2015 ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment

Chad: A Country on the Cusp
Invest today, or pay the price of underfunding?

OCHA & ECHO
June 18th 2015, 12:30pm
Room XXIV, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

This is one of the side-events to be convened during the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment, in keeping with this year’s theme: The future of humanitarian affairs: towards greater inclusiveness, coordination, interoperability and effectiveness.

Background

Today, Chad has become a critical partner of the international community in the Sahel region. Over the last decade, Chad has affirmed itself as key contributor to the peace and stability of the Sahel and Central Africa, acting as an “island of stability” in a turbulent region. Chad has been internationally recognized for its diplomatic and peacekeeping involvement abroad, particularly in Mali (2013), as well as for its military involvement in the fight against Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin (2015). Chad’s leadership in addressing the challenges of Sahel-Saharan States, including as the Secretariat for the G5 Group, have also been appreciated as part of a growing contribution to addressing regional – as well as global - challenges. Today, Chad is a non-permanent member of the Security Council (2014-2015).

Nevertheless, Chad remains very much a country on the cusp. While considerable progress has been made following decades of internal conflict, through efforts to improve economic stability, political dialogue, human rights, and social services, Chad is once again facing significant external and internal pressures, which add to its fragility.

Surrounded by countries in crisis, Chad hosts over 750,000 people who fled violence in Sudan, Central African Republic, Libya and the Lake Chad Basin. This places a significant burden on national and community resources – Chad itself situated 184th on the Human Development Index. Considerable expenditures have been made in the security sector, to secure Chad’s borders and to prevent the spread of conflict. Chad is also under significant economic and budgetary pressure, due to the recent, significant drop in global oil prices (oil revenues accounting for approximately 20% of GDP but 80% of the national budget), and as a result of the negative impact that insecurity has had on trade, with three of its four critical borders closed to commerce. Chad also remains extremely vulnerable to climactic variations, with natural disasters affecting some 1 million people annually, and an estimated 2.4 million people suffering from food insecurity in 2015. A landlocked country, Chad's economic development suffers from its geographic remoteness, lack of infrastructure and industrial underdevelopment: about 85 per cent of the population still depends on subsistence agriculture.
Despite its growing international role and its underlying fragility, Chad remains an aid orphan. It continues to suffer from historically low levels of international assistance relative to humanitarian and development requirements. In 2013, official development assistance (ODA) to Chad totaled some USD400 million— a mere 3% of its Gross National Income, placing it as 59th in the world in terms ODA per capita (World Bank). Over the last five years, humanitarian appeals have been funded, on average, to 55% compared to 80% over the previous five years. Despite increased humanitarian requirements – aid levels continue to fall. Of the USD527 million requested for 2015, less than 20% is currently funded.

This level of funding is particularly concerning, in light of Chad’s current vulnerability and risk profile. The InfoRM initiative (the global index for risk management) ranks Chad as the 9th most at risk country worldwide, just after Iraq. Yet, it is one of the countries in which there is the greatest mismatch between risk and ODA. There is increasing pressure on the humanitarian community to “look beyond the crisis” and to assist in a way to help reduce vulnerability and to manage risk. Investing in preventive action is widely recognized as more efficient and “better value for money” than spending on response. Donors have been encouraged to bridge humanitarian and development funding, and to take on complementary roles in addressing immediate needs, protracted crises, and the underlying causes of crises.

**Discussion points**

Against this backdrop, the side-event will focus on the following suggested questions:

1. **Can a more anticipatory and forward-looking approach to financing be applied?**
   Can Governments, humanitarians, development actors, and communities work together more effectively to better anticipate a possible crisis and to reduce vulnerabilities? OCHA’s 2014 report “Saving Lives Today and Tomorrow” highlights a number of factors that currently stand in the way of more effective management of risk. Can these be overcome in the context of Chad?

2. **Can development investments be better leveraged?** How can humanitarian actors influence development planning in Chad, so that funding targets the structural causes of crises? How can resilience to future crises be built? How can increased funding from development budgets be allocated to risk reduction? The right combination of humanitarian, development, climate change, and political action will help limit unnecessary loss of life, better protect livelihoods, and reduce the need for humanitarian assistance.

3. **Can the international community afford the cost of underfunding?**

**Intended outcomes/conclusions/recommendations**
The panel seeks to explore tangible steps that can be taken to enhance the international community’s support to Chad at this crucial moment in its development.

**Format**
The side event will be an interactive panel discussion, intended to provoke discussion, debate and possible recommendations for increasing Member State investments in Chad.
Chair:
• Mr. Thomas Gurtner, Humanitarian Coordinator and UN Resident Coordinator for Chad

Moderator:
• Ms. Kyung-wha Kang, UN Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator,

Panelists:
• H.E. Mr. Mahamat Moussa Faki, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Chad
• Mr. Claus Sorenson, Director General, European Commission for Humanitarian Aid & Crisis Management,
• Ms. Rachel Scott, Senior Humanitarian Advisor, Development Co-operation Directorate, OECD

Background Material

Dare to Prepare: Taking Risk Seriously – Jan Kellett and Katie Peters, Overseas Development Institute, 2014
www.odi.org/daretoprepare

www.futurehumanitarianfinancing.org/looking-beyond-the-crisis/


Index for Risk Management (INFORM,) Results 2015, http://www.inform-index.org/

www.oecd.org/ImaginingMoreEffectiveHumanitarianAid


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