Background

In its 20 years of existence, the Stand-By Partnership Programme (SBPP) has become and remains a key component of OCHA’s surge capability providing timely expert capacity in support of OCHA’s response coordination mandate worldwide. OCHA’s SBPP is governed by General Assembly Resolutions and currently includes Memoranda of Understandings to provide gratis personnel with 14 organizations.

2020 Overview

In 2020, 60 SBP experts commenced deployment, for an average duration of 5.5 months, to new and escalating humanitarian emergencies and to situations where specific expertise was required and not available within the organization. Because COVID-19 was deemed a new global emergency and a whole of OCHA response, SBP experts were sought and accepted for the first time into a headquarters location to provide emergency additional surge support. Applying an average P3 monthly salary and associated expenses, these 60 deployments represent an estimated in-kind contribution of USD 5.3m to OCHA.

1 CANADEM (Canada’s Civilian Reserve), DEMA (Danish Emergency Management Agency), DRC (Danish Refugee Council), FCDO (UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office), ICRU (Icelandic Crisis Response Unit), iMMAP (Information Management and Mine Action Programs), Irish Aid (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade), MapAction, MSB (Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency), NRC (Norwegian Refugee Council), Qatar Charity, RedR Australia (Registered Engineers for Disaster Relief Australia), SDC/HA (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Department of Humanitarian Aid and Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit) and ZIF (Center for International Peace Operations).
SBP experts were sourced from ten SBPs, and FCDO funded approximately 28 per cent of all the deployments.

Information Management Officers became the most deployed profile, counting for close to half of all deployments and with most of them providing remote support in connection with the COVID-19 response. Humanitarian Affairs Officers continued to be in high demand either as generalists or with specific expertise.

There was an increase this year in deployments pertaining to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and accountability to affected populations. OCHA also benefitted from SBP support for Cash, Civil Military Coordination and Public Information.

At 31 per cent, 2020 deployments of female experts were comparable to previous years.

SBP Network

Throughout the year, OCHA remained engaged in and supported various initiatives within the SBP Network, a community of 14 UN Agencies and over 40 partners, including around Duty of Care, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Results Based Management and Due Diligence.

A new SBP Network Secretariat was staffed by March with the objective of supporting the Network in enhancing the way in which we operate through, among other things, the establishment of a new information sharing platform, compilation and analysis of deployment data across the Network, as well as awareness raising and advocacy. The Secretariat also organised several COVID-19 focused discussions which were key in swiftly sharing information on the latest measures and in addressing key concerns.

A word of thanks

2020 has brought many challenges due to the emergence of and requirement to continue to operate in a COVID-19 affected operational environment. We would like to thank our Partners and their deployees for their commitment and continued support throughout the year, which has enabled us to successfully respond to a growing number of requests.