 40 years to feed an estimated 9.1 billion in 2050. (FAO) Between 1995 and 2025, grain demand in sub-Saharan Africa will increase by 121 percent, from 78 to 172 million metric tons.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If more land is not allocated for food production now, 370 million could face famine by 2050. (FAO) • Smallholder farmers produce 80% of food crops in Africa. (FAO)
Financial and economic crises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current financial and economic crisis is expected to cause the loss of over 50 million jobs and the increase of the population living below the poverty threshold by some 55 million. • In 2007, remittance flows were estimated at USD 337 billion worldwide, USD 251 billion of which went to developing countries. Remittances are likely to fall by 5 to 8% in most developing countries. (WB) • ODA from some countries could drop by as much as 40%. (UNCTAD) • The African continent is forecasted to experience a drop in GDP of \$49 billion as compared to 2007, a percentage cut of over 10%. Only 10-15 countries in Africa have the capacity to implement counter-cyclical responses to the financial crisis. (Action Aid)
Energy security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand in energy is expected to increase by 50% by 2030. Over 70% of this increase in energy demand will stem from the developing world. (NIC) • Fossil fuels will still comprise the bulk of the demand (some 83% for the combination of oil, coal and gas). (IEA) • Currently 2.4 billion people lack the necessary fuel supplies to meet their basic, daily household cooking and heating needs. • Bio-fuel production is set to expand by nearly 90% over the next 10 years, reaching 192 billion litres by 2018. Bio-fuel production to reduce dependency on fossil fuels by only 10% will require 7% of the world's arable land. (FAO) • Raw materials from forests represent over 90% of energy sources in Africa. (FAO)
Water security	<p><i>Consumption patterns</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the past 100 years, while world population has tripled, water consumption sextupled. (WB) • Feeding everyone in 2050 – including the undernourished and additional 3 billion people expected – could require 50 % more water than is needed now. (FAO) <p><i>Access and scarcity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around 1.2 billion people, or almost one-fifth of the world's population, live in areas of physical scarcity, while another 1.6 billion people, or almost one quarter of the world's population, face economic water shortage. (UN-Water)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is projected by 2030, 47% of world population will be living in areas of high water stress. (OECD) • 1.4 billion people do not have access to safe water (a number that could double by 2025). (WHO) • By 2020, up to 250 million people could face more severe water shortages across Africa. (IPCC) • Over one-third of the world's population (2.6 billion) has no access to sanitation facilities. (WHO) In developing countries, about 80% of illnesses are linked to poor water and sanitation conditions. One out of every 4 deaths under the age of 5 worldwide is due to a water-borne disease. At any one time, half of the world's hospital beds are occupied by patients suffering from water-borne diseases. • In developing countries, water collectors, usually women and girls, have to walk several kilometers every day to fetch water. Once filled, pots and jerry cans weigh as much as 20kg. • 93% of African communities do not have groundwater access and depend entirely on variable rainfall for their water needs. Only 7% of African land and 4% of sub-Saharan African land is irrigated overall. (FAO) • There are 215 “international” rivers and more than 300 water basins shared by 2-3 countries, all providing potential conflict zones as resources are debilitated. (IEA)
Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net migration from developing to developed countries is projected to average 2.4 million persons annually from 2009 to 2050. (DESA) • There are more than 200 million estimated international migrants in the world today. (IOM) • Migrants comprise 3% of the global population. The number of the migrants worldwide would constitute the fifth most populous country in the world. Women account for 49.6% of global migrants. • By 2050, anywhere between 50 and 200 million people may become domestic or international migrants as a result of climate change. (Stern Review)
Health pandemics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The influenza pandemic of 1918-1919 caused an estimated 40 to 50 million deaths worldwide. Current models project that a pandemic could result in 2 to 7.4 million deaths. (WHO) • By 2025, there will still be 5 million deaths among children under five - 97% of them in the developing world, and most of them due to infectious diseases such as pneumonia and diarrhea, combined with malnutrition. (WHO) • It is projected that more than 5 billion people – 67% of the world population – may still

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	be without access to adequate sanitation in 2030. (UN-Water)
Protection of civilians	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Armed conflict has caused an estimated 26 million people to flee their homes and become internally-displaced (IDMC), in addition to approximately 11 million refugees. (UNHCR)• Sexual violence remains a particularly urgent challenge. In the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo alone, at least 200,000 cases of sexual violence have been recorded since hostilities began in 1996. (Report of the SG pursuant to SC res.1820)