

Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network

Organisational Effectiveness Assessment

**Office of the United Nations
High Commissioner for
Refugees (UNHCR)**

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Preface

The Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) is a network of donor countries with a common interest in assessing the organisational effectiveness of multilateral organisations. MOPAN was established in 2002 in response to international fora on aid effectiveness and calls for greater donor harmonisation and coordination.

Today, MOPAN is made up of 16 donor countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, The Netherlands, Norway, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. For more information on MOPAN and to access previous MOPAN reports, please visit the MOPAN website (www.mopanonline.org).

Each year MOPAN carries out assessments of several multilateral organisations based on criteria agreed by MOPAN members. Its approach has evolved over the years, and since 2010 has been based on a survey of key stakeholders and a review of documents of multilateral organisations. MOPAN assessments provide a snapshot of four dimensions of organisational effectiveness (strategic management, operational management, relationship management, and knowledge management). MOPAN does not examine an organisation's development results.

MOPAN 2011

In 2011, MOPAN assessed five multilateral organisations: the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

MOPAN Institutional Leads liaised with the multilateral organisations throughout the assessment and reporting process. MOPAN Country Leads monitored the process in each country and ensured the success of the survey.

MOPAN Institutional Leads	Multilateral Organisation
Norway and The Netherlands	Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)
Spain and Denmark	Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)
Switzerland and United Kingdom	United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
Norway and Belgium	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
Sweden and Finland	United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)
MOPAN Country Leads	Countries
Canada and Australia	Bangladesh
Switzerland and Denmark	Bolivia
Germany and Spain	Brazil
France	Burundi
Spain	Ecuador
Germany and Finland	Nepal
Germany and Canada	Peru
Canada	Tanzania
Switzerland and Norway	Jordan
Norway and Austria	Lebanon
Ireland and Austria	Palestinian territories
Switzerland and Norway	Syrian Arab Republic

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We thank all participants in the MOPAN 2011 assessment of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). UNHCR senior management and their staff made valuable contributions throughout the survey and document review processes and provided lists of their direct partners, recipient governments and peer organisations to be surveyed in each country where the survey took place. Survey respondents contributed useful insights and time in responding to the survey. The MOPAN Institutional Leads, Norway and Belgium, liaised with UNHCR throughout the assessment and reporting process. The MOPAN Country Leads in each country oversaw the process in the field and ensured the success of the survey. Consultants in each country provided vital in-country support by following up with direct partners, recipient governments and peer organisations to enhance survey response rates.

Roles of Authors and the MOPAN Secretariat

The MOPAN Secretariat, led by Germany in 2011, worked in close cooperation with the MOPAN Technical Working Group to launch and manage the survey. MOPAN developed the Key Performance and Micro-indicators, designed the survey methodology, coordinated the development of lists of survey respondents, and approved the final survey questionnaire. MOPAN also directed the design of the approach to document review. MOPAN oversaw the design, structure, tone, and content of the reports.

Universalialia and Epinion developed the survey instrument and carried out the survey and analysis. Universalialia carried out the document review and wrote the reports.

Epinion is a leading consulting firm in Denmark that analyses and evaluates data to support decision making. It conducts specially designed studies for public and private organisations based on data collected among an organisation's employees, members, customers, partners, and other sources. Website: www.epinion.dk

Universalialia Management Group is a Canadian consulting firm established in 1980 that specialises in evaluation and monitoring for international development. Universalialia has made significant contributions to identifying best practices and developing tools in the fields of organisational assessment; planning, monitoring, and evaluation; results-based management; and capacity building. Website: www.universalialia.com.

Acronyms

GSP	Global Strategic Priority
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MI	Micro-Indicator
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
RBM	Results-Based Management
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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Executive Summary

This report presents the results of an assessment of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) conducted by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN). MOPAN assesses the organisational effectiveness of multilateral organisations based on a survey of stakeholders and a review of documents. MOPAN does not assess an organisation's development results.

UNHCR pursues a refugee protection mandate in more than 120 countries, serving 36.4 million persons of concern. As a humanitarian organisation, it faces the particular challenges of working in complex operational environments. Over the past five years, UNHCR has undertaken a major structural and management reform process to improve its effectiveness and efficiency, including the introduction of results-based management, decentralisation and regionalisation, and improvement of its management of human resources and supplies.

In 2011, MOPAN assessed UNHCR based on information collected at the organisation's headquarters and in six countries: Bangladesh, Burundi, Ecuador, Nepal, the Syrian Arab Republic, and Tanzania. The survey targeted UNHCR's direct partners, recipient governments, peer organisations, and MOPAN donors based in-country and at headquarters. A total of 206 respondents participated in the survey. MOPAN's document review assessed UNHCR through an examination of publicly available corporate documents and country programming documents from the six countries selected.

MOPAN assessments provide a snapshot of four dimensions of organisational effectiveness (strategic management, operational management, relationship management, and knowledge management). The main findings of the 2011 assessment of UNHCR are summarised below.

Strategic Management

In strategic management, MOPAN established criteria to determine if a multilateral organisation has strategies that reflect good practices in managing for humanitarian results. Overall, the 2011 assessment found that:

- UNHCR has a clear mandate to provide international protection to refugees that is valued by its stakeholders.
- Its strategy reflects core humanitarian principles such as neutrality, independence, and impartiality, which are essential to preserving space for humanitarian action.
- The Office's leadership is seen to provide direction to ensure that UNHCR's work is focused on achieving results for the ultimate beneficiaries of humanitarian action.
- Through its strategy and policy work, UNHCR integrates a focus on key thematic issues and cross-cutting priorities that can affect the achievement and sustainability of results. Stakeholders commended UNHCR for its focus on human rights and the assessment noted UNHCR's efforts to integrate environment and HIV/AIDS in its programming with populations of concern. The Office's efforts to improve emergency preparedness as an area that cuts across all of its work were also noted.
- While UNHCR has made considerable progress in adopting results-based management practices as part of a major structural and management reform process, some work is still required in fine-tuning its organisational results framework. The assessment finds that clearer statements of expected results, clearer linkages between results at each level, and better performance indicators to measure results could enhance its overall capacity to plan, deliver, and report on results achieved.

Operational Management

In operational management, MOPAN established criteria to determine if a multilateral organisation manages its operations in a way that supports accountability for results and the use of information on performance. Overall, the 2011 assessment found that:

- UNHCR is seen to strongly adhere to humanitarian principles in its field operations and to engage its partners in policy dialogue on the importance of observing these principles, particularly in situations of conflict.
- The organisation has implemented a number of changes to improve the delegation of key decisions. These changes have put in place substantial delegation of authority to the field with respect to allocations and re-allocations of approved financial resources, among other areas.
- UNHCR's manages its human resources within a recognised code of conduct, has taken strong measures to ensure staff security, and seems to have an appropriate range of in-house and externally accessible personnel when rapid deployment of staff is required. Its practices in managing staff performance have improved since 2009, but there is still work to be done in policies and procedures that link staff performance to promotion.
- As part of the UN family, UNHCR has financial accountability systems that are regarded as acceptable. Its approach to assessing and managing risks (other than security risks) is an area that needs further attention, primarily in terms of putting in place a more comprehensive risk management framework at the organisational level.¹
- Despite some improvements in 2010, UNHCR faces challenges in linking its budgets and expenditures with its humanitarian results. Results-based budgeting is a complex undertaking for any organisation and more so for organisations like UNHCR that must respond to unforeseen humanitarian emergencies.
- UNHCR's programming process is designed to draw on performance information (e.g., information from measuring indicators, reviews of progress, and evaluations), but the use of such information to inform decisions about country operation plans and general programming is not clear at this time. The reporting aspects of *Focus* have not yet been fully taken advantage of.

Relationship Management

In relationship management, MOPAN established criteria to determine if a multilateral organisation is engaging with its partners at the country level in ways that contribute to aid effectiveness. For humanitarian organisations, MOPAN criteria examine the organisation's procedures, track record on coordination and harmonisation with peers, and contributions to policy dialogue. Overall, the 2011 assessment found that:

- UNHCR operates in complex environments and performs well in managing relationships with the variety of actors it collaborates with (i.e., UN agencies, recipient governments, and direct partners).
- UNHCR is seen as a strong supporter of inter-agency plans and appeals. It aligns with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and participates in Delivering as One processes. It is recognised for participating in joint needs assessments and joint missions.
- UNHCR is perceived as contributing to policy dialogue with its humanitarian partners.

¹ UNHCR recognised this need and in 2011 began developing a risk-based approach to implementing partner management and an Enterprise Risk Management strategy.

- UNHCR has procedures that can be understood and completed by partners and that allow it to provide timely responses to events/disaster situations.
- UNHCR could enhance its provision of technical cooperation through programs that are coordinated with other humanitarian actors.

Knowledge Management

In knowledge management, MOPAN established criteria to determine if a multilateral organisation has reporting mechanisms and learning strategies that facilitate the sharing of information inside the organisation and with the development community. Overall, the 2011 assessment found that:

- Improvements in reporting on effectiveness are evident in the Global Report 2010 (e.g., reporting on most Global Strategic Priorities using performance targets), and are likely to continue as the Office adapts and uses new information systems that it has put in place.
- UNHCR reports do not comment explicitly on results at all levels (especially outcomes and how its activities are affecting the outcome area) or on programming adjustments made at the country level on the basis of performance information.
- UNHCR is seen to involve direct beneficiaries and stakeholders in the evaluation process but needs to improve evaluation coverage of programming activity and further develop quality control mechanisms for evaluations. Improvements may not be possible within the resources currently assigned to the evaluation function.

Conclusions

The following conclusions of the assessment provide some main messages that can contribute to dialogue between MOPAN, UNHCR and its partners.

- **From its strategy to its operations, UNHCR respects humanitarian principles** – UNHCR's respect for humanitarian principles is reflected in its Global Appeal (primarily its neutrality, independence, and impartiality), its delivery of humanitarian action, and its policy dialogue with partners, particularly in cases of conflict.
- **UNHCR is commended for its openness to policy dialogue** – UNHCR is an important advocate for the rights and protection of refugees and persons of concern. It is respected for its policy dialogue with governments, partners, and other actors on a broad range of humanitarian issues including assistance, migration, and international law.
- **UNHCR has made progress in managing for results and its practices are catching up with its commitment** – Since 2006, UNHCR has introduced major changes in the way that it plans, budgets, monitors, and reports on its results. The implementation of organisational results frameworks, Country Operation Plans, and results-oriented budgets are just beginning to show in UNHCR reporting. Its reporting on all indicators and targets of the Global Strategic Priorities should improve as its new software begins to provide this information.
- **UNHCR's approach to cross-cutting priorities is well articulated at the strategic level but may be less clear in the field** – While UNHCR's strategic documents articulate a clear approach to cross-cutting priorities such as gender equality, environment, and HIV/AIDS, it is not clear whether this high level strategic support translates into changes on the ground.

- **UNHCR's emergency preparedness and response is improving but faces some on-going challenges** – UNHCR's performance in this area is good, but may not be sufficient to respond quickly to new situations affecting populations of concern, a constant challenge for humanitarian organisations. UNHCR is reforming its supply management and intends to strengthen its standby partnerships to enhance the predictability and quality of deployments, but faces some constraints due to short-term and often earmarked donor support.
- **UNHCR is recognised for contributions to inter-agency processes but needs to improve its coordination with other actors** – UNHCR is a strong contributor to joint needs assessments, inter-agency plans, and Common Humanitarian Action Plans (CHAP) in countries where these are used. UNHCR could improve its sharing of information with partners and disbursing of technical cooperation through coordinated programs. While many donor and partner respondents consider UNHCR's coordination one of its strengths, some peer organisations consider this an area for improvement. (However, most countries surveyed do not have cluster coordination operations, which are where critical coordination among UN agencies takes place.)
- **UNHCR's evaluation function is improving but is constrained by limited resources** – The UNHCR Policy Development and Evaluation Service (PDES) is a relatively new unit that is focusing on evaluations that are tailored to the humanitarian nature of UNHCR's work and that provide rapid feedback in the field. The unit still needs to improve its evaluation coverage, quality control, and mechanisms for tracking the implementation of evaluation recommendations, which may require additional resources.²
- **UNHCR could enhance its transparency by sharing more of its documents** – While certain sensitive information must remain confidential, UNHCR could make some documents more widely available, as feasible given UNHCR's policy on information classification, handling and disclosure.³

² The PDES has recently developed a format for a follow-up matrix for evaluation findings and recommendations.

³ UNHCR is already planning to use its Global *Focus* data platform to make portions of its country operational plans available to donors and other key stakeholders by the end of 2011.

Overall MOPAN Ratings of UNHCR

The chart below shows the ratings on the 20 key performance indicators that MOPAN used to assess UNHCR in 2011. These indicators were designed to measure organisational effectiveness (practices and systems), not development results on the ground. The indicators were adapted to the work of humanitarian organisations to reflect: organisational practices and procedures related to the time-sensitive nature of crisis response, the need for intense coordination with other humanitarian actors, and the challenges of operating in zones of conflict or potential conflict. UNHCR received ratings of adequate or strong on all key performance indicators assessed by survey respondents, and document review ratings ranging from inadequate to strong; two key performance indicators were not assessed by the document review due to lack of information.

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

- 1 Providing direction for results
- 2 Corporate focus on humanitarian needs and results
- 3 Focus on thematic priorities
- 4 Country focus on results

Survey Respondents	Document Review
4.51	5
4.39	4
4.40	5
4.39	◇

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

- 5 Aid allocation decisions
- 6 Linking aid management to performance
- 7 Financial accountability
- 8 Using performance information
- 9 Managing human resources
- 10 Performance oriented programming
- 11 Delegating decision making
- 12 Adherence to humanitarian principles

4.23	4
4.32	4
4.28	4
4.18	3
4.38	4
4.29	◇
4.39	5
4.61	4

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

- 13 Adjusting procedures
- 14 Supporting inter-agency plans and appeals
- 15 Contributing to policy dialogue
- 16 Managing the cluster
- 17 Harmonising procedures

4.32	NA
4.62	NA
4.52	NA
4.34	NA
4.46	NA

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

- 18 Evaluating external results
- 19 Presenting performance information
- 20 Disseminating lessons learned

4.29	4
4.26	3
4.12	4

Legend	
Strong or above	4.50-6.00
Adequate	3.50-4.49
Inadequate or below	1.00-3.49
Document Review Data Unavailable	◇
Not assessed in the document review	NA

1. Introduction

1.1 MOPAN

This report presents the results of an assessment of the organisational effectiveness of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) that was conducted in 2011 by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN). In 2011 MOPAN also assessed four other multilateral organisations: the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

Background

MOPAN was established in 2002 in response to international fora on aid effectiveness and calls for greater donor harmonisation and coordination. The purpose of the network is to share information and experience in assessing the performance of multilateral organisations. MOPAN supports the commitments adopted by the international community to improve the impact and effectiveness of aid as reflected in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action. MOPAN's processes and instruments embody the principles of local ownership, alignment and harmonisation of practices, and results-based management (RBM).

MOPAN provides a joint approach (known as the Common Approach) to assess the organisational effectiveness of multilateral organisations. The approach was derived from existing bilateral assessment tools and complements and draws on other assessment processes for development organisations – such as the bi-annual Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and annual reports of the Common Performance Assessment System (COMPAS) published by the multilateral development banks. In the long term, MOPAN hopes that this approach will replace or reduce the need for other assessment approaches by bilateral donors.

MOPAN assesses four dimensions of organisational effectiveness

MOPAN has defined organisational effectiveness as the extent to which a multilateral organisation is organised to contribute to development and/or humanitarian results in the countries or territories where it operates. It does not assess a multilateral organisation's contributions to development results.

Based on a survey of stakeholders and a review of documents, MOPAN assessments provide a snapshot of a multilateral organisation's effectiveness in four dimensions:

- Developing strategies and plans that reflect good practices in managing for development results (strategic management)
- Managing operations by results to support accountability for results and the use of information on performance (operational management)
- Engaging in relationships with direct partners and donors at the country level in ways that contribute to aid effectiveness and that are aligned with the principles of the Paris Declaration (relationship management)
- Developing reporting mechanisms and learning strategies that facilitate the sharing of knowledge and information inside the organisation and with the development community (knowledge management).

Purpose of MOPAN assessments

MOPAN assessments are intended to:

- Generate relevant, credible and robust information MOPAN members can use to meet their domestic accountability requirements and fulfil their responsibilities and obligations as bilateral donors
- Provide an evidence base for MOPAN members, multilateral organisations and direct partners to discuss organisational effectiveness and, in doing so, build better understanding and improve organisational effectiveness and learning over time
- Support dialogue between MOPAN members, multilateral organisations and their partners, with a specific focus on improving organisational effectiveness over time, both at country and headquarters level.

The MOPAN methodology is evolving in response to what is being learned from year to year, and to accommodate multilateral organisations with different mandates. For example, the indicators and approach for the 2011 MOPAN review of humanitarian organisations were adapted to reflect the reality of these organisations.⁴

MOPAN assessment of UNHCR

This is the first time UNHCR has been assessed by MOPAN.

1.2 Profile of UNHCR

UNHCR was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1950. It is mandated to lead and co-ordinate international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide and to help stateless people.⁵ Its mandate is supported by various UN General Assembly Resolutions, the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951), the Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (1954), and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (1961). It works in various areas such as advocacy, assistance, asylum and migration, capacity building, durable solutions, emergency response, and protection. According to its original mandate, UNHCR's populations of concern include refugees, stateless people, and asylum-seekers. However, because of its expertise in displacement, UNHCR was authorised to broaden this mandate to include internally displaced people (IDPs) and returnees.

Governance and structure

UNHCR is based in Geneva, Switzerland, and also has a Global Service Centre in Budapest, Hungary that opened in 2008 as part of a major reform process. UNHCR manages most of its operations from 124 regional and branch offices and 272 field offices. The agency has approximately 7,190 employees, the majority of which are national staff.

⁴ MOPAN recognises the special nature of humanitarian assistance and its focus on saving lives and reducing suffering in natural and conflict-related disasters. The politically and time-sensitive nature of crisis response tends to focus greater attention on maintaining core humanitarian principles and on operational considerations such as speed of response, flexibility, and quality of coordination with other international actors over other development programming considerations such as sustainability and the thoroughness of longer-term planning. The MOPAN 2011 framework for assessing organisational effectiveness was adjusted accordingly.

⁵ Retrieved 14 June 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c2.html>

UNHCR is governed by the UN General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which established the UNHCR Executive Committee as its governing body in 1959. The Executive Committee is composed of 85 members⁶ who meet annually to review and approve UNHCR's programs and budget. Since 1995, the Standing Committee (a subsidiary of the Executive) has met three times a year to carry on work between annual plenary sessions. Throughout the year, the Standing Committee also holds informal consultative meetings on topics requiring in-depth discussion.

The High Commissioner, appointed by the UN General Assembly, is the head of UNHCR and responsible for the direction and control of the agency. He reports annually to ECOSOC and the General Assembly on UNHCR's work, and is assisted by a Deputy High Commissioner and Assistant High Commissioners for Protection and Operations. Mr António Guterres has been the High Commissioner since 2005.

