

Terms of Reference
Regional Inter Agency Coordination Support Office (RIACSO)
For the Southern Africa Crisis
Johannesburg, South Africa

Background

In March of this year, the IASC determined the need to assess the gravity of the emerging crisis. There was agreement that the FAO/WFP Joint Crop and Food Supply Assessments form the basis of this work and that the assessments would also review the relevant critical non-food areas, giving particular attention to the impact of HIV/AIDS. WFP's Regional Director for East and Southern Africa was requested to initiate this process in close collaboration with the UN Resident Coordinators in each of the six countries. The results led to a regional and national Consolidated Appeals for Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

On 18th July 2002, the UN Secretary General announced the appointment of a Special Envoy on the Humanitarian Crisis in Southern Africa to spearhead the UN system's efforts to raise awareness of the situation, and to provide recommendations on how to strengthen the humanitarian response and mobilize donor support for the affected countries.

The appointment coincided with the launching of the Appeals in which it was stated that Resident Coordinators retain primary responsibility for country leadership and coordination of the crisis response within their respective countries. While the focus of coordination of efforts to address the crisis rest at the country level, regional support for national efforts is required to ensure cohesion and complementarity of effort.

Consistent with these understandings, it has been agreed that a Regional Inter Agency Coordination Support Office be established in Johannesburg under the direction of a Regional Coordinator for the Special Envoy. The broad purpose of this office will be three fold:

- 1) To support the Special Envoy for Humanitarian Needs in Southern Africa fulfil his role and mandate.
- 2) To support the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators and the UN Country Teams in the concerned countries.
- 3) To bring together Inter Agency Regional efforts under the Regional Coordinator for the Special Envoy.

The Office will be responsible for reporting to the UN Special Envoy and to the Emergency Relief Coordinator. Specific Functions will include:

a) Strategic Planning, Assessment and Monitoring

A key role of the Office will be to ensure that coordinated support is provided to country teams for strategic planning, assessment, monitoring and analysis of the Southern Africa crisis. The baseline for this planning has been set by the strategies, plans and programmes included within the various Appeal documents for the affected countries but will need to be adapted as the situation evolves. Ongoing strategic planning will therefore be contingent on effective monitoring of the implementation

of these plans as well as management of ongoing rolling assessment. In this respect the office will perform the following tasks in close collaboration with the Resident Coordinators in each case:

- Weekly monitoring of contributions made by donors to the southern African crisis in close collaboration with FTS OCHA Geneva and UN Agencies.
- Monitoring the implementation of activities funded by donors in the appeals.
- Based on analysis of the above, identification of shortfalls in funding and priority activities.
- Continued assessment and advocacy in addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic and reproductive health in the context of the food security crisis.
- Ongoing review of the internal and external operating environment for the humanitarian operation to ensure that effective contingency plans are elaborated for any possible changed.

b) Reporting

The Office will be responsible for supporting regular and consistent Inter Agency reporting from each of the six countries most affected by the present crisis. Advice and guidance will be provided to Resident Coordinators on the organization and periodicity of situation reports. Particular emphasis will be given to multi-sectoral information, coverage of information sources (UN and non UN) and contributions to programmes and projects included in the Consolidated Appeals. The Office will be responsible for the preparation of:

- The weekly brief of the SE to the Secretary General
- Twice monthly Inter Agency regional updates
- Ad hoc briefing materials for high level delegations
- Ad hoc strategic focus pieces
- Other reports, as required

These reports will be prepared based on the timely submission of inputs from key national and regional partners as well as in collaboration with relevant HQ's.

c) Donor Liaison and Advocacy

The office will be responsible for maintaining a constant dialogue with donors on the overall funding / resource status of the humanitarian programmes in close collaboration with all partner agencies (UN and NGOs). The Office will be responsible for organizing periodic meetings with donors as well as facilitating and preparing appropriate briefing materials for visiting delegation.

d) Inter Agency Communication

The Office will be responsible for maintaining a network of communication between the key UN agencies operating at the regional level as well as with key NGO partners. RIACSO will also form a functional partnership with SADC, in order to build on the networks and institutional structures already set in place. A key tool in this regard will be the facilitation and support of periodic Inter Agency meetings, as well as to support the broadening of inter agency information through situation updates and newsletters.

e) Southern African Humanitarian Information Management System

A key component that will facilitate Inter Agency and regional information communications will be the establishment of SAHIMS. The service will be co-located within the Regional Inter Agency Coordination Support Office and will serve as a data management and clearing house. Details of SAHIMS organization and proposed functions are contained in a separate comprehensive project document. OCHA will be responsible for supporting the Inter Agency task force identified in the project document for guiding the evolution and development of SAHIMS.

f) Staff and Management

The Office will be led by the Regional Coordinator of the Special Envoy. The office will be staffed by representatives of Agencies, lo-located to the Johannesburg office. At this time, this will include personnel from UNICEF, FAO, WHO, UNFPA and other agencies as agreed. Key to ensuring the effective linkage between the humanitarian efforts and longer term development initiatives will be the role of a UNDP Regional Recovery Coordinator whose function will be to ensure the development of a strategy for sustainable recovery. The Coordinator will also be based in Johannesburg.

In order to provide the support necessary to enable the Regional Coordinator of the Special Envoy to fulfil her functions, OCHA has moved the Regional Disaster Response Advisor from Gaborone to Johannesburg. OCHA will strengthen this support function with additional humanitarian affairs officers as well as with personnel to manage the implementation of the SAHIMS. OCHA personnel will also provide direct support the Regional Coordinators in the affected countries as well as other countries in the region from Johannesburg where and when required.