Finances

Most of UNHCR's funding derives from voluntary contributions, 90 per cent of which comes from governments. Its annual budget has increased significantly in recent years and in 2011 was a record US\$3.32 billion.⁷

Organisational reform process

In 2006, UNHCR embarked on a major structural and management reform process that is now being fine-tuned. The reform involves various aspects of UNHCR's structure and management functions such as results-based management, decentralisation and regionalisation, human resources management, supply management, and oversight and accountability. During the first phase of the reform process (2006-2008), UNHCR reviewed its structures, identified gaps, and developed tools to make its practices more consistent with results-based management. Since 2009, UNHCR has been implementing the reform process and gradually mainstreaming new structures and management practices into its operations.⁸

The UNHCR website is: www.unhcr.org.

⁶ All MOPAN members are part of UNHCR's Executive Committee.

⁷ The budget is based on total requirements. Although the budget has been approved by UNHCR's Executive Committee, there is no guarantee it will be fully funded.

⁸ UNHCR (2010). *Update on UNHCR's structural and management change process* (EC/61/SC/CRP.17), (p. 2). Retrieved 15 June 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/4c18dc709.html>

2. MOPAN Methodology – 2011

2.1 Overview

Background

In 2009, MOPAN began to apply a new methodology known as the “Common Approach,” which broadens and extends the reach of the annual assessments that MOPAN has conducted since work began in 2003. The Common Approach draws on a survey of stakeholder perceptions and a review of documents published by the organisations assessed and other sources to examine organisational systems, practices and behaviours that MOPAN believes are important for aid effectiveness and that are likely to contribute to development or humanitarian results in the field.⁹ The assessment is structured around four areas of performance (called quadrants) – strategic management, operational management, relationship management, and knowledge management.

MOPAN’s methodology has changed significantly in the last two years and comparisons of this year’s assessments with previous assessments should take this into consideration. The following is a summary of the MOPAN methodology in 2011.¹⁰

MOPAN 2011

In 2011, MOPAN assessed the effectiveness of five multilateral organisations: the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

The assessment of UNHCR included perception data from MOPAN donors at headquarters and from respondents in the following countries: Bangladesh, Burundi, Ecuador, Nepal, the Syrian Arab Republic, and Tanzania.¹¹

Key Performance Indicators and Micro-indicators – Within each performance area, organisational effectiveness is described using key performance indicators (KPIs) that are measured with a series of micro-indicators (MIs). UNHCR was assessed using 20 KPIs and 83 MIs. These indicators were adapted in 2010 to reflect the operational realities of humanitarian organisations.

The indicators were assessed using data from a survey and document review. The survey collected perception data from a variety of stakeholders, which are described in Section 2.2. The review of documents relied on a set of criteria that provided a basis for the assessment of each micro-indicator. The approach to document review is described in Section 2.3.

The survey did not assess all micro-indicators; some were assessed only through document review. Consequently, some charts do not show survey scores for each KPI or MI. The full list of MIs assessed for UNHCR is provided in Volume II, Appendix V (KPI and MI Data by Quadrant).

⁹ Whether or not a multilateral organisation contributes to the achievement of results also depends on how it addresses development or humanitarian issues, the instruments it uses, the scale of its interventions, and the country contexts in which it operates.

¹⁰ The full methodology is presented in Volume II, Appendix I.

¹¹ MOPAN criteria for country selection include: multilateral organisation presence in-country, presence and availability of MOPAN members, no recent inclusion in the survey, the need for geographical spread. UNRWA and IDB required special considerations in 2011 because of their regional mandates.

2.2 Survey

MOPAN gathered stakeholder perception data through a survey of MOPAN donors, direct partners, recipient governments, and peer organisations as shown in Figure 2.1. MOPAN donor respondents were chosen by MOPAN member countries. The direct partner, recipient government and peer organisation respondents were identified by UNHCR.

Figure 2.1 UNHCR Survey Respondent Groups

Respondent groups	Description
Direct partners	Civil society organisation (mostly NGOs) that receive a direct transfer from UNHCR. They are acting as contractors or delivery agents and are referred to as the “implementing partners” of UNHCR.
Donors at headquarters	- MOPAN member representatives based at headquarters in the MOPAN country with oversight responsibility for the multilateral organisation - MOPAN member representatives based at the permanent mission or executive board office of the multilateral organisation
Donors in-country	MOPAN member representatives in country/regional offices (including embassies) who are familiar with the multilateral organisation
Peer organisations	Field representatives of UN organisations and international NGOs that make significant investments in humanitarian programming, that operate at the country level, and that tend to coordinate work with UNHCR
Recipient governments	Governments in countries selected for the assessment that receive the assistance or host the activities of UNHCR. This group includes officials from line ministries, central ministries (such as planning, finance, etc.), and other government officials.

The survey was customised for UNHCR and could be completed online in English, French, or Spanish or offline (paper, email, or interview) in these same languages, and in Arabic and Bengali. See Volume II (Appendix II) for the UNHCR survey. Individual responses to the survey were confidential to the independent consultants managing the online survey or collecting data offline in the field.

Respondent Ratings – Survey respondents were presented with statements describing an organisational practice, system, or behaviour and asked to rate the organisation’s performance on a scale of 1 to 6 as shown below.

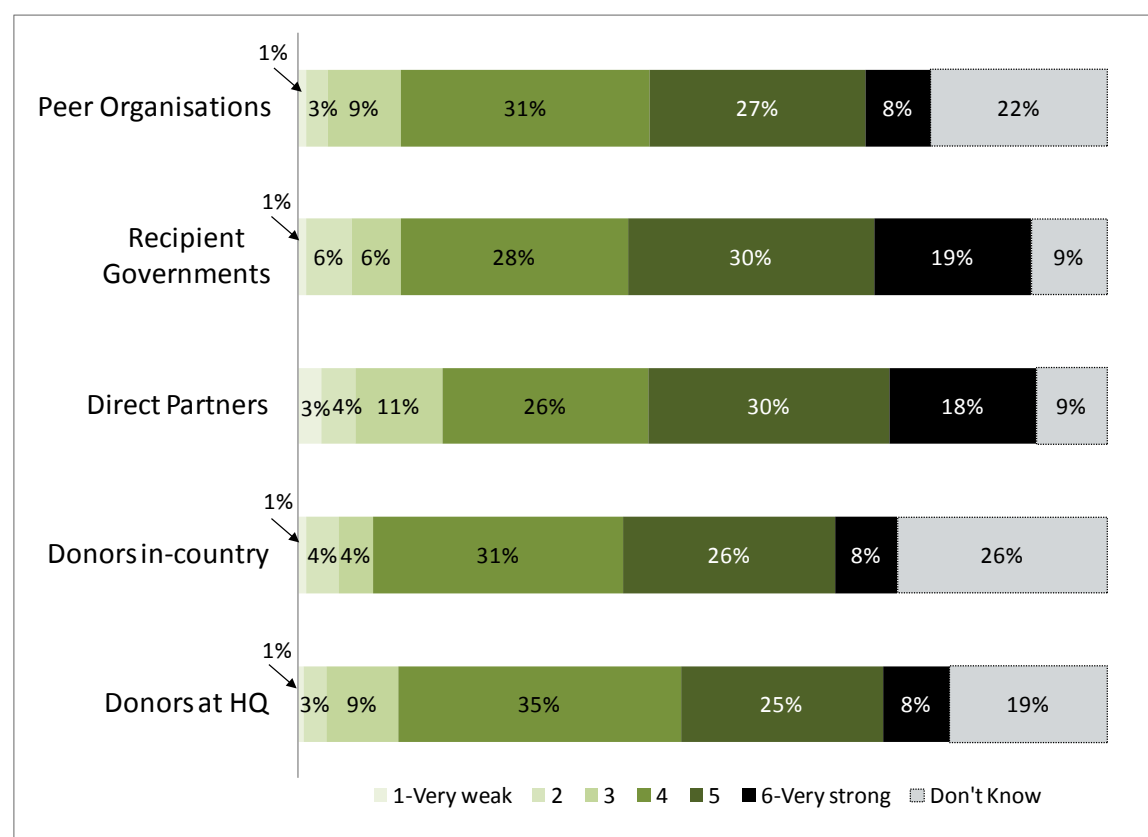
Figure 2.2 Respondent Rating Scale

Score	Rating	Definition
1	Very Weak	The multilateral organisation does not have this system in place and this is a source of concern.
2	Weak	The multilateral organisation has this system but there are important deficiencies.
3	Inadequate	The multilateral organisation’s system in this area has deficiencies that make it less than acceptable.
4	Adequate	The multilateral organisation’s system is acceptable in this area.
5	Strong	The multilateral organisation’s system is more than acceptable, yet without being “best practice” in this area.
6	Very Strong	The multilateral organisation’s system is “best practice” in this area.

In some cases, not all survey questions were answered, either because: 1) the individual chose not to answer, or 2) the question was not asked of that individual. In these cases, mean scores were calculated using the actual number of people responding to the question. As noted in the methodology (Volume II, Appendix I), 'don't know' survey responses were not factored into the calculation of mean scores. However, when the proportion of respondents answering 'don't know' was considered notable for a micro-indicator, this is indicated in the report.

The responses of various categories of respondents on the six choices, plus 'don't know' are summarised across all survey questions in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3 UNHCR - Distribution of Responses (n=206) on all Questions Related to Micro-Indicators



While there were responses in all six possible choices, relatively few responses overall were at the 'weak' end of the scale. Over one-fifth of the responses of peer organisations and MOPAN donors were 'don't know,' which is not unexpected given the potentially more limited familiarity of these groups with the operational specifics of UNHCR covered in certain questions. Direct partners and recipient governments gave few 'don't know' responses. (More data on distribution of responses for respondents can be found in Volume II, Appendix III.)

Survey Response Rate

MOPAN aimed to achieve a 70 per cent response rate from donors at headquarters and a 50 per cent response rate among the population of respondents in each of the survey countries (i.e., donors in-country, direct partners, recipient government and peer organisations). The number of respondents targeted in each category (i.e., the total population) and the actual response rates are presented in Figure 2.4 below. Response rates of all categories of respondents, except recipient governments, exceeded the 50 per cent target rate. The poor response rate of recipient governments is discussed in the subsequent section on limitations.

While there are wide variations in the response rates by category and location of respondents, UNHCR survey results reflect the views of 206 respondents.

Figure 2.4 Number of Survey Respondents for UNHCR by Country and Respondent Group

Country	Actual Number of Respondents (Total Population)					Total
	Peer organisations	Recipient governments	Direct partners	Donors in-country	Donors at headquarters	
Bangladesh	12 (12)	0 (4)	5 (6)	7 (12)		24 (34)
Burundi	4 (5)	--	14 (20)	3 (4)		21 (29)
Ecuador	4 (8)	6 (7)	12 (16)	2 (2)		24 (33)
Nepal	4 (6)	2 (5)	28 (30)	7 (12)		41 (53)
Syria	4 (8)	0 (12)	11 (12)	7 (9)		22 (41)
Tanzania	--	2 (4)	11 (27)	11 (17)		24 (48)
Total	28 (39)	10 (32)	81 (111)	37 (56)	50 (71)	206 (309)
Response Rate	72%	31%	73%	66%	70%	67%

Converting Individual Ratings to Mean Scores

As noted above, individuals responded to survey questions on a six-point scale where a rating of "1" meant a judgment of "very weak" up to a rating of "6" intended to represent a judgment of "very strong." MOPAN calculated a mean score for each group of respondents (e.g., donors at HQ). Since the mean score for a group of respondents was not necessarily a whole number (from 1 to 6) MOPAN assigned numerical ranges and descriptive ratings for each range (from very weak to very strong) as shown in Figure 2.5.

Figure 2.5 MOPAN Ranges and Descriptions

Range of the mean scores	Rating
1 to 1.49	Very Weak
1.50 to 2.49	Weak
2.50 to 3.49	Inadequate
3.50 to 4.49	Adequate
4.50 to 5.49	Strong
5.50 to 6.00	Very Strong

Please note that the ranges are represented to two decimal places, which is simply the result of a mathematical calculation and should not be interpreted as representing a high degree of precision. The ratings applied to the various KPIs should be viewed as indicative judgments rather than precise measurements.

Data Analysis

First level survey data analysis included calculations of mean scores, standard deviations, frequencies, 'don't know' responses, and content analysis of open-ended questions. The 'don't know' responses were removed from the calculation of mean scores, but the proportion of respondents choosing 'don't know' was retained as potentially useful data.

A weighting scheme was applied to ensure that no single respondent group or country was under-represented in the analysis. Due to the fact that the numbers of survey respondents differ – both among respondent categories and among survey countries – a weighting factor was applied to the survey data based on the survey response rate. The weighting was designed to give equal weight to: 1) the views of each respondent group, 2) the countries where the survey took place, and 3) respondent groups within each country where the survey took place. The mathematical basis for the weighting is described in Volume II, Appendix I.

Second level analysis examined differences in the responses among categories of respondents and when significant differences were found, these are noted in the report.¹² For a full description of survey data analysis see Volume II, Appendix I.

2.3 Document Review

The document review considered documents provided by UNHCR, available on its web site, or available through other web sites of the UN system. For each micro-indicator, a set of criteria were established which, taken together, were thought to represent good practice in that topic area. The rating on any micro-indicator depends on the number of criteria met by the organisation. While the document review assessed most micro-indicators, it did not assign a rating to all of them (when criteria had not been established). Consequently, some charts do not show document review scores for each KPI or MI.

The document review and survey used the same list of micro-indicators, but some questions in the document review were worded differently from those in the survey. The document review and survey also used the same rating scale, but scores are presented separately on each chart in the report to show their degree of convergence or divergence.

2.4 Strengths and Limitations of Methodology

MOPAN continues to improve methodology based on the experience of each year of implementation. The following strengths and limitations should be considered when reading MOPAN's report on UNHCR.

Strengths

- The MOPAN Common Approach is based on the core elements of existing bilateral assessment tools. In the long term, MOPAN hopes that this approach will replace or reduce the need for other assessment approaches by bilateral donors.
- It seeks perceptual information from different perspectives: MOPAN donors (at headquarters and in-country), direct partners/clients of multilateral organisations, peer organisations, and other relevant stakeholders. This is in line with the commitments made by donors to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action regarding harmonisation, partner voice, and mutual accountability.

¹² The normal convention for statistical significance was adopted ($p \leq .05$).

- It complements perceptual data with document review, thus adding an additional data source. This should enhance the analysis, provide a basis for discussion of agency effectiveness, and increase the validity of the assessment through triangulation of data sources.
- The reports undergo a validation process, including multiple reviews by MOPAN members, and review by the multilateral organisation being assessed.
- MOPAN strives for consistency across its survey questions and document review for each of the multilateral organisations, while allowing for customisation to account for differences between types of multilateral organisations.

Limitations

Data sources

- The MOPAN Common Approach asks MOPAN members and the organisations assessed to select the most appropriate individuals to complete the survey. MOPAN sometimes discusses the selection with the organisation being assessed; however, MOPAN has no means of determining whether the most knowledgeable and qualified individuals complete the survey.
- As noted in section 2.1, the countries surveyed in the 2011 assessment were selected based on established MOPAN criteria and do not include some of the countries where UNHCR has its largest operations.
- As evident in Figure 2.4, the assessment was not able to obtain responses from recipient governments in all of the countries surveyed. In the case of Syria, this could be due to the extremely sensitive political context at the time.
- The document review component works within the confines of an organisation's disclosure policy. At UNHCR, several documents (such as Country Operation Plans) could not be disclosed, resulting in partial information for conducting the assessment.¹³

Data Collection Instruments

- Three issues potentially affect survey responses. First, the survey instrument is long and a fatigue factor may affect responses and rates of response. Second, respondents may not have the knowledge to respond to all the questions (e.g., survey questions referring to internal operations of the organisation, such as financial accountability and delegation of decision-making, seem difficult for many respondents, who frequently answered 'don't know.')
- Third, a large number of 'don't know' responses may imply that respondents did not understand certain questions.
- The rating choices provided in the MOPAN survey may not be used consistently by all respondents, especially across the many cultures involved in the MOPAN assessment. One potential limitation is 'central tendency bias' (i.e., a tendency in respondents to avoid extremes on a scale). Cultural differences may also contribute to this bias as respondents in some cultures may be unwilling to criticise or too eager to praise.

¹³ UNHCR plans to make portions of the country operational plans more widely available to donors and other stakeholders by the end of 2011.

Triangulation of Data

- The validity of assessments is enhanced when multiple data sources are combined. While the Common Approach combines a stakeholder perception survey and a review of documents that can provide corroborating data (e.g., evaluation reports), it does not include interviews, focus groups, and other data collection methods with the organisation's staff or other respondents that could be helpful in analysing an organisation's current results-oriented behaviours, systems, and procedures.

Data Analysis

- MOPAN's practice of weighting responses according to the number of respondents in each category amplifies the voices of the smaller groups of respondents. The relatively large number of responses of UNHCR's direct partners and MOPAN donors, in contrast to the small number of responses from recipient governments underscores the need for caution in interpreting comparisons of the scores on the charts involving the recipient government category.
- While the document review can comment on the contents of a document, it cannot assess the extent to which the spirit of that document has been implemented within the organisation (unless implementation is documented elsewhere).

Basis for Judgment

- Although MOPAN used recognised standards and criteria for what constitutes good practice for a multilateral organisation, such criteria did not exist for all of the MOPAN indicators. As a result, many of the criteria used in reviewing document content were developed by MOPAN in the course of the assessment process. The criteria are a work in progress and should not be considered definitive standards.
- In the document review, low ratings may be due to unavailability of organisational documents that meet the MOPAN criteria (some of which require a sample of a type of document, such as country plans, or require certain aspects to be documented explicitly).
- The Common Approach assessment produces numerical scores or ratings that appear to have a high degree of precision, yet can only provide general indications of how an organisation is doing and a basis for discussion among MOPAN members, the multilateral organisation, and other stakeholders, including recipient governments, direct partners, and peer organisations.

Despite some limitations, the Assessment Team believes that the data generally present a reasonable picture of systems associated with the organisational effectiveness of multilateral organisations.

3. Main Findings

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the 2011 MOPAN assessment of UNHCR. Findings are based on respondent survey data and document review.

- Section 3.2 presents overall ratings on the performance of UNHCR and summarises respondent views on its primary strengths and areas for improvement;
- Section 3.3 provides findings on each of the four areas of performance (strategic, operational, relationship, and knowledge management).

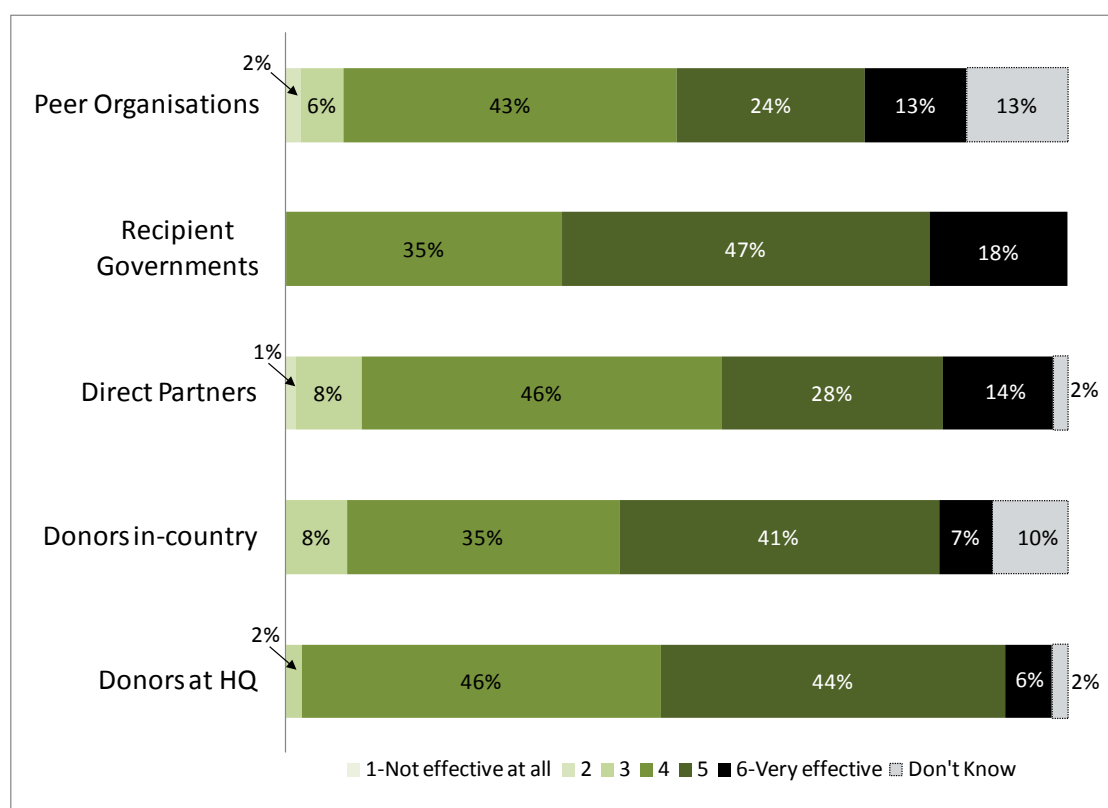
3.2 Overall Ratings

This section provides a summary of overall ratings. It includes: survey respondent ratings of UNHCR's overall internal effectiveness, survey respondent views on UNHCR's strengths and areas for improvement, and survey and document review ratings for all key performance indicators.

Survey ratings of UNHCR internal effectiveness

MOPAN has defined 'internal effectiveness' as the extent to which a multilateral organisation is organised to support partners and beneficiaries to produce and deliver expected results. Respondents were asked the question: "How would you rate the overall internal effectiveness of UNHCR?" As shown in Figure 3.1, recipient government respondents and MOPAN donors at headquarters gave higher ratings on UNHCR's internal effectiveness than other respondent groups (with 50 per cent or more of each group providing ratings of 5 or 6 on this question).

Figure 3.1 Overall Ratings of Internal Effectiveness by Respondent Group



Respondents' Views on UNHCR's Strengths and Areas for Improvement

The survey included two open-ended questions that asked respondents to identify UNHCR's greatest strengths and areas of improvement. Out of 206 respondents, 199 provided responses to the question on strengths and 186 on areas for improvement.¹⁴ The comments are summarised below in order to illustrate the range of perceptions; they have been qualified by the approximate proportion of respondents holding such a view.

Many respondents considered UNHCR's two greatest overall strengths to be its clear mandate to provide protection for refugees and its cooperation with partners.

Almost 30 per cent of the respondents stated that the greatest strength of UNHCR is related to its mandate. They noted in particular UNHCR's legal mandate to provide international protection to refugees, and the clarity and focus of its mandate.

UNHCR's cooperation and coordination with partners were recognised as strengths by 25 per cent of

respondents, primarily by direct partners that coordinate with UNHCR in the field and by donors in-country. Its respect for partners and capacity building of partners were often cited as well.

Other areas of strength (noted by 15 to 22 per cent of respondents) included UNHCR's:

- Committed, competent, and professional staff
- Operational capacity and procedures
- Flexibility and prompt response to rapid onset situations
- Experience, expertise, and leadership in refugee matters
- Field presence.

Survey respondent comments on UNHCR strengths

"The organisation has a unique mandate and a highly dedicated staff." (Donor at headquarters)

"UNHCR's mandate is a particularly important one. It is also a respected leader in refugee issues with the authority to engage government in sensitive issues and to advocate for the rights of refugees." (Peer organisation)

"One of UNHCR greatest strengths is the continuous attempt to coordinate between partners to develop a common working plan that best suit the beneficiaries." (Direct partner)

"Ability to plan for and respond effectively to essentially unpredictable situations" (Recipient government)

¹⁴ Respondents who wrote "no comment" or something similar were filtered out of the analysis.

UNHCR's coordination with UN agencies, partners, and governments emerged as its greatest area for improvement.

Respondents have mixed opinions regarding UNHCR's coordination with UN agencies, partners, governments, and peer organisations. While some donors in-country and direct partners considered this one of UNHCR's strengths, as noted above, this was cited more often as an area for improvement – by 37 per cent of respondents overall and most notably by 63 per cent of peer organisations, who mainly cited UNHCR's poor coordination with UN agencies.

Other areas for improvement (mentioned by 10 to 15 per cent of respondents overall) included:

- Dissemination of information to partners, stakeholders, the public, and internally
- Human resources (particularly insufficient and under-qualified staff, staff turnover, underpaid staff)
- Staying true to its mandate (i.e., it is perceived as compromising its mandate, doing longer term development work instead of focusing on its mandate, etc.).

Survey respondent comments on UNHCR areas for improvement

"Whilst UNHCR's response is often rapid and effective it needs to improve the strategic and collaborative approach with other actors in the field, particularly within the UN family and the cluster approach." (Donor at headquarters)

"The agency can better remunerate and make greater utilisation of local staff." (Recipient government)

"It would be useful if UNHCR could share information automatically also to those donor agencies which are not in the so called core group." (Donor in-country)

"UNHCR should include its partner organisations in decision making process (it should be more participatory). It should respect the view of Host community in any decision making process concerned with the Host community." (Direct partner)

"It still often operates in isolation. Joint programmes in its true sense (common workplans and joint fundraising) between UNHCR and other UN agencies are rare." (Peer organisation)

Overall Ratings of Key Performance Indicators

Figure 3.2 shows scores from both the document review and the survey on the key performance indicators (KPI) of the MOPAN 2011 assessment. The grey bar presents the survey score, while the black diamond presents the document review score. For example, on the first indicator, "providing direction for results", UNHCR received a score of 4.50 (strong) from the survey, and a score of 5 (strong) from the document review.

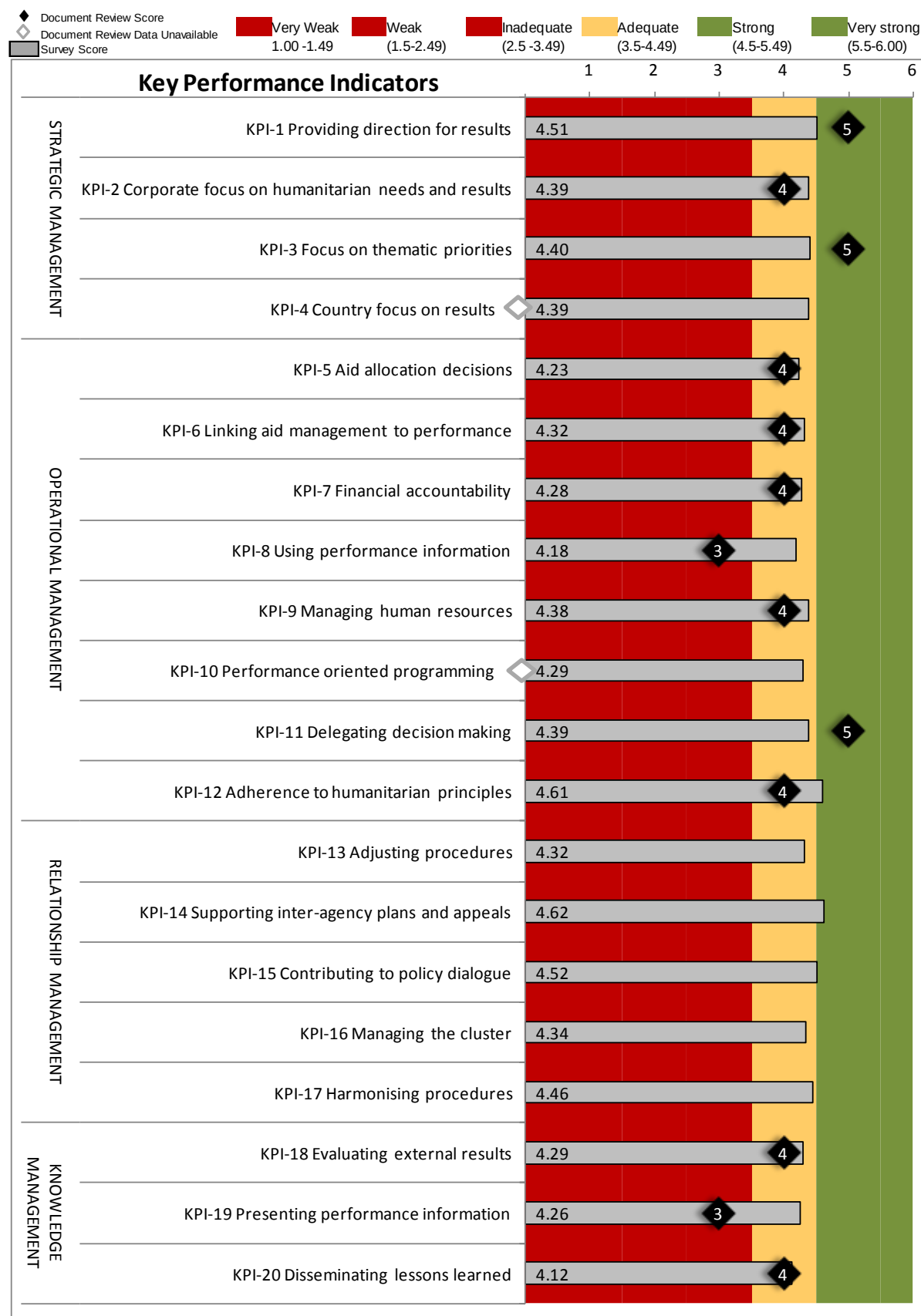
In the overall ratings from the survey and document review, UNHCR was seen to perform adequately or better on the majority of key performance indicators.

In survey data, UNHCR received scores of adequate or strong on all 20 KPIs. Out of the 78 micro-indicators assessed in the survey, UNHCR received 20 ratings of strong and 58 ratings of adequate. It did not receive any ratings of very strong, very weak, weak or inadequate.

In the document review, UNHCR received scores of adequate or better on 11 out of 13 KPIs rated.¹⁵

The survey and document review ratings differed on several KPIs which were rated lower by the document review than by survey respondents. The reasons for these differences are discussed in the following sections on each KPI. In some cases, document review ratings were negatively affected because some of the documents required for the review were not in the public domain.

¹⁵ While KPIs and micro-indicators were considered in the document review, not all were rated. See section 2.3.

Figure 3.2 Overall Ratings on Key Performance Indicators (mean scores, all respondents and document review ratings)

3.3 UNHCR Performance in Strategic, Operational, Relationship, and Knowledge Management

3.3.1 Overview

This section presents the results of the 2011 MOPAN assessment of UNHCR in four performance areas (quadrants): Strategic, Operational, Relationship, and Knowledge Management.

The following sections (3.3.2 to 3.3.5) provide the overall survey and document review ratings for the KPIs in each quadrant, the mean scores by respondent group, and findings based on an analysis of survey and document review ratings in each quadrant.

Where statistically significant differences among categories of respondents were found, these differences are noted. Divergent ratings between the survey results and document review ratings are also noted.

The survey data for each KPI and MI by quadrant are presented in Volume II, Appendix V. The document review ratings are presented in Volume II, Appendix VI.

3.3.2 Strategic Management

Stakeholders rated UNHCR as adequate or strong in all areas of strategic management. The document review rated UNHCR as adequate to strong in most areas other than those related to its results framework.

Figure 3.3 shows the overall survey and document review ratings for the four KPIs in the strategic management quadrant.

Survey respondents rated UNHCR as adequate or strong on all areas in strategic management. They gave higher ratings on indicators that relate to UNHCR's strategy and leadership on results management. Their responses suggest that UNHCR's value system supports a results-orientation and focuses on its direct partners and beneficiaries. UNHCR's implementation of human-rights based approaches, as a cross-cutting priority, and its consultation with partners in developing a humanitarian response were also noted by survey respondents in their ratings.

According to the document review, UNHCR is strong in making key strategic documents available to key partners including the public, having an organisational strategy based on a clear mandate, and in its focus on cross-cutting thematic priorities. It also has taken important steps in promoting results management. However, there are lower ratings on indicators related to UNHCR's Results Framework.

As noted earlier, UNHCR has embarked on a major structural and management reform process that is being fine-tuned at the time of this assessment. This reform covers different aspects of UNHCR's structure and management functions, one of which is results-based management. In 2009, the reform process entered the implementation phase. New tools and practices have thus recently been implemented and in some cases it is too early to assess their results, at least from the documents accessible for the review.

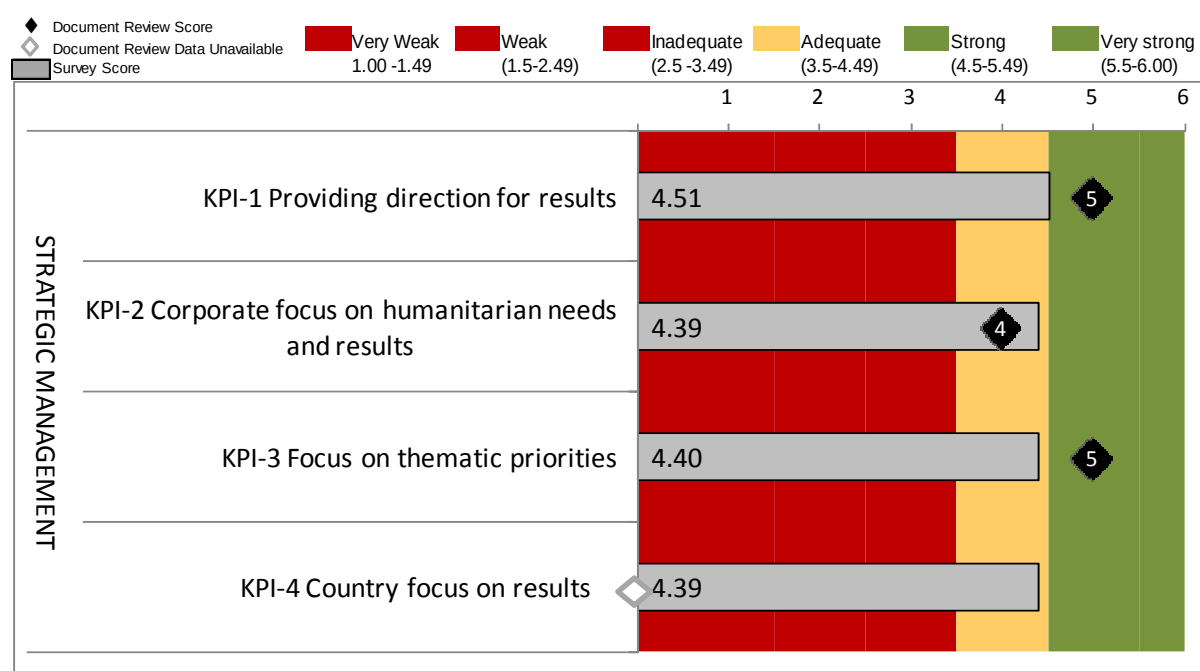
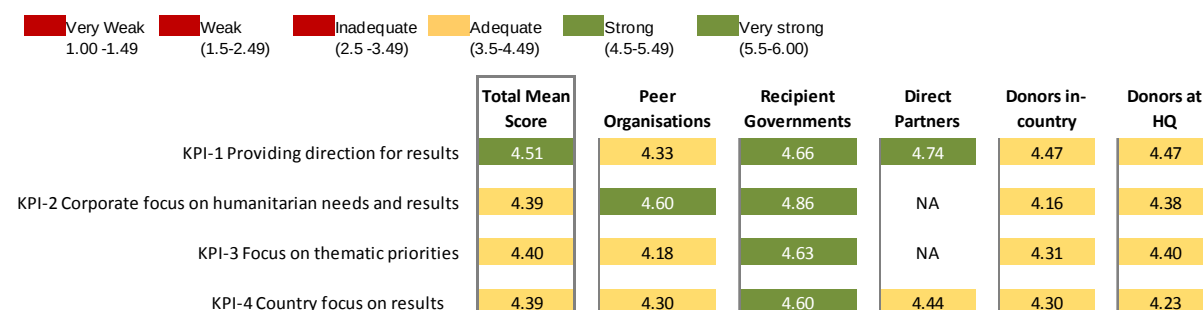
Figure 3.3 Quadrant I: Strategic Management, Survey and Document Review Ratings

Figure 3.4 shows the mean scores for the four KPIs for all survey respondents, and by category of respondents.

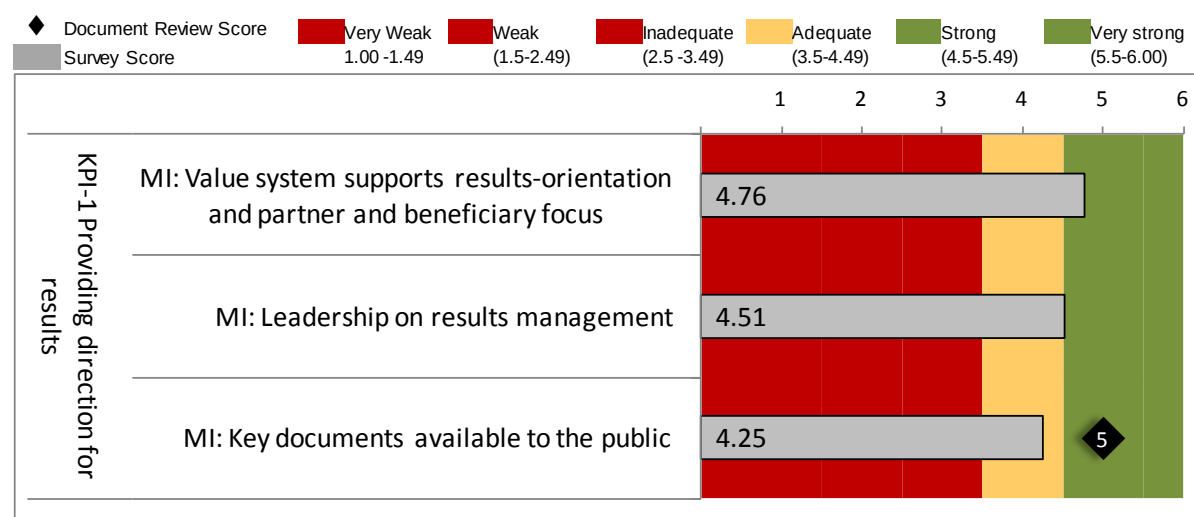
Figure 3.4 Quadrant I: Strategic Management, Mean Scores by Respondent Group

KPI 1: Providing Direction for Results

Finding 1: Survey respondents consider that UNHCR's executive management provides strong direction for the achievement of external/beneficiary focused results. UNHCR also makes its key strategic and organisation-wide documents available to the public on its web site.

UNHCR was rated as adequate or above on this KPI by 77 per cent of respondents. Respondents from recipient governments and direct partners gave UNHCR higher ratings than respondents from peer organisations and MOPAN donors. The document review, which only rated the MI on the availability of key documents, gave UNHCR a score of strong as key organisational documents are available on UNHCR web site.¹⁶

Figure 3.5 KPI 1: Providing Direction for Results, Ratings of Micro-Indicators



MI 1.1 – Value system supports results-orientation and direct partner and beneficiary focus

The majority of survey respondents provided ratings of adequate or higher on all four questions in this MI (which asked about UNHCR's focus on results, humanitarian partners, and direct beneficiaries, as well as its respect for humanitarian principles).

Respondents from recipient governments gave UNHCR higher ratings than other respondent groups for its focus on results (76 per cent providing a rating of strong or very strong). Donors at headquarters were less positive than most of the other respondent groups about UNHCR's focus on humanitarian partners, a difference that is statistically significant. However, UNHCR's respect for humanitarian principles received a rating of strong – this was the highest overall score of the MOPAN assessment, and also the highest score from donors at headquarters.

MI 1.2 – Leadership on results management

Among MOPAN donors at headquarters and respondents from recipient governments, the only groups asked about this MI, 81 per cent agreed that UNHCR's senior management shows leadership on results management. Ratings from recipient governments were higher than those from donors at headquarters.

¹⁶ However, as noted in other parts of the assessment, the documentation on certain topics, such as country operations and different levels of the organisational results framework, are not in the public domain.

MI 1.3 – Key documents available to the public

Overall, all respondent groups agreed that UNHCR's practice of making key documents available to key partners, including the public, is adequate. The MOPAN criteria for the review of documents focused on strategic organisation-wide documents such as the Statute of the UNHCR, Executive and Standing Committees documents, Global Appeals and Global Reports, organisational charts, audit and evaluation reports, and budgets. All of these are on UNHCR website in English, and some in French and other languages. Current country operational plans, however, are not available. Nonetheless, portions of these plans will be made available to the donor community on line through the Global *Focus* software.¹⁷ Since 2010, UNHCR has had a comprehensive policy on information classification, handling and disclosure, although this policy is not available on its website.

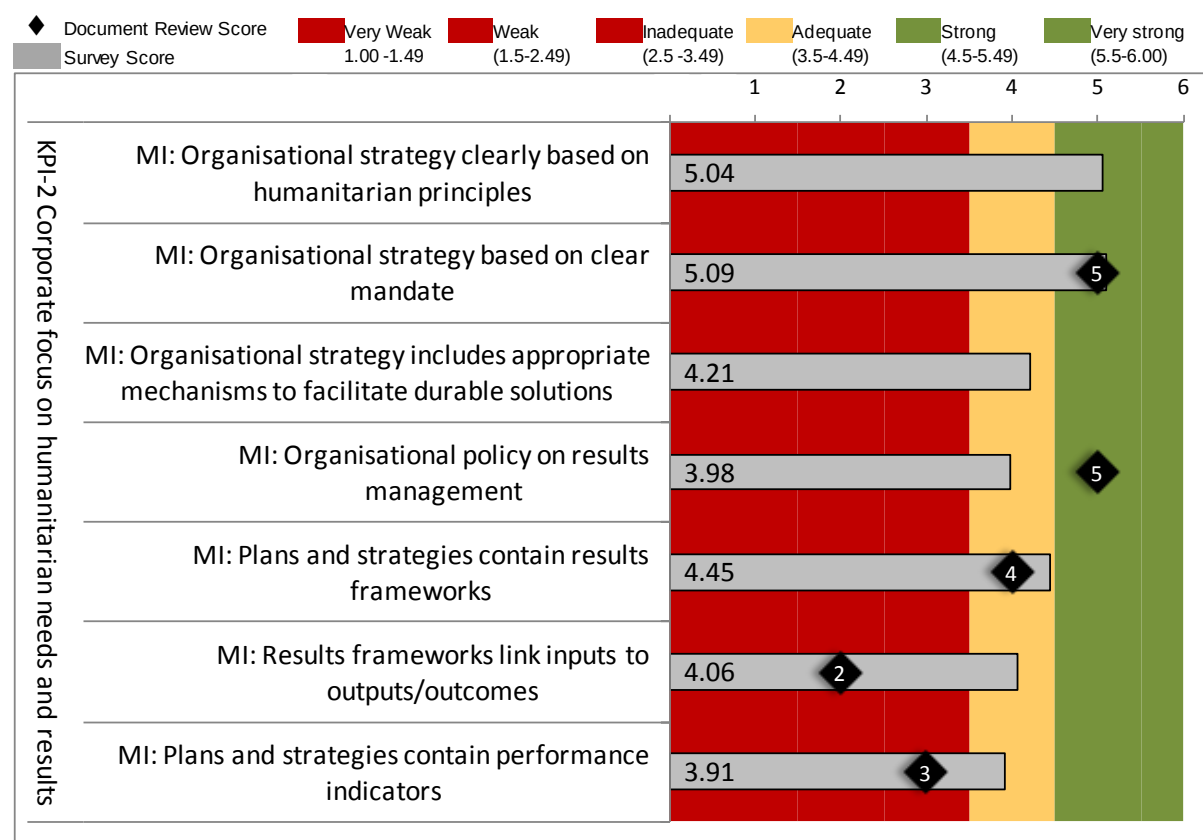
KPI 2: Corporate Focus on Humanitarian Needs and Results

Finding 2: UNHCR's organisational strategy has a strong focus on humanitarian needs. The document review found that UNHCR is strengthening its results-based management, but it has put in place a complex system, and, not surprisingly, its results framework still requires fine tuning.

As noted above, UNHCR is making a number of changes to improve its results focus. Various initiatives have been undertaken since 2006: i) the introduction of the Results Framework, an overarching protection-based framework describing the results UNHCR wants to achieve, ii) the utilisation of the *Focus* software, a tool to support a results-based management system, iii) the use of an analytical framework called Global Strategic Priorities.

The survey asked all respondents other than direct partners about UNHCR's focus on humanitarian needs and results at a corporate level. Overall, they rated UNHCR as adequate or strong on the seven MIs in this KPI, suggesting that progress is being made in these areas. Respondents from peer organisations and recipient governments gave higher ratings than MOPAN donors. The document review ratings on this KPI vary from weak to strong.

¹⁷ As UNHCR notes, however, standard procedure is to invite most stakeholders (host government, implementing partners, donors) to a workshop in which the broad parameters of the annual programming exercise are discussed.

Figure 3.6 KPI 2: Corporate Focus on Humanitarian Needs and Results, Ratings of Micro-Indicators**MI 2.1 – Organisational strategy clearly based on humanitarian principles**

The majority of respondents (88 per cent) provided ratings of adequate or higher on this MI. UNHCR's strategy is reflected in its Global Appeal, which is published annually, and contains the Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs) that provide a blueprint for UNHCR operations.

The overview written by the High Commissioner in the most recent Global Appeal¹⁸ insists on UNHCR's adherence to the principles of neutrality, independence, and impartiality. The rest of the Global Appeal does not refer to the humanitarian principles per se, but it clearly reflects the spirit of those principles.

MI 2.2 – Organisational strategy based on a clear mandate

Both the document review and the survey rated UNHCR as strong on this MI. The majority of respondents (85 per cent) gave UNHCR a rating of adequate or above, and 73 per cent gave ratings of strong or very strong.

The document review found that the Statute and the Global Appeal 2011 Update are aligned, although the links are not explicit. UNHCR's mandate was established in its Statute (1951) and subsequently revised by General Assembly resolutions.¹⁹ The Global Appeal 2011 has seven Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs) that give an indication of how UNHCR will implement its mandate for the protection of refugees and other populations of concern. (Six of the GSPs are linked to international protection and one is linked to UNHCR management.)

¹⁸ UNHCR (2010). *Global Appeal 2011 Update*. Retrieved 2 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/ga11/index.html#/home>

¹⁹ UNHCR's assistance of IDPs is not part of the organisation's original mandate, but is accepted as long as it does not undermine its mandate.

MI 2.3 – Organisational strategy includes appropriate mechanisms to facilitate durable solutions

One of UNHCR's Global Strategic Priorities, and an important part of its protection mandate, is to intensify efforts to find durable solutions for people of concern. Overall, survey respondents rated UNHCR as adequate on having appropriate mechanisms in its strategy to facilitate these solutions. Respondents from recipient governments rated UNHCR as strong while respondents from peer organisations provided a rating that was in the "adequate" range but significantly lower than ratings of other groups.

MI 2.4 – Organisational policy on results management

Donors at headquarters, the only respondent group asked, rated UNHCR as adequate overall in ensuring the application of results-based management across the organisation. However, they also gave this MI the highest number of inadequate responses (24 per cent).

The review of documents focused on UNHCR's policy and institutional framework for promoting results-based management (RBM), including the efforts to build institutional capacity for RBM. UNHCR has recently implemented a series of initiatives that, together, provide the framework for strengthening its results focus. The 2010 review of RBM within UNHCR, called *Measure for measure: A field-based snapshot of the implementation of results based management in UNHCR*,²⁰ commented on the positive contributions to building UNHCR capacities in this area, while noting some implementation constraints such as the limited impact on the organisational culture and the demanding nature of this broad and complex reform. The management response to this review recognised the need for more training on RBM and promised to increase training in this area, which was started in the first quarter of 2011.

MI 2.5 – Plans and strategies contain results frameworks

The majority of survey respondents (77 per cent) perceived UNHCR's strategy to adequately contain explicit management and humanitarian results.

In December 2008, UNHCR introduced a Results Framework as part of the reforms it has undertaken in the area of results-based management. The framework includes results at different levels (i.e., goals, objectives, and more than 700 outputs) and is embedded in UNHCR's *Focus* software.²¹ The MOPAN assessment is based on a review of the Results Framework and the Global Strategic Priorities for 2011.²²

The Global Strategic Priorities (GSP) represent an improvement over the previous Global Strategic Objectives presented in the Global Appeals 2008-2009 and 2009. Indeed, the latter only presented the objectives and their respective performance targets whereas the GSPs now present the priorities with their indicators, current situations (baselines), and targets.

²⁰ UNHCR (2010). *A field-based snapshot of the implementation of results based management in UNHCR*, Retrieved 2 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/4cf3ad8f9.html>

²¹ *Ibid.*, (p.19)

²² Although the full Results Framework in *Focus* is not available on-line, UNHCR is currently working on an interface to enable Executive Committee members to have access to part of the system's operational planning data. This interface should be established by the end of 2011.

The Results Framework provides standard outputs that are associated with each objective/impact indicator, and it reflects the significant effort that UNHCR has made to categorise its organisational activities and link them to results. However, it is only the second full year of implementation and UNHCR is still fine tuning this framework. The sheer number of outputs, and the need to balance country and operation specificity with corporate needs for performance information, may continue to generate some challenges.²³

MI 2.6 – Results frameworks link inputs to outputs and outcomes

There was a divergence between the ratings of the document review (weak) and the survey (adequate) on this MI.

Donors at headquarters, the only respondent group asked, perceived UNHCR's results frameworks to have adequate causal links from inputs through to outputs and outcomes.

Focus, UNHCR's system to support results based management, provides the platform for "technically" linking the inputs to outputs and higher level results. The system will not be able to portray the theory of change that links the outputs to the kinds of impacts desired in a particular context. The linkages between the different levels of results would have to be further specified in narratives of country operation plans (as noted below in KPI 4.)

As in other organisations, there is a sizable causal distance between the outputs identified and the higher level result (objective/impact indicator). As a result, there may be some challenges associated with collecting and using the data collected on such a large number of standard outputs. In particular, we see challenges in ensuring that the data collected (output level) can support analysis of the contributions these outputs are making to the higher level results – the objective or impact indicator in UNHCR's Results Framework. UNHCR is currently revising its Results Framework to improve the formulation of objectives and outputs. The new Results Framework will be implemented in the 2012-2013 planning exercises.

MI 2.7 – Plans and strategies contain performance indicators

Donors at headquarters considered UNHCR's strategy to adequately include measurable indicators at output and outcome levels. Other respondent groups were not asked this question.

The document review, however, assessed UNHCR as inadequate on this MI. At the level of GSPs, the indicators are sometimes relevant to the results they are associated with in the framework. Most indicators are not clear and lack specificity and may pose measurement challenges. One of the positive aspects of the GSPs is that they have targets that should be achieved by the end of 2011, and which will become the basis for reporting. Monitoring progress may prove challenging, however, given that for some of the indicators, the baselines (i.e., current situation) and the targets do not use the same unit of analysis.

At the output level, many of the indicators tend to focus on volume of activity. In its on-going review of the Results Framework, UNHCR is attempting to modify indicators to make them more measurable.

²³ Some of the challenges are referenced in the most recent report of the UN Board of Auditors (2011), which analysed UNHCR's progress in performance reporting and results-based management, and the study entitled *Measure for measure: A field-based snapshot of the implementation of results based management in UNHCR* (2010).

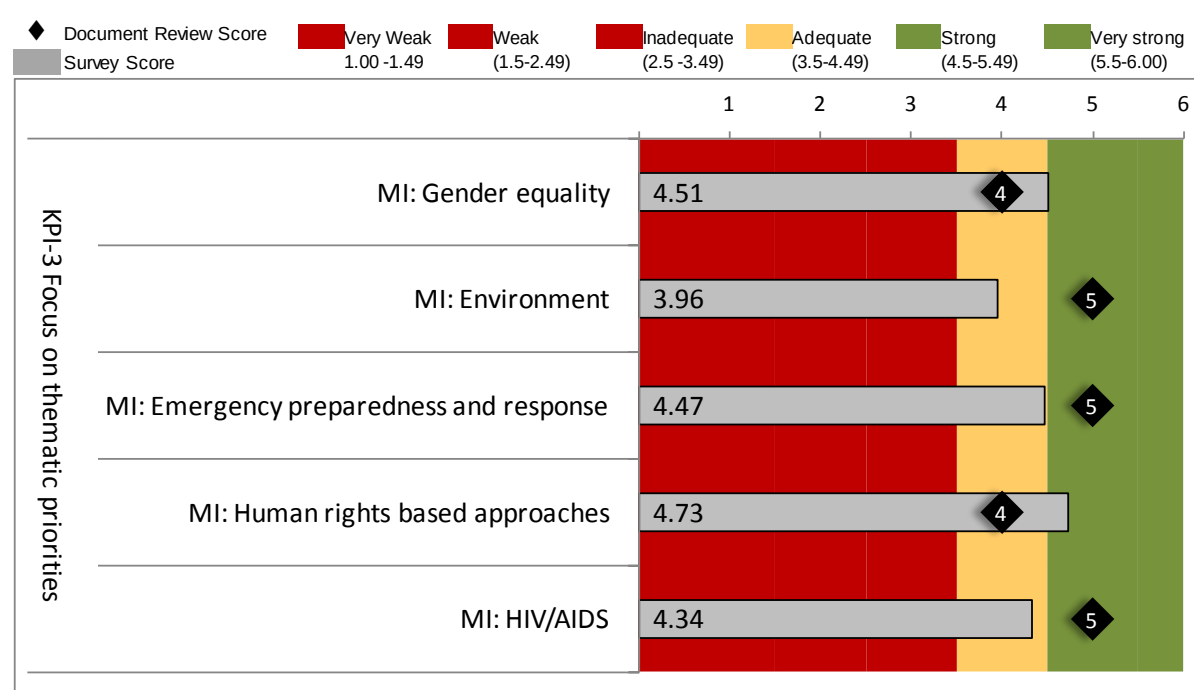
KPI 3: Focus on Thematic Priorities

Finding 3: UNHCR's focus on cross-cutting thematic priorities was rated as adequate by survey respondents, and the document review assessed UNHCR's performance in this area as strong.

The MOPAN Common Approach examined five cross-cutting thematic priorities or focus areas in UNHCR: gender equality, environmental policy and assessment practices, emergency preparedness and response, human rights-based approaches, and HIV/AIDS.

The survey and document review both rated UNHCR as adequate or strong on all five thematic priorities. Overall, respondents from recipient governments rated UNHCR as strong on this KPI, while other respondent groups rated it as adequate. Direct partners were not asked about this KPI.

Figure 3.7 KPI 3: Focus on Thematic Priorities, Ratings of Micro-Indicators



MI 3.1 – Gender equality

The majority of respondents (80 per cent) provided ratings of adequate or higher on UNHCR's mainstreaming of gender equality into its programmatic work. Respondents from recipient governments rated UNHCR higher than the other groups.

The document review rated UNHCR as adequate on this MI. While the Global Appeal 2011 does not identify gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting priority per se, it emphasises the importance of implementing the age, gender and diversity mainstreaming (AGDM) strategy more effectively.

Some of the measures introduced in the context of the AGDM strategy illustrate UNHCR's efforts to ensure that gender can be mainstreamed by both its institutional and programming practices and systems and its staff. The AGDM strategy includes an accountability framework that requires staff to review the implementation of actions undertaken and report annually on progress.

Since 2007, UNHCR also has had a policy on achieving gender equity in staffing.

In 2010, an independent evaluation of the first phase of the implementation of the AGDM strategy (2007-2009) found that the strategy was broad, innovative, and highly relevant to UNHCR. It also noted that its implementation was affected by a lack of capacity, investment and senior management support, and that there had been inconsistent performance in meeting AGDM objectives. Thus, although interim results at policy, advocacy, and operational levels were positive, more effort and time would be required for UNHCR to fully mainstream gender and diversity in all its operations.

MI 3.2 – Environment

Overall, survey respondents agreed that UNHCR sufficiently addresses how it will take environmental issues into account when delivering humanitarian action.

The document review rated UNHCR as strong on this MI. The Global Appeal 2011 specifies that environmental conservation and sustainable management of natural resources are priorities for UNHCR, and includes environmental protection as one of UNHCR's priorities. The organisation's Environmental Guidelines recognise environmental issues as being cross-sectoral. They commit the organisation to environmentally responsible practices in its internal management (procurement practices, sectoral guidelines/manuals, and staff training in planning, programming, supervising and monitoring environment-related activities) and specify measures to be taken in refugee situations (such as appointing an environmental specialist/coordinator/focal point and establishing an environmental task force).

MI 3.3 – Emergency preparedness and response

Survey respondents rated UNHCR as adequate on this MI. Donors at headquarters and in-country and respondents from recipient governments rated UNHCR as strong while respondents from peer organisations rated it as adequate on its integration of emergency preparedness and response into its work. The differences in ratings between respondents from peer organisations and the other groups were statistically significant.

The document review rated UNHCR as strong on this MI. Emergency preparedness and response is part of the seventh Global Strategic Priority (GSP) identified in the Global Appeal 2011, which is used to identify local priorities and give focus to protection interventions. Moreover, the Global Appeal identifies this area as a key function that UNHCR will try to strengthen and its Global Report 2010 reports on the progress in 2010 to reach the target in this area. UNHCR also created a Handbook for Emergencies, which has a section on emergency management that provides guidance on the various activities to be undertaken in emergency preparedness and response phases (e.g., contingency planning and early warning, initial needs, operations planning, coordination and site-level organisation, etc.).

UNHCR conducted a review of the Office's emergency preparedness in 2009 and recently developed an organisation-wide approach to the mobilisation of human resources for emergencies.

MI 3.4 – Human rights-based approaches

The majority of survey respondents (85 per cent) provided ratings of adequate or higher on this MI, and the document review rated UNHCR as adequate.

To some extent, human rights are at the centre of UNHCR because its mandate is to ensure that all refugees and people of concern are provided the right to international protection. The Global Appeal 2011 specifies that UNHCR will focus on human rights principles in all areas of its work; the Office's commitment to a human rights-based approach in its work with people of concern has been reinforced by the Executive Committee. There is evidence that UNHCR provides training and guidelines to its staff on human rights, in order to strengthen the organisation's capacity in this area.

MI 3.5 – HIV/AIDS

Overall, survey respondents rated UNHCR as adequate on this MI, and the document review rated it as strong.

The Global Appeal 2011 identifies HIV/AIDS as a cross-cutting priority and the GSPs include HIV/AIDS as a priority under GSP 4. Moreover, in UNHCR Strategic Plan for HIV (2008-2012), one of the strategic objectives for UNHCR is linked to using a multi-sectoral approach to HIV/AIDS. A 2009 report noted that UNHCR intended to include “HIV programming as a cross-cutting issue into all clusters of the humanitarian reform process.”²⁴

The Global Appeal 2011 and the Strategic Plan for HIV (2008-2012) commit the organisation to build staff capacity in HIV/AIDS and UNHCR has developed various tools in collaboration with other organisations to support these efforts.²⁵

KPI 4: Country Focus on Results

Finding 4: UNHCR’s country strategies for protracted relief operations are adequately results-focused, according to survey respondents. UNHCR documents suggest that progress has been made with regard to enhancing the focus on results in country programming.

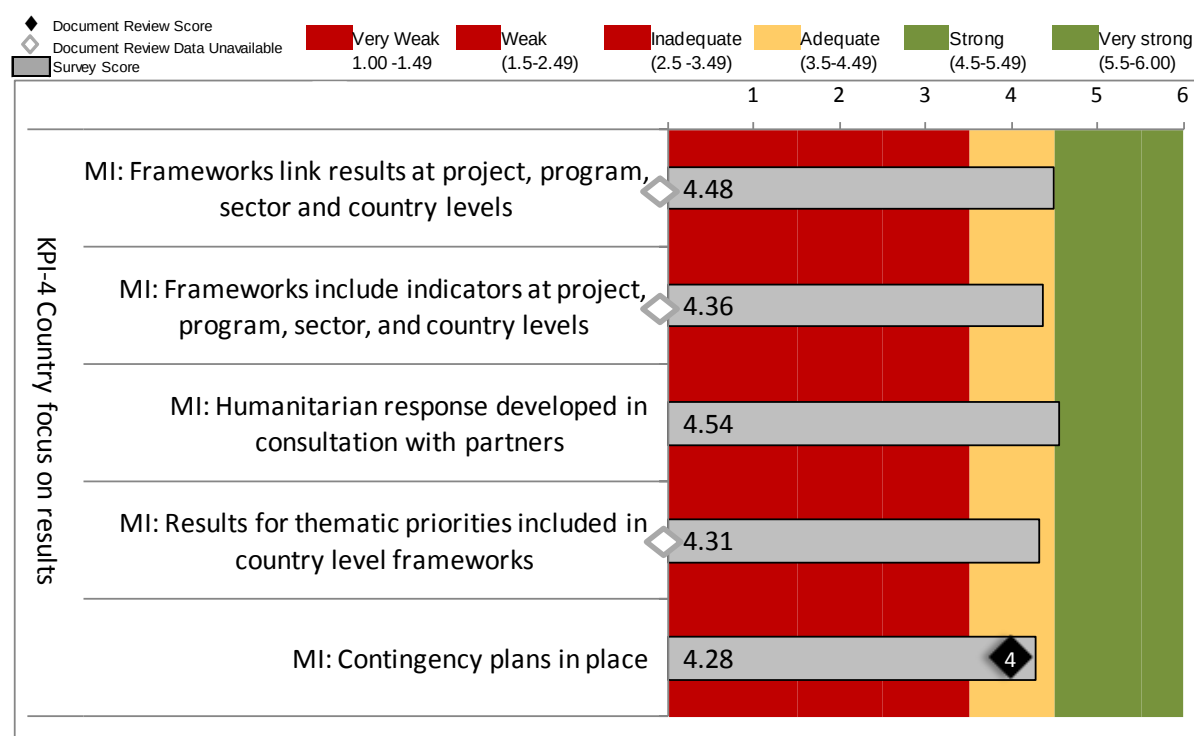
UNHCR’s Country Operation Plans (COPs) are its strategic documents for protracted relief operations. UNHCR revised its country programming approach based on the principles of results-based management. COPs for 2010 and 2011 have been prepared using a new approach that uses UNHCR’s Results Framework and the new *Focus* software. Overall, survey respondent groups considered UNHCR’s country strategies to be adequately results-focused.

In general, COPs are internal documents.²⁶ As a result, the MOPAN assessment does not provide a rating on most of the following micro-indicators (which require samples of COPs). Comments on the progress in enhancing results focus of COPs are made, where relevant, based on the review of complementary documents such as planning guidelines, UNHCR Results Framework, and an example of an abstract of a recent COP.

²⁴ UNHCR (2010). *Annual Report 2009: Public Health and HIV*, (p. 2), Retrieved 5 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/4bff765d9.html>

²⁵ For example, the *HIV/AIDS and Conflict/Displaced Persons Assessment and Planning Tool Framework* (2004) and the *Guidance on Infant feeding and HIV in the context of refugees and displaced populations* (June 2009).

²⁶ The parameters of the COPs are usually discussed with a broad range of stakeholders in the field and an overview of major operations is provided in the Global Appeal. As of December 2011, UNHCR will make some sections of the COPs available to donors through the on-line *Global Focus* platform.

Figure 3.8 KPI 4: Country Focus on Results, Ratings of Micro-Indicators**MI 4.1 – Frameworks link results at project, program, sector, and country levels**

Respondents from recipient governments gave higher ratings of UNHCR's ability to link results from rapid onset situations, projects and programs at country level than respondents from peer organisations and donors in-country, who rated it as adequate.

Since 2010, UNHCR's country operational planning process uses the *Focus* tool. As per planning guidelines, all country plans provide a description of the results chain that includes the problem analysis and the outputs and objectives that are part of the organisational Results Framework. Because the operating plans draw on standard outputs and objectives, the narratives are key to explaining the expected linkages between different levels of results in that particular context. Furthermore, these plans are to be outlined in terms of a comprehensive programming response (e.g., meeting all the needs identified in the needs assessment) and an operational programming response, which are the prioritised results that can be implemented within the funds made available.

MI 4.2 – Frameworks include indicators at project, program, sector, and country levels

Survey respondents were asked two questions on this MI: whether results frameworks include indicators at all levels and whether frameworks for rapid onset situations include indicators. They rated UNHCR as adequate. However, close to 40 per cent of respondents from peer organisations and donors at headquarters and in-country answered 'don't know' on this MI.

UNHCR's Results Framework includes impact indicators and performance indicators that are to be used in field operations. The performance indicators are used to measure achievement of standardised outputs. As noted above, in indicator 2.7, the risk is that considerable energy will be required to populate *Focus* with data on many indicators that measure volume of activity, with less energy available to analyse the extent to which outputs are helping to contribute to the objectives (impact indicator) in the most cost-effective way.

MI 4.3 – Humanitarian response developed in consultation with humanitarian partners and beneficiaries

On this MI, survey respondents were asked whether UNHCR ensures sufficient involvement of beneficiaries in the design of humanitarian response and whether it involves partners in design of humanitarian response whenever feasible and appropriate. Overall, 70 per cent of respondents rated UNHCR as adequate or above on this MI. Respondents from recipient governments and donors in-country provided higher overall ratings than respondents from peer organisations and direct partners.

MI 4.4 – Results for thematic priorities included in country level frameworks

All respondent groups considered UNHCR's country-level strategies to adequately include results for the thematic areas it defines as cross-cutting priorities and respondents from recipient governments rated UNHCR as strong. Donors at headquarters were less knowledgeable about this MI (36 per cent responded 'don't know'). The UNHCR Results Framework includes a number of results at the level of objectives and outputs that relate to its broader efforts on gender equality and diversity and protection of the environment. The extent to which a particular country operation includes these results depends on its analysis of the problems that exist in that context.

MI 4.5 – Contingency plans in place

The survey and document review rated UNHCR as adequate on this MI. Donors at headquarters gave higher ratings (strong overall) than the other respondent groups (adequate) on UNHCR's contingency plans. Interestingly, 35 per cent of donors in-country did not know whether UNHCR has contingency plans in place should a major increase or scale up of humanitarian actions be required.

The UNHCR *Handbook for Emergencies* contains a section on contingency planning that explains the context in which contingency planning should take place and identifies the diverse planning groups responsible for developing the plans (including UNHCR staff, direct partners, other UN agencies and government representatives). In addition, UNHCR developed a self-study learning module on contingency planning that notes the usefulness of exercises or drills to assess contingency plans and encourages staff to perform such simulations.

3.3.3 Operational Management

Stakeholders rated UNHCR as adequate or strong in all key areas of operational management. The document review rated UNHCR as adequate in five areas, strong in delegating decision making, and inadequate in use of performance information.

Figure 3.9 below shows the overall survey and document review ratings for the eight KPIs in the operational management quadrant.

Survey respondents rated UNHCR as adequate on all KPIs in operational management, and as strong for its adherence to humanitarian principles. In addition, when asked about UNHCR's greatest strength, many survey respondents identified UNHCR's operational capacity and procedures.

The document review found UNHCR strong in delegating decision making, adequate in five key performance areas, and inadequate in using performance information. One indicator was not assessed due to the fact that it required samples of country operational plans, which were not accessible at the time of the MOPAN assessment. Survey respondents' higher ratings may reflect their recognition of UNHCR's application of revamped practices in some of these areas (a product of the reform process undertaken since 2006).

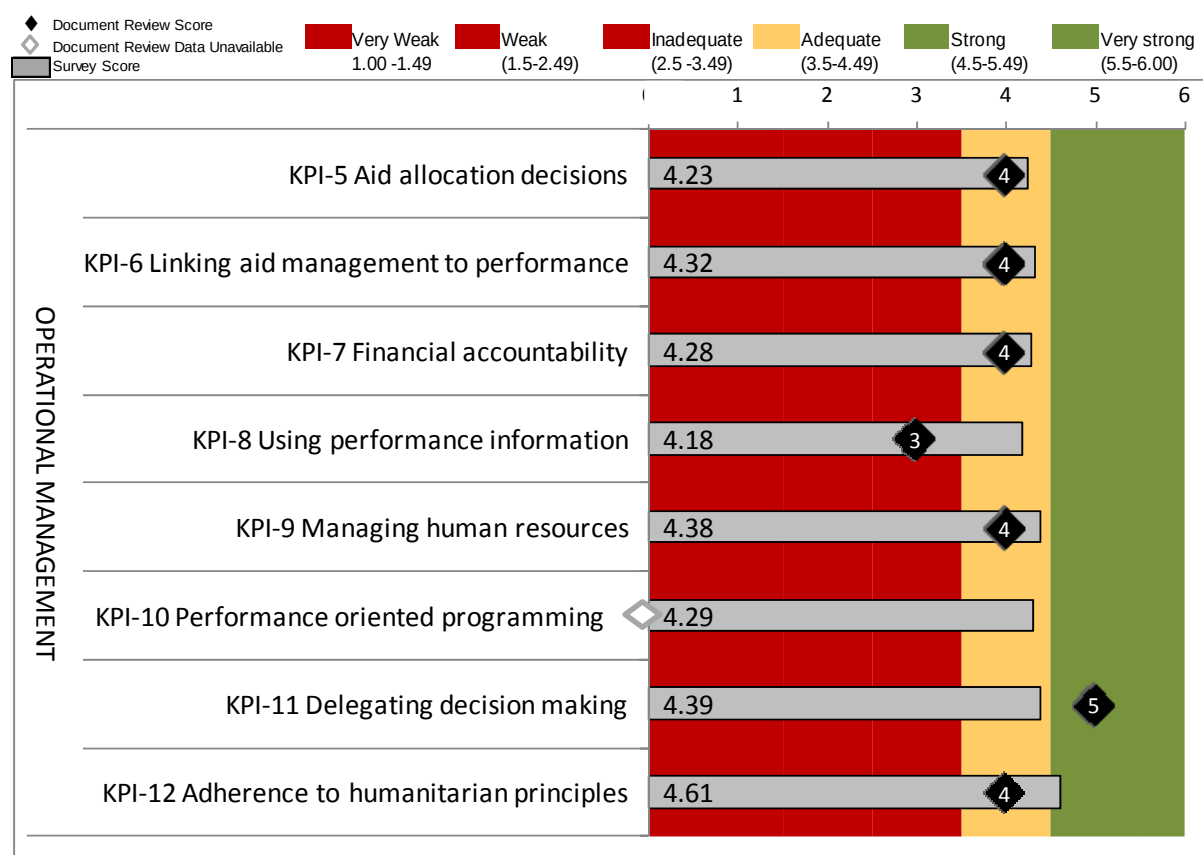
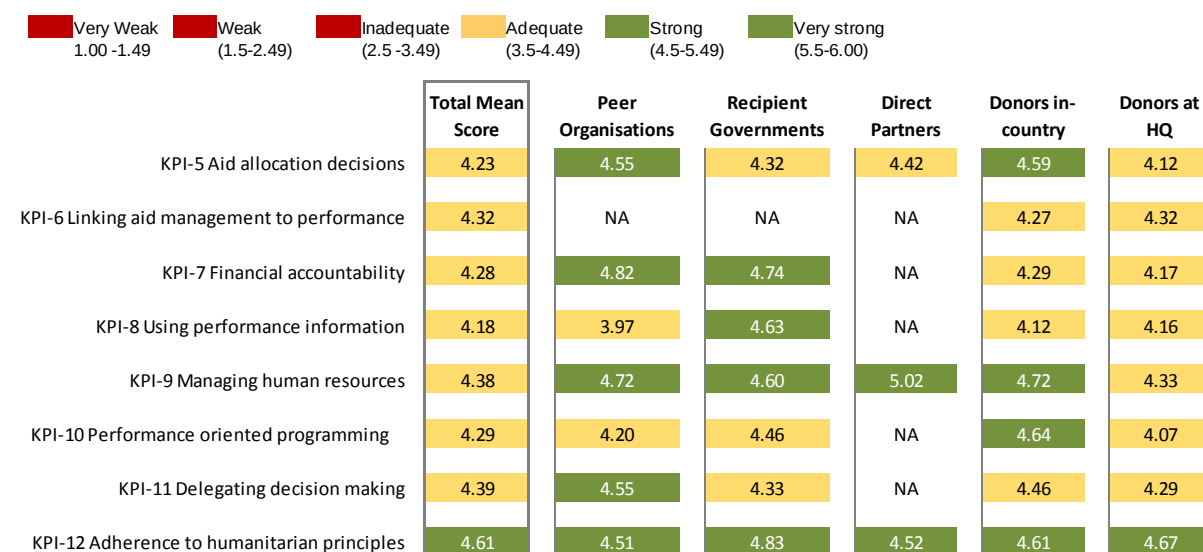
Figure 3.9 Quadrant II: Operational Management, Survey and Document Review Ratings

Figure 3.10 shows the mean scores for the eight KPIs for all survey respondents, and by category of respondents.

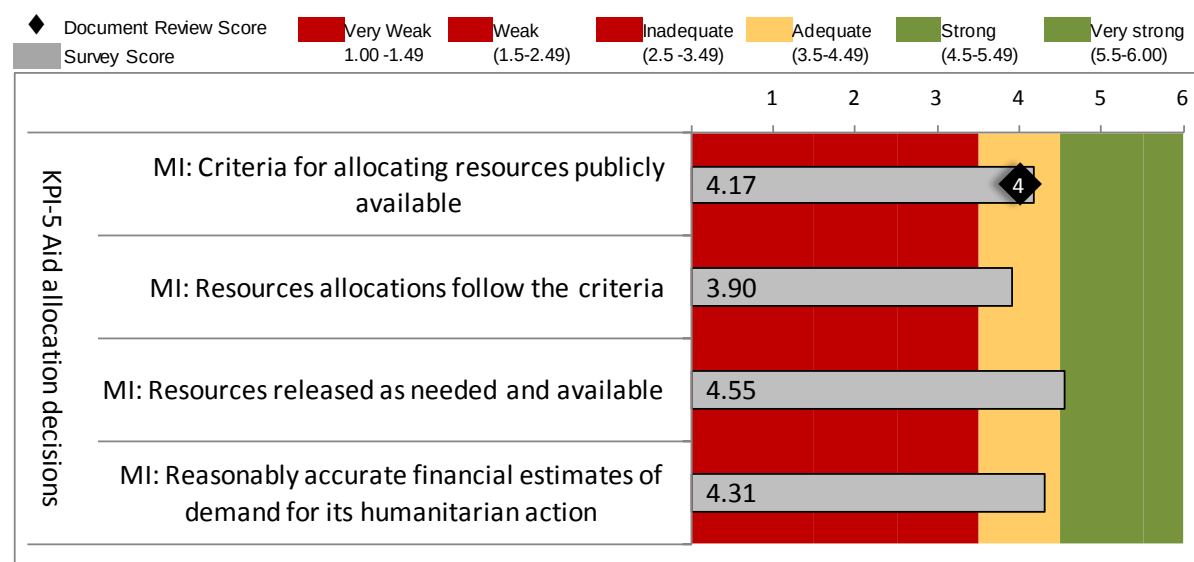
Figure 3.10 Quadrant II: Operational Management, Mean Scores by Respondent Group

KPI 5: Aid Allocation Decisions

Finding 5: UNHCR is adequately making transparent and predictable aid allocation decisions.

Overall, donors in-country and respondents from peer organisations rated UNHCR higher than the other respondent groups on its performance in this area. However, respondents from peer organisations were also less knowledgeable, 38 per cent of them answering 'don't know', on average.

Figure 3.11 KPI 5: Aid Allocation Decisions, Ratings of Micro-Indicators



MI 5.1 – Publicly available criteria for allocating un-earmarked resources

Survey respondents and document review agreed that UNHCR makes available its criteria for allocating un-earmarked resources. However, there was a high rate (48 per cent) of 'don't know' responses among respondents from peer organisations.

UNHCR's allocation of resources is based on the Global Needs Assessment (GNA) and the Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs). Every regional and country office does its own needs assessment and enters the results in *Focus*; all operational plans are based on these assessments. However, since UNHCR cannot predict in advance the exact amount of voluntary contributions it will receive, all offices must prioritise their activities. Prioritisation is guided by the GSPs and a realistic but conservative funding estimate to provide the field with spending authority to meet the minimum requirements to continue with the operation. Once the level of funding resources becomes clearer, the spending authority is increased. However, since not all identified needs can be met, prioritising activities at the regional and country level is a challenge and can have adverse consequences. UNHCR presents these adverse consequences in the country chapters of its Global Appeal.

UNHCR's system for allocating resources is not clearly identified on its website. To understand the way the organisation allocates its resources, it is necessary to consult a number of organisational documents.

MI 5.2 – Allocation of un-earmarked resources follow the criteria

Only donors at headquarters were asked whether UNHCR allocates un-earmarked resources according to the criteria mentioned above and they expressed a high level of uncertainty. Indeed, 36 per cent responded 'don't know' to this MI. This may reflect the fact that the application of the GNA world-wide is recent. It was applied across the organisation effective 2010 for the biennial 2010-2011 budget.²⁷

MI 5.3 – Resources released as needed and available

The majority of respondents (70 per cent) provided ratings of adequate or higher on UNHCR's management of aid flows on the basis of needs and its strategic priorities. Donors at headquarters were most positive – 86 per cent rated UNHCR as adequate or above. UNHCR's ability to release aid flows and planned resources (financial, technical cooperation, etc.) as needed and available is affected by the sustainability of donor support and the predictability of funding patterns. From 2001 to 2009, the percentage of un-earmarked contributions remained fairly steady (18 to 21 per cent). However, since 2004, tightly earmarked contributions have clearly been replacing broadly earmarked contributions, and this affects UNHCR's ability to release resources as needed. The release of aid flows and planned resources also depends on when the organisation receives contributions: the earlier in the year, the more efficient and effective the implementation of operations can be.

MI 5.4 – Reasonably accurate financial estimates of demand for its humanitarian action

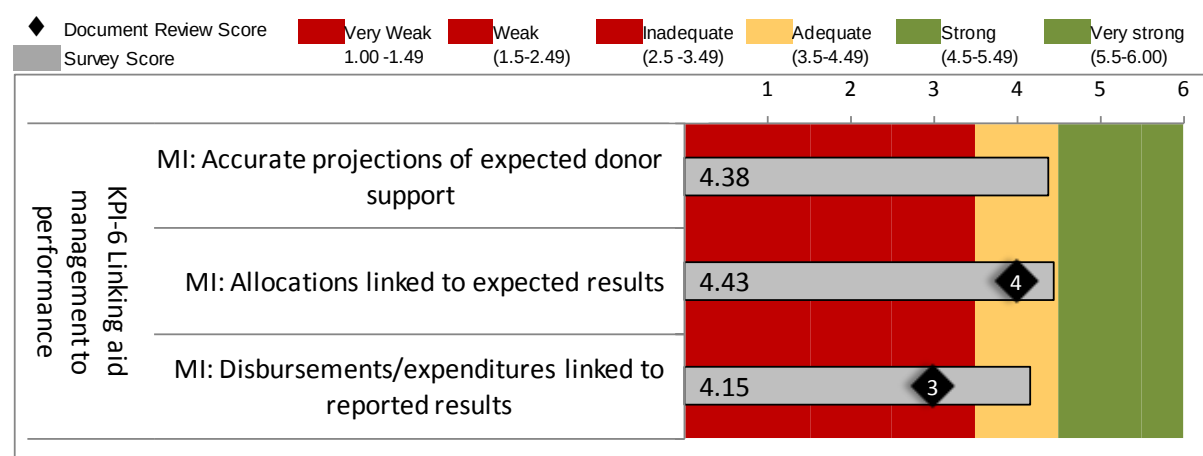
The majority of donors at headquarters (70 per cent), the only respondent group asked, provided ratings of adequate or higher on UNHCR's ability to access or generate reasonably accurate overall financial estimates of demand for its humanitarian action. Based on the percentage of the initial budget for which it had to ask for more funding (as found in the Global Appeals), UNHCR seems to make reasonably accurate financial estimates. The increase in the budget is often explained by new emergencies and additional needs in current operations, for which the Office does supplementary appeals. The GNA process is leading towards more accurate estimates of the needs of UNHCR's populations of concern.

KPI 6: Linking Aid Management to Performance

Finding 6: UNHCR is perceived by donors to adequately link aid financial management to aid performance. UNHCR has the systems to link budgets to results, but is not yet reporting in a way that demonstrates the linkage between expenditures and results.

Donors in-country and at headquarters, the only respondent groups asked about this KPI, rated UNHCR as adequate. The document review was based on the Biennial Programme Budget, the financial report, and planning and budget instructions for the 2012-2013 biennium. The review suggests that budget allocations are better linked to expected humanitarian results. UNHCR introduced results-based budgeting in 2010 and its current system is based on costing at the level of its organisational outputs. The most recent financial report (for 2010) also shows improvement.

²⁷ In 2009, the GNA was only piloted in eight countries.

Figure 3.12 KPI 6: Linking Aid Management to Performance, Ratings of Micro-Indicators**MI 6.1 – Accurate projections of expected donor support**

Donor respondents generally perceived UNHCR's ability to make accurate projections of expected donor support as adequate.

Because many donor contributions to UNHCR are earmarked for specific purposes within a specific timeframe, UNHCR must review the requirements carefully in order to make revenue forecasts.

MI 6.2 – Budget allocations linked to expected humanitarian results

The majority of donors at headquarters (78 per cent), the only respondent group asked, rated UNHCR's performance in linking budget allocations to expected humanitarian results as adequate or above.

The document review rated this MI as adequate. UNHCR restructured its budget for the 2010-2011 biennium. This budget is presented according to four pillars (categories of populations of concern: refugees, statelessness, reintegration, IDP) and by rights groups that correspond to the Global Strategic Priorities presented in the Global Appeal 2011. UNHCR's planning and budget system is designed to link budget resources to outputs, which are associated with objectives and rights groups in the Results Framework. In principle, this means that UNHCR can estimate the projected and actual costs of delivering outputs.²⁸ This is clearly a step in the right direction.

²⁸ However, it is not clear to what extent this has been possible in 2010 and 2011. The most recent report of the UN Board of Auditors (July 2010) recommended greater use of financial and output data to assess efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

A recent report from the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgets Questions (ACABQ)²⁹ suggests potential for further improving the alignment between costs and the results they are intended to achieve, and demonstrating stronger evidence of how resources contribute to the Global Strategic Priorities:

The Advisory Committee was further informed that more work needs to be done to ensure that staff and administrative costs of all operations are aligned with the results they are intended to achieve, as well as to complete development of reporting on performance indicators [sic], targets and baselines and consolidated global reporting. The Committee welcomes the progress made to date. It encourages UNHCR to pursue further development and refinement of these tools and to seek ways of reflecting the results framework in a more concrete manner in the context of the programme budget, with a view to demonstrating how the resources utilized contribute to achieving the Offices global strategic priorities.

However, given the nature of UNHCR's work, there will always be a limit to the extent it can base its budget on planned results since the organisation must always respond to unforeseen emergencies.

MI 6.3 – Disbursements/expenditures linked to reported results

Donors in-country and at headquarters rated UNHCR as adequate for reporting on the amounts disbursed to achieve results.³⁰ The document review found that financial reports do not yet report on the use of resources in relation to results. In 2010, UNHCR implemented its programs under a new budget structure, based on the four pillars, or populations of concern. Its Financial Report on 2010 is also presented in this way and represents an improvement over past years. However, the two UNHCR reports reviewed (the Financial report and the Global Report 2010) do not yet allow for analysis of the relationship between expenditures and results achieved (e.g., the resources used in relation to UNHCR contributions to Global Strategic Priorities). The most recent report of the UN Board of Auditors also noted limitations in UNHCR's ability to link expenditures to results.³¹ This may be facilitated in the future as the *Focus* reporting function is more fully utilised.

KPI 7: Financial Accountability

Finding 7: Survey respondents were consistent in rating UNHCR's policies and processes for financial accountability as adequate. The document review generally provided ratings of adequate or higher for indicators related to UNHCR's audit and procurement practices. Organisational risk management requires further refinement, and is currently being addressed by UNHCR.

In their overall ratings of this KPI, respondents from peer organisations and recipient governments rated UNHCR higher than donors but expressed a high level of uncertainty about UNHCR's financial accountability (38 per cent of the total responses were 'don't know').

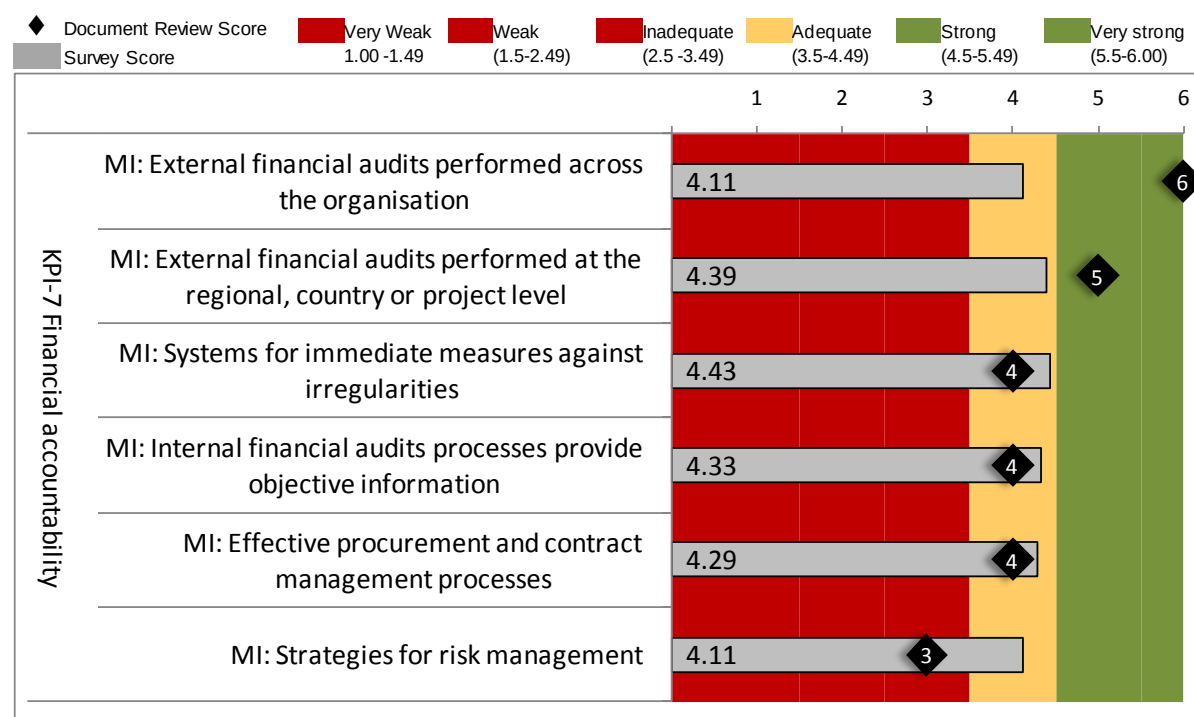
²⁹ ACABQ (2010). *Biennial programme budget 2010-2011 (revised) of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Addendum: Report by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/AC.96/1087/ADD.1)*, (p. 9), Retrieved 12 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/4c9c5b5c9.html>

³⁰ As noted by UNHCR, "expenditures" is the more appropriate term because it includes purchase orders. In the review of documents, we used the concept of expenditures. However, respondents were asked about disbursements. Thus, we have kept both terms as a reference for this micro-indicator.

³¹ United Nations, Voluntary funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: Financial report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2010 and Report of the Board of Auditors (2011), paragraphs 94-98.

The document review rated UNHCR adequate or higher on the micro-indicators linked to audits. The Audit Coordination Unit in the Division of Financial and Administrative Management (DFAM) is the focal point for internal and external audits. The UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) is responsible for internal audits and, under the Single Audit Principle, the UN Board of Auditors (UNBOA) is exclusively responsible for external audit of UNHCR. UNHCR has also committed to establishing an Independent Audit and Oversight Committee to enhance overall financial accountability. The document review was more critical of UNHCR's performance in risk management.

Figure 3.13 KPI 7: Financial Accountability, Ratings of Micro-Indicators



MI 7.1 – External audits performed across the organisation

Overall, donors at headquarters believed UNHCR's external financial audits adequately meet the expectations of donors. The document review rated UNHCR as very strong for having external financial audits (meeting recognised international standards) performed across the organisation. The UN Board of Auditors (UNBOA) performs external audits of UNHCR and produces an annual report and an Audit Opinion confirming that an audit of the financial statements of the voluntary funds was done in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISA).

MI 7.2 – External audits performed at regional, country, or project level

Respondents from recipient governments rated UNHCR higher than donors at headquarters on its programs and projects being appropriately audited at the country level. However, 30 per cent of donors at headquarters responded 'don't know' to this question.

The document review rated UNHCR as strong on this MI. According to the financial rules for voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner for Refugees, all financial transactions and related activities are subject to audit by the UNHCR Audit Section of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) or the UN Board of Auditors (UNBOA). UNHCR also engages audits of its implementing partners.³² According to UNHCR's disclosure policy, the audits of the OIOS and the UNBOA at the country level are confidential; however both OIOS and UNBOA produce annual reports that are presented to member states at Standing Committee meetings in September. The audits of implementing partners required under the sub-project agreements (i.e., not performed by OIOS or UNBOA) are also confidential. Nonetheless, there is evidence of mandatory audit for all sub-project agreements of US\$100,000 or more and ample explanation of independent audit requirements in the operations management handbook prepared for UNHCR's implementing partners.³³ As noted below, UNHCR has been paying significant attention to risk management with respect to its approach to managing the relationship with implementing partners.

MI 7.3 – Systems for immediate measures against irregularities

Respondents from peer organisations and recipient governments rated UNHCR as strong for having systems to follow up on financial irregularities, including fraud and corruption, whereas donors in-country and at headquarters rated it as adequate. Overall, this MI had a high rate of 'don't know' responses (38 per cent), mainly due to respondents from peer organisations and donors in-country (respectively 48 and 53 per cent).

The document review rated UNHCR adequate on this MI. UNHCR is subject to the United Nations Financial Regulations, UNHCR's own Financial Rules, and the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules, which govern the use and misuse of resources. It does not seem to have any specific written policy, guidelines, or rules on the measures to be taken against irregularities. The OIOS noted that UNHCR does not have a policy or procedure for de-listing and re-admitting implementing partners that have committed fraud or other mismanagement.³⁴ However, major or systemic irregularities are reported to the Executive Committee through the report from the Board of Auditors, which contains an Audit Opinion drawing attention to irregularities. UNHCR reports on measures taken or proposed in response to the UNBOA recommendations during the Standing Committee meetings.

³² UNHCR (2009). *Financial rules for voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner for Refugees* (A/AC.96/503/Rev.9). (p. 16). Retrieved 12 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/4b693d089.html>

³³ UNHCR (2003). *Partnership: An operations management handbook for UNHCR's partners*. Retrieved 12 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/4a39f7706.html>

³⁴ OIOS (2010). *Internal Audit in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2009-2010) – Report by the Office of Internal Oversight Services* (A/AC.96/1088), (p. 7). Retrieved 12 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/4c80edd49.html>

MI 7.4 – Internal financial audits processes provide objective information

Donors at headquarters and the document review agreed that UNHCR's internal financial audits adequately provide objective information to its governing body. UNHCR relies on the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), which is separate from UNHCR programming areas, to conduct internal audits following the guidelines outlined in the OIOS Audit Manual. Two improvements in the overall accountability structure for internal audit are either under consideration or in process. First, OIOS and UNHCR have discussed moving the Office's audit focal point so that it is with Executive Management.³⁵ Second, UNHCR has already established Terms of Reference for an Independent Audit and Oversight Committee (IAOC) to replace the existing Oversight Committee (composed of staff). This Committee, which will serve in an expert advisory capacity, will:

*(1) assist the High Commissioner and the Executive Committee in exercising their oversight responsibilities; (2) ensure improved quality of oversight information and effectiveness of audit functions; (3) lead to improved communication and a strengthened ethical culture; and (4) oversee a robust risk management system for the Office.*³⁶

The IAOC will produce an annual report on its findings that will be shared with the High Commissioner and the Executive Committee.

MI 7.5 – Effective procurement and contract management processes

Donors at headquarters rated UNHCR's procurement and contract management processes for the provision of services or goods as adequate. However, 38 per cent answered 'don't know' to this MI.

The document review rated UNHCR as adequate on this MI. Procurement within UNHCR is guided by the principle of best value for money, which aims to achieve maximum benefit for the organisation. UNHCR has several documents which, taken together, give a relatively good idea of its procurement and supply chain management. It does not, however, seem to have an organisation-wide policy or guidelines on procurement and contract management.

In 2008, the Policy Development and Evaluation Service (PDES) commissioned an evaluation of supply chain management.³⁷ It acknowledged UNHCR's strong emergency response supply chain and noted that the organisation had made progress in re-aligning supply chain priorities, but that it still faced some serious supply chain management problems. The High Commissioner endorsed the conclusions from the evaluation and key changes were introduced to strengthen supply management, such as the adoption of the integrated supply chain concept, thus bringing together procurement and logistics. UNHCR will pursue its efforts in this area in 2011.

³⁵ OIOS (2010). *Internal Audit in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2009-2010): Report by the Office of Internal Oversight Services* (A/AC.96/1088), (p. 6). Retrieved 12 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/4c80edd49.html>

³⁶ UNHCR (2010). *Establishment of an Independent Audit and Oversight Committee* (EC/62/SC/CRP.8), (p. 3). Retrieved 12 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/4d665dbd9.html>

³⁷ Fritz Institute (2008). *Assuring effective Supply Chain Management to support UNHCR's beneficiaries: An independent evaluation commissioned by the Policy Development and Evaluation Service*, Retrieved 13 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/496db70a4.html>

MI 7.6 – Strategies for risk management

Donors at headquarters rated UNHCR as adequate for having appropriate strategies in place for risk management. The document review was somewhat less positive. UNHCR clearly engages in risk management in its day-to-day operations but it is only beginning to address risk management at an organisation-wide level.

UNHCR has a learning module for managers that explains the detailed processes for security risk assessment (i.e., threat assessment, vulnerability assessment, program assessment, risk analysis, criticality assessment, decision and implementation of risk reduction measures, and review and modification of assessment). However, the learning module is about security risk and does not identify other types of risk for the organisation (e.g., financial, political, reputational, etc.). Some organisation-wide risk areas are highlighted in the report of the Board of Auditors and presented to the Standing Committee.³⁸ In 2011, UNHCR reports on two significant initiatives that should improve its overall strategy for risk management: the development of an Enterprise Risk Management strategy and a risk-based approach to implementing partner management, which is particularly important given the volume of UNHCR's budget that is disbursed through implementing partners to implement its programs.

KPI 8: Using Performance Information

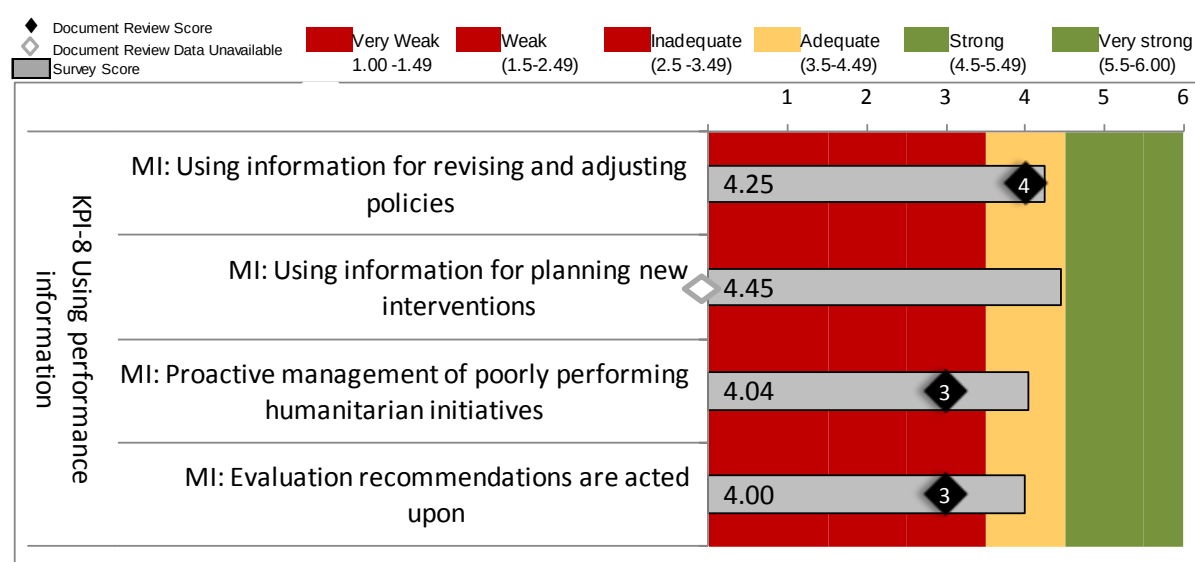
Finding 8: Overall, survey respondents provided an assessment of adequate on UNHCR's use of performance information on results. The review of documentation indicates that improvement is needed in this area.

Survey respondents perceived UNHCR as adequate in using performance information. Respondents from recipient governments provided higher ratings than the other respondent groups. Overall, 35 per cent of donors in-country and 32 per cent of respondents from peer organisations responded 'don't know'.

According to the document review, however, UNHCR's use of performance information is still in early stages. Three changes that have not yet been fully implemented should enhance quality and availability of performance information: the full use of *Focus* as a system to help capture performance data on results, the revamped evaluation office, and revisions to the Office's approach to planning and reporting. The recent report of the UN Board of Auditors also noted challenges that the organisation is facing in ensuring that performance information is used to make programming decisions.³⁹

³⁸ UNHCR (2009). *Summary report on main risk areas raised in the Report of the Board of Auditors on the accounts for 2009* (EC/61/SC/CRP.23), Retrieved 13 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/4c99ba159.html>

³⁹ United Nations, Voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner for Refugees, Financial report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2010 and Report of the board of Auditors (2011). See for example paragraphs 97 and 98.

Figure 3.14 KPI 8: Using Performance Information, Ratings of Micro-Indicators

MI 8.1 – Using information for revising and adjusting policies

Donors at headquarters, the only respondent group asked this question, believed that UNHCR adequately uses performance information from rapid onset situations, projects/programs, sectors and countries to revise organisational policies.

The document review rated UNHCR as adequate on this MI. The Global Report 2010, which is considered UNHCR's annual performance report, represents a substantial improvement in reporting on the organisation's performance but provides insufficient detail to determine whether UNHCR is adjusting its strategy or policies based on past performance.

However, there is evidence that UNHCR makes adjustments to its approaches based on performance information provided through evaluations and reviews. Indeed, in its management response to the snapshot evaluation of RBM (2010), UNHCR explains actions undertaken or planned to address the recommendations of the evaluation. It also notes that, starting in 2012-2013, it will modify its programming cycle based on experience from two previous annual programming cycles. In addition, the High Commissioner endorsed the recommendations of a 2008 comprehensive review of the supply chain and UNHCR engaged in a major reform of the Office's operations management to improve the global stock management system.

Evidence of performance information being used to revise and adjust policies nonetheless remains scattered and unsystematic.

MI 8.2 – Using information for planning new interventions

Overall, most respondent groups agreed that UNHCR is adequately using performance information to plan responses to new rapid onset situations, initiatives, projects, and programs. Respondents from recipient governments provided a rating of strong. Respondents from peer organisations expressed a high level of uncertainty (37 per cent answered 'don't know').

Country Offices produce two end-of-year reports: the Annual Protection Report and the Country Report, which should report on the objectives, outputs and indicators in the Country Operation Plans and project descriptions. However, these reports were not available and could not be taken into account by the document review. Nor was it possible to review Country Operational Plans to see how information on performance the previous year was taken into account in proposing any adjustments in strategy. There is evidence, however, that the guidelines and format for country operating plans developed on a yearly basis call for reflection on

achievements to date (but not necessarily on what has worked and has not worked) and changes in the context. Furthermore, each year's operating plans are designed to draw on the data collected on people of concern to UNHCR, through the regular update of the Standards and Indicators in UNHCR operations.

Since the 1990s, UNHCR uses real-time evaluations to analyse its performance at an early stage of an operation and adjust its response. In the humanitarian context, this type of evaluation provides an important source of performance information with immediate effects on the planning or adjustments of interventions on the ground.

MI 8.3 – Using information to manage poorly performing humanitarian initiatives, programs and/or projects

All respondent groups provided UNHCR an overall rating of adequate on its proactive management of poorly performing humanitarian initiatives, programs and/or projects. However, 41 per cent of donors in-country and 36 per cent at headquarters responded 'don't know.'

The document review rated UNHCR as inadequate on this MI as there is limited evidence of its process for reviewing poorly performing programs/projects. Implementing partners produce monitoring reports and UNHCR produces three internal reports – that may review the performance of humanitarian projects and programs and provide information on managing poorly performing initiatives – but none of these were accessible for the document review.

UNHCR often implements its programs through sub-project agreements with Implementing Partners. UNHCR indicates that projects are subject to frequent revisions as a result of changes occurring in the field, as well as issues of performance, during each project cycle (a one year period). Similarly, the annual planning process provides a fora for the review of positive and negative performance issues. UNHCR sub-project agreements with these partners clearly articulate the need for early termination in case of serious performance problems. In the future, the new Implementing Partner risk management model should complement more integrated financial and non-financial performance information to support programming at project or program level.

MI 8.4 – Evaluation recommendations are acted upon

Donors at headquarters rated UNHCR as adequate in acting upon evaluation recommendations reported to the Board while the document review rated UNHCR as inadequate.

The Policy Development and Evaluation Service (PDES) reports annually to the Executive Committee and provides information on the utilisation of evaluation findings and recommendations. UNHCR's evaluation policy notes that senior managers may be held accountable for implementation of specific evaluation recommendations. The policy also refers to a follow-up process that should be reviewed six months after the publication of an evaluation report. UNHCR's practical guide, *How to Manage Evaluations*, provides guidance to managers on the development of responses to evaluation reports.

The document review could not find evidence of a systematic process for following-up on the recommendations accepted by management. UNHCR staff confirmed that it does not produce written reports on the status of the implementation of evaluation recommendations accepted by management (however, informal updates may in fact take place on a case by case basis).⁴⁰

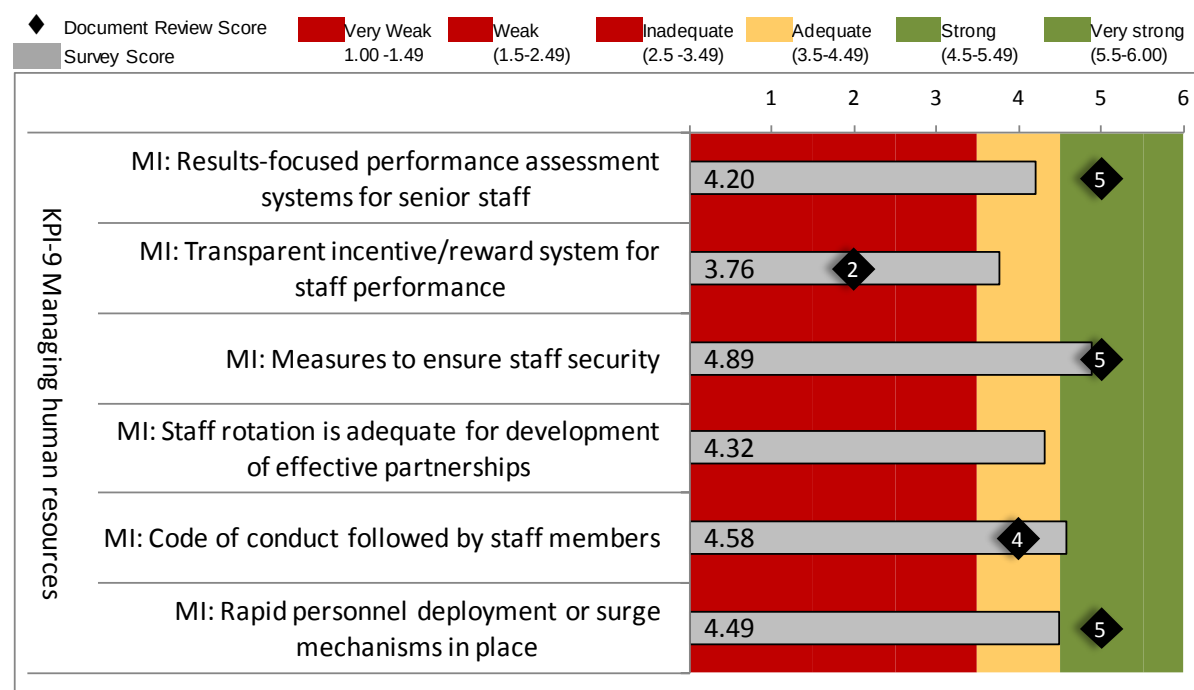
⁴⁰ In addition, the Policy Development and Evaluation Service recently developed a follow-up matrix for evaluation findings and recommendations.

KPI 9: Managing Human Resources

Finding 9: Survey respondents and document review agreed that UNHCR adequately manages human resources using methods to improve organisational performance.

The overall survey rating for this key performance indicator is adequate. The document review was also quite positive about UNHCR's performance in the area of human resources management.

Figure 3.15 KPI 9: Managing Human Resources, Ratings of Micro-Indicators



MI 9.1 – Results-focused performance assessment systems for senior staff

While donors at headquarters, the only respondent group asked, rated UNHCR as adequate in using results-focused performance assessment systems for senior staff, 44 per cent answered 'don't know'.

Following a 2006 evaluation⁴¹ that was quite critical of UNHCR's performance management system, a new Performance Appraisal Management System (PAMS) was launched in 2009. It is used to assess the performance of all staff members up to and including the level of Assistant High Commissioner. The PAMS is based on assessments from colleagues and an overall rating provided by the immediate supervisor, with whom the staff member has on-going dialogue about work objectives, competencies and development plans. The policy on the PAMS describes the PAMS process and content.

⁴¹ Wigley, Barb (2006). *The State of UNHCR's Organisation Culture: What now?* Retrieved 13 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/43eb6a862.html>

While the new system has not been reviewed, according to the Global Report 2009:

*Internal reports indicate a leap in the compliance rate in comparison with previous years – a positive trend in terms of overall commitment to performance management, and an increase in awareness of the importance of the role of managers in managing performance.*⁴²

MI 9.2 – Transparent incentive/reward system for staff performance

Donors at headquarters provided a rating of adequate on UNHCR's use of a transparent system to manage staff performance. However, they also expressed a high level of uncertainty on this MI (44 per cent responded 'don't know').

As mentioned above, UNHCR launched a Performance Appraisal Management System in 2009, which reached a global 89 per cent compliance after its first annual cycle. There is no evidence however of how the assessment of staff performance is linked to incentives and/or rewards. The first part of the *Policy and Procedures on Assignments and Promotions* (2010) does not explain how staff performance relates to promotion, but the promotions part of the policy has not been issued yet.

MI 9.3 – Measures to ensure staff security

Respondents from all groups provided ratings of strong on the appropriateness of UNHCR's measures to ensure staff security. Recipient governments provided their highest rating in the survey on this question.

The document review agreed with the survey respondents rating of strong on this MI. As part of the UN system, UNHCR uses the guidelines provided in the UN Field Security Handbook and complies with Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS). UNHCR's own Emergency Handbook addresses issues related to both national and international staff security. In compliance with the MOSS, all UN staff (including UNHCR staff) are required to complete the CD-ROM security training modules on Basic and Advanced Security in the Field.

In 2009, the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) completed an audit of security governance within UNHCR that recommended reinforcing certain procedures and structures related to security.

However, in 2009, UNHCR developed a Security Risk Management Distance Learning Module and in 2010, it created modules for the Security Management Learning Programme and the Workshop on Emergency Management, which were intended to be available on the intranet.

MI 9.4 – Staff rotation adequate for development of effective partnerships

All respondent groups answering this question provided UNHCR an overall rating of adequate for keeping deployed international staff in post for a sufficient time to maintain effective partnerships at country level. Donors in-country were particularly positive, with 76 per cent providing ratings of adequate or higher on this MI.

MI 9.5 – Code of conduct followed by staff members

Respondents from peer organisations, recipient governments, direct partners, and donors in-country were asked if UNHCR staff follow the code of conduct. The majority (91 per cent) provided ratings of adequate or higher on this question. Donors at headquarters were asked whether UNHCR monitors compliance with the code of conduct and whether UNHCR has a system in place for reporting transparently on compliance with the code of conduct. The majority (92 per cent) rated UNHCR as adequate or higher on both questions.

⁴² UNHCR (2009). *Global Report 2009*, (p. 331). Retrieved 13 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/4c08f2449.html>

The document review rated UNHCR as adequate on this MI. Since October 2002, signing the code of conduct has been a condition of recruitment in UNHCR and the organisation monitors implementation of the code for staff that were employed before October 2002. UNHCR developed a Facilitators Guide and Guidelines for Managers to help managers facilitate group sessions about the code.

Any failure to comply with the code of conduct represents misconduct, and must be reported to the Inspector General's Office (IGO). UNHCR's beneficiaries can also report breaches of the code of conduct. If the investigation process undertaken by the IGO concludes that there is sufficient evidence, a report is sent to the Division of Human Resources Management (DHRM) and the Director of DHRM decides whether to institute disciplinary proceedings.

MI 9.6 – Rapid personnel deployment or surge mechanisms in place

Survey respondents rated UNHCR as adequate overall on its use of both in-house and externally accessible personnel for rapid deployment, and the document review rated it as strong.

Recipient governments and donors at headquarters provided a rating of strong, while other groups provided a rating in the 'adequate' range. Respondents from peer organisations and donors in-country provided high rates of 'don't know' responses (respectively 40 and 38 per cent). On the question concerning the use of in-house personnel for rapid deployment, donors at headquarters provided a statistically significant higher score than the other respondent groups.

Since 1991, UNHCR has relied on its Emergency Response Team Roster. In 2011, it established a Corporate Senior Emergency Roster to complement the Emergency Response Team. In addition, the organisation uses other less formal internal technical staff emergency rosters within its Divisions.

UNHCR has a number of documents that describe the different types of internal and external stand-by arrangements and the way to request them.⁴³ As of 2008, UNHCR had 14 standby agreements and four deployment scheme agreements with partner agencies.

It also has a Resettlement Deployment Scheme that is managed through a partnership agreement between UNHCR and the International Catholic Migration Commission.⁴⁴ In 2011, UNHCR intends to further strengthen its standby partnerships in order to enhance the predictability and quality of deployments.

KPI 10: Performance Oriented Programming

Finding 10: Survey respondents agreed that UNHCR has performance-oriented country/regional programming processes. The review of documents on the country programming process confirmed UNHCR efforts to track performance.

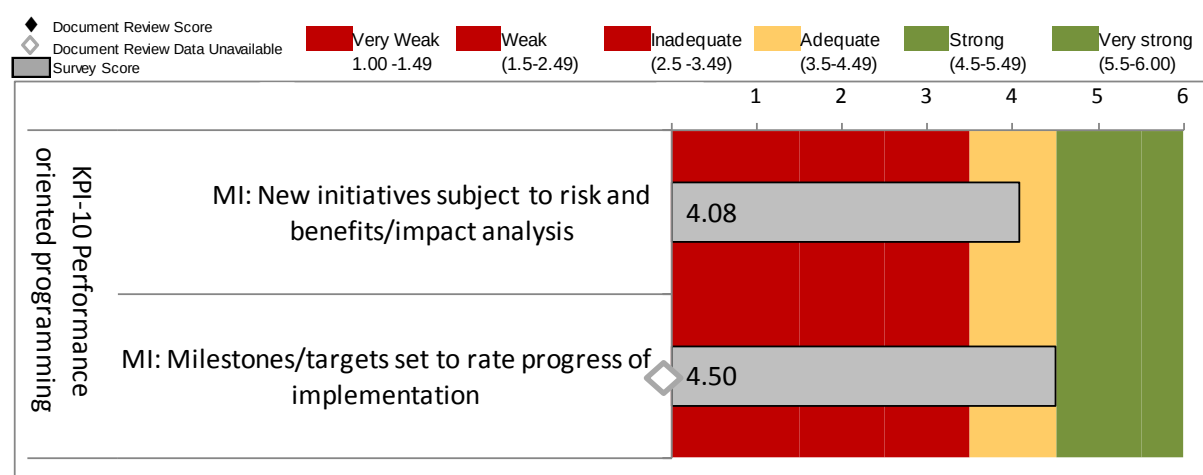
Donors in-country rated UNHCR higher than other respondent groups on its country/regional programming processes being performance-oriented. Respondents from peer organisations and donors at headquarters expressed high levels of uncertainty (39 and 35 per cent respectively responded 'don't know').

⁴³ See for example: *Catalogue of Emergency Response Resources* (2006), and *Guide to UNHCR's Emergency Standby Partners and External Deployment Arrangements* (2008).

⁴⁴ This partnership is included in the four deployment schemes mentioned above.

Although the extent of performance-orientation in individual country operational plans could not be verified, UNHCR provided documentation to explain the Results Framework and the country programming process. This process clearly requires the use of targets and milestones to rate progress of program implementation.

Figure 3.16 KPI 10: Performance Oriented Programming, Ratings of Micro-Indicators



MI 10.1 – New initiatives subject to risk and benefit/impact analysis

Survey respondents were asked two questions related to this MI: whether UNHCR subjects new programming initiatives to impact analysis and whether UNHCR subjects new programming initiatives to risk analysis. While they rated UNHCR as adequate, an average of 35 per cent of respondents from peer organisations and 38 per cent of donors at headquarters responded 'don't know' to both questions.

Considering the humanitarian nature of UNHCR's work, the incorporation of formal risk or benefits assessments prior to taking action may not be a reasonable expectation.

Nonetheless, there is evidence that UNHCR has a process of quality assurance in the assessment and design of interventions, which starts with situation and needs assessments. Several tools (often inter-agency) are available for these assessments. Quality is also ensured through standard-setting and guidance on technical standards. For example, UNHCR developed a booklet on designing appropriate interventions in urban settings (2009) and intends to disseminate operational guidance on other topics linked to refugees in urban settings. The Office also made guidance tools on a range of technical matters available on the intranet over the past two years.

MI 10.2 – Milestones/targets set to rate progress of project/program implementation

Respondents from peer organisations and donors at headquarters provided an overall rating of adequate on this MI, and respondents from recipient governments and donors in-country rated UNHCR as strong. However, respondents from peer organisations and donors at headquarters provided high rates of 'don't know' responses (respectively 43 and 32 per cent).

Although it was not possible to review a sample of country operational plans, UNHCR has guidelines on how programming should take place. At the level of country operation plans, the guidelines require the recording of baseline data for impact indicators. Targets are also required for both performance indicators (at output level) and impact indicators. In addition, UNHCR requires its implementing partners to follow similar procedures for the projects that they implement.

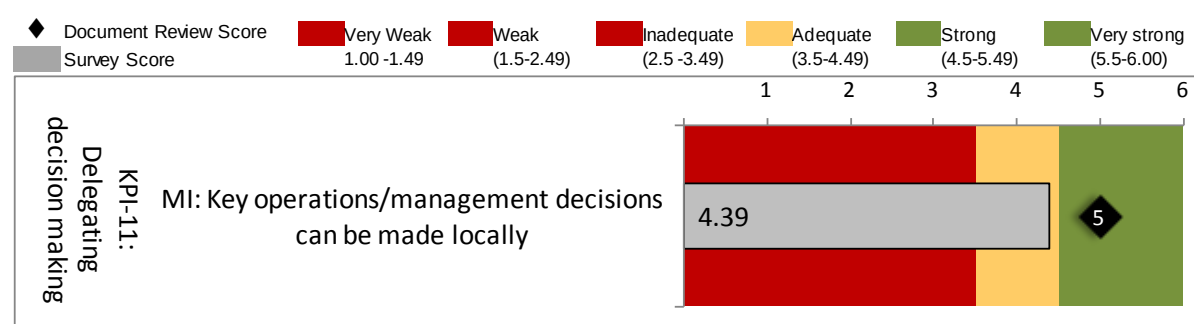
KPI 11: Delegating Decision Making

Finding 11: Survey respondents and the document review indicate that UNHCR has taken appropriate steps to improve delegation of decision-making authority.

Respondents from peer organisations rated UNHCR as strong in delegating decision-making to the country level and all other respondent groups perceived UNHCR as adequate. The document review found UNHCR strong.

The reform process launched by UNHCR in 2006 included a decentralisation and regionalisation component and there has been increasing willingness to delegate decision-making authority to the country level. The Global Management Accountability Framework and Revised Framework for Resource Allocation and Management reflect the organisation's efforts to establish the responsibilities and authorities that will be most supportive of results achievement. The Office notes that this is subject to on-going review to ensure that all key decision areas are appropriately covered.

Figure 3.17 KPI 11: Delegating Decision Making, Ratings of Micro-Indicators



MI 11.1 – Key operations/management decisions can be made locally

Respondents from peer organisations rated UNHCR higher than the other respondent groups on its key operational/management decisions being delegated in a manner appropriate to the context. However, many respondents from peer organisations, donors in-country, and donors at headquarters responded 'don't know' (48, 37, and 32 per cent respectively). The document review rated UNHCR as strong on this MI.

In 2007, UNHCR developed a Revised Resource Framework for Allocation and Management that delegated more authority and flexibility in decision making to representatives in the field (country and regional offices) and in 2008 it issued Terms of Reference for regional structures that state:

*... regional offices have the authority, within their regions, to: i) provide strategic direction; ii) design and lead the strategic planning process; iii) deliver advice, support and services; iv) carry out advocacy and build partnerships; v) manage resources; and vi) provide quality control and oversight.*⁴⁵

⁴⁵ UNHCR (2009). *Update on UNHCR's structural and management change process* (EC/60/SC/CRP.3). Retrieved 24 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/499041bb2.html>

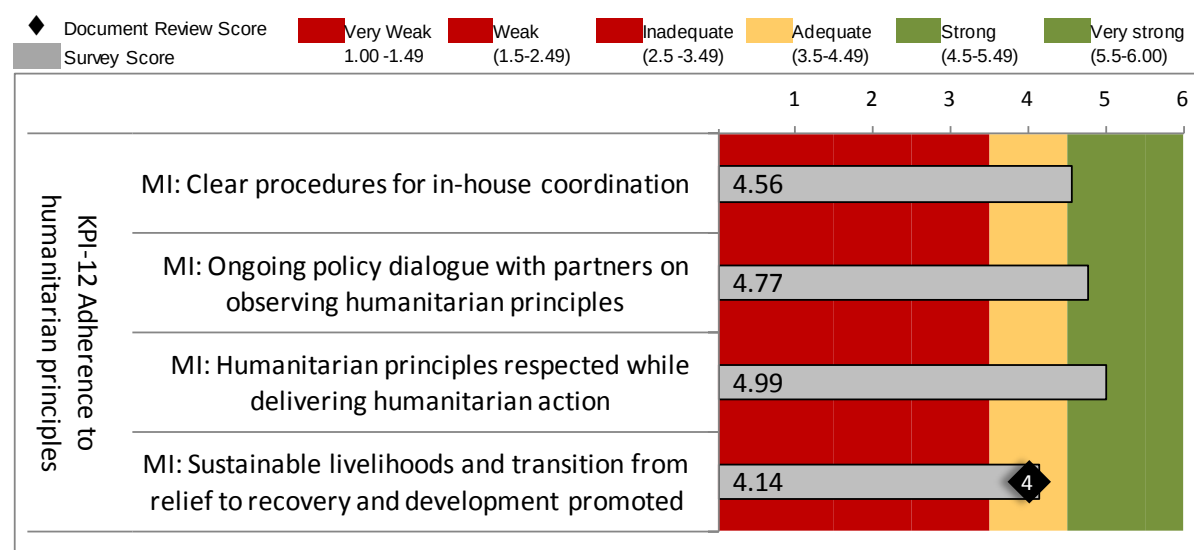
UNHCR is making efforts to improve delegation of decision making to the country and regional levels through the process of regionalisation and decentralisation launched in 2006. Evidence of the decision-making authorities at country level in various functions – strategic direction, international protection, programme, external relations, finance, human resources, emergency, security, supply chain, administration, and ICT – suggest that this is on the right track. The Organisational Development and Management Service is currently conducting a stocktaking review of regionalisation.

KPI 12: Adherence to Humanitarian Principles

Finding 12: UNHCR is considered strong in respecting and supporting humanitarian principles and adequate in promoting sustainable livelihoods.

The majority of respondents (70 per cent) provided ratings of adequate or higher on UNHCR's adherence to humanitarian principles. The document review provided a rating of adequate.

Figure 3.18 KPI 12: Adherence to Humanitarian Principles, Ratings of Micro-Indicators



MI 12.1 – Clear procedures for in-house coordination

UNHCR received mixed ratings on this MI. Donors in-country and at headquarters rated UNHCR strong and adequate respectively for having clear procedures for in-house coordination of the various functions and roles that are part of its mandate. However, 45 per cent of donors in-country responded 'don't know' to this MI.

MI 12.2 – Ongoing policy dialogue with partners on observing humanitarian principles

The majority of respondents (70 per cent) rated UNHCR adequate or higher for maintaining ongoing policy dialogue with partners on the importance of observing humanitarian principles in the delivery of humanitarian action, particularly in cases of conflict.

MI 12.3 – Humanitarian principles respected while delivering humanitarian action

The majority of respondents (70 per cent) rated UNHCR adequate or higher for respecting humanitarian principles while delivering humanitarian action. This MI received the highest score from donors at headquarters, which corresponds to a rating of strong.

MI 12.4 – Sustainable livelihoods and transition from relief to recovery and development promoted

Survey respondents were asked two questions related to this MI: whether UNHCR engages with local partners and communities to promote sustainable livelihoods, and whether UNHCR uses appropriate modalities to mitigate aid dependency. They all provided an average rating of adequate on this MI.

The document review rated UNHCR as adequate in promoting sustainable livelihoods and transition from relief to recovery and development. In the Global Appeal 2011, one of the Global Strategic Priorities relates to sustainable livelihood and there is a section on 'Encouraging Self-reliance' that describes progress made in 2010 and the priorities for 2011. In addition, UNHCR has introduced various livelihood initiatives (e.g., Women Leading for Livelihood, Community Technology Access, Urban Refugees livelihoods) and access to microfinance services. The concept of 'exit strategy' is also important in this context. UNHCR documents provide sufficient evidence of the importance placed on this, although details are often more limited. The Global Report 2009 refers to exit strategy in Georgia and Guinea and UNHCR's *Emergency Handbook* notes the importance of thinking about the exit strategy from the beginning of an operation.

3.3.4 Relationship Management

In the survey UNHCR was seen to perform adequately or better across all of the KPIs in relationship management.

Figure 3.19 below shows the overall survey ratings for the five KPIs in the operational management quadrant.

UNHCR was rated as adequate or strong in all aspects of relationship management. Its support for inter-agency plans and appeals received the highest total score of the survey. The document review did not rate UNHCR on specific criteria in this quadrant but provided data to support findings.

Figure 3.19 Quadrant III: Relationship Management, Survey and Document Review Ratings

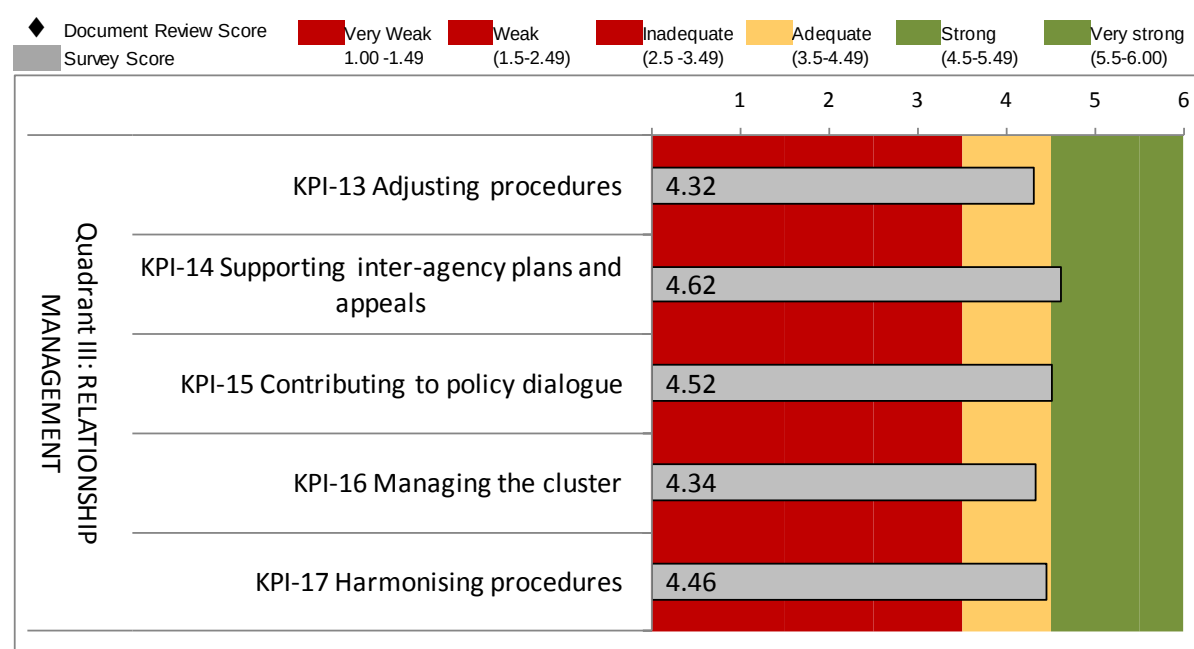
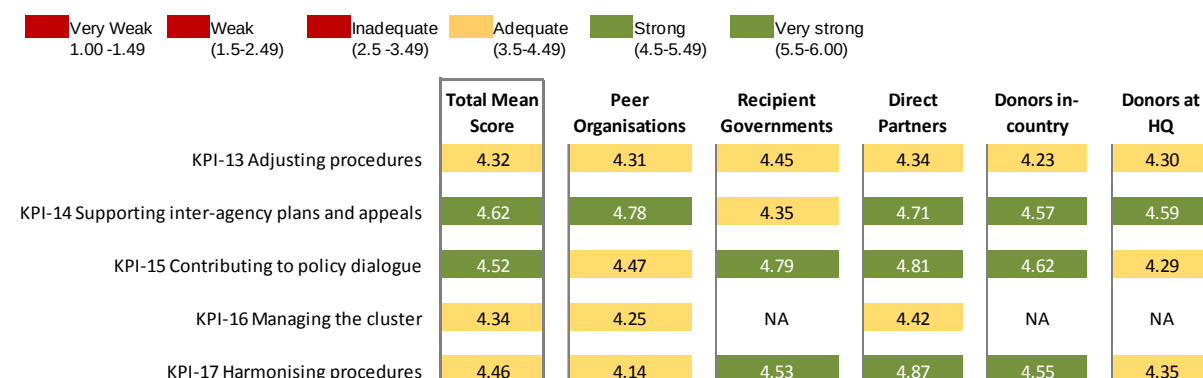


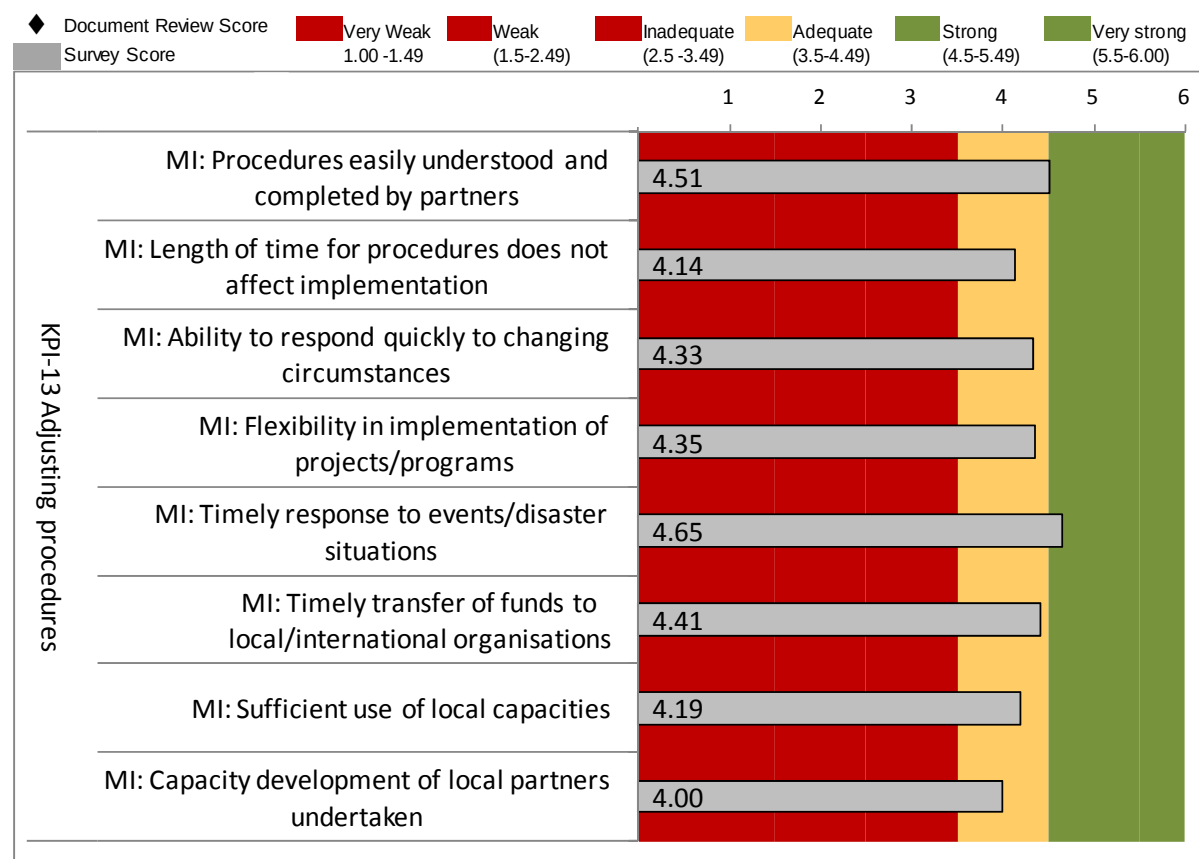
Figure 3.20 shows the mean scores for the five KPIs for all survey respondents, and by category of respondents.

Figure 3.20 Quadrant III: Relationship Management, Mean Scores by Respondent Group

KPI 13: Adjusting Procedures

Finding 13: UNHCR's procedures are considered to adequately take into account local conditions and capacities.

Survey respondent groups gave UNHCR an overall rating of adequate for adjusting procedures to local conditions and capacities. The results on the micro-indicators suggest that respondents, on average, feel that UNHCR operates with procedures that are easy to understand (an area that is rated as strong) and can be completed in a timely fashion. Its ability to respond to changing circumstances is viewed as adequate, as is the flexibility and responsiveness of its programming. UNHCR is seen to make use of local capacities and to support the development of local capacities.

Figure 3.21 KPI 13: Adjusting Procedures, Ratings of Micro-Indicators

MI 13.1 – Procedures easily understood and completed by partners

Respondents from peer organisations, recipient governments, and direct partners provided higher ratings than donors in-country and at headquarters on UNHCR's use of procedures that can easily be understood and followed by humanitarian partners.

MI 13.2 – Length of time for procedures does not affect implementation

Survey respondents were asked to rate the length of time it takes to complete UNHCR procedures, and whether this negatively affects implementation. Overall, respondent groups rated UNHCR as adequate on this MI and respondents from recipient governments provided a rating of strong; 38 per cent of respondents from peer organisations responded 'don't know'.

MI 13.3 – Ability to respond quickly to changing circumstances

Overall, survey respondents rated UNHCR as adequate for adjusting its portfolio in-country to respond quickly to changing circumstances, and respondents from peer organisations rated UNHCR as strong.

MI 13.4 – Flexibility in implementation of projects/programs

Overall, respondent groups provided a rating of adequate for UNHCR's flexibility in adjusting the implementation of projects/programs as learning occurs, and respondents from recipient governments rated it as strong.

MI 13.5 – Timely response to events/disaster situations

The majority of respondents (70 per cent) shared the perception that UNHCR is adequate or better at responding to rapid onset situations in a timely manner. Respondents from peer organisations provided lower ratings than the other respondent groups.

MI 13.6 – Timely transfer of funds to local/international organisations

The majority of respondents from recipient governments and direct partners (respectively 72 and 74 per cent) provided ratings of adequate or higher on this MI. Respondents from peer organisations and donors in-country and at headquarters expressed high rates of uncertainty (respectively 45, 41, and 36 per cent responded 'don't know').

MI 13.7 – Sufficient use of local capacities

Overall, all respondent groups agreed that UNHCR sufficiently uses local capacities.

MI 13.8 – Capacity development of local partners undertaken

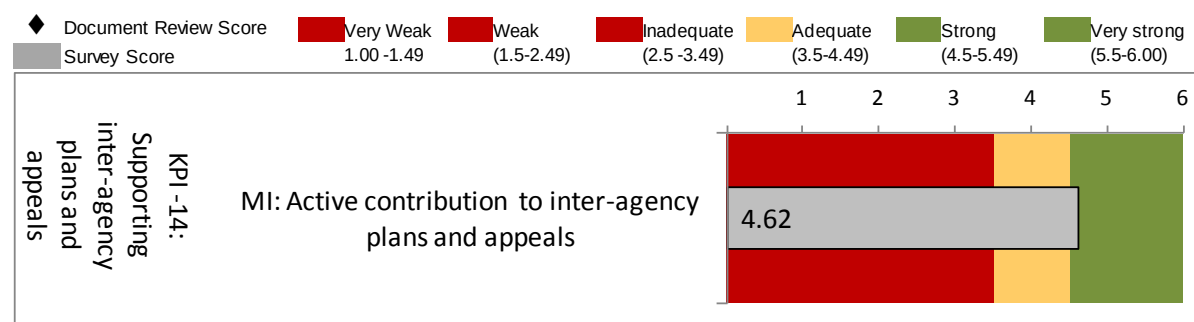
All respondent groups rated UNHCR as adequate in providing capacity development for local partners.

KPI 14: Supporting Inter-Agency Plans and Appeals

Finding 14: UNHCR's support of inter-agency plans and appeals is perceived as one of the organisation's strongest practices.

Overall, survey respondents perceived UNHCR as strong in coordinating and directing its aid programming at the country level in support of inter-agency plans and appeals. The only exception is respondents from recipient governments, who rated the organisation as adequate on this KPI. The information found in documents tends to corroborate the survey assessment.

Figure 3.22 KPI 14: Supporting Inter-Agency Plans and Appeals, Ratings of Micro-Indicators



MI 14.1 – Active contribution to inter-agency plans and appeals

Survey respondents were asked two questions related to this MI.

In response to the question on whether UNHCR contributes to inter-agency plans and appeals in a timely fashion, the majority of survey respondents (73 per cent) provided ratings of adequate or higher.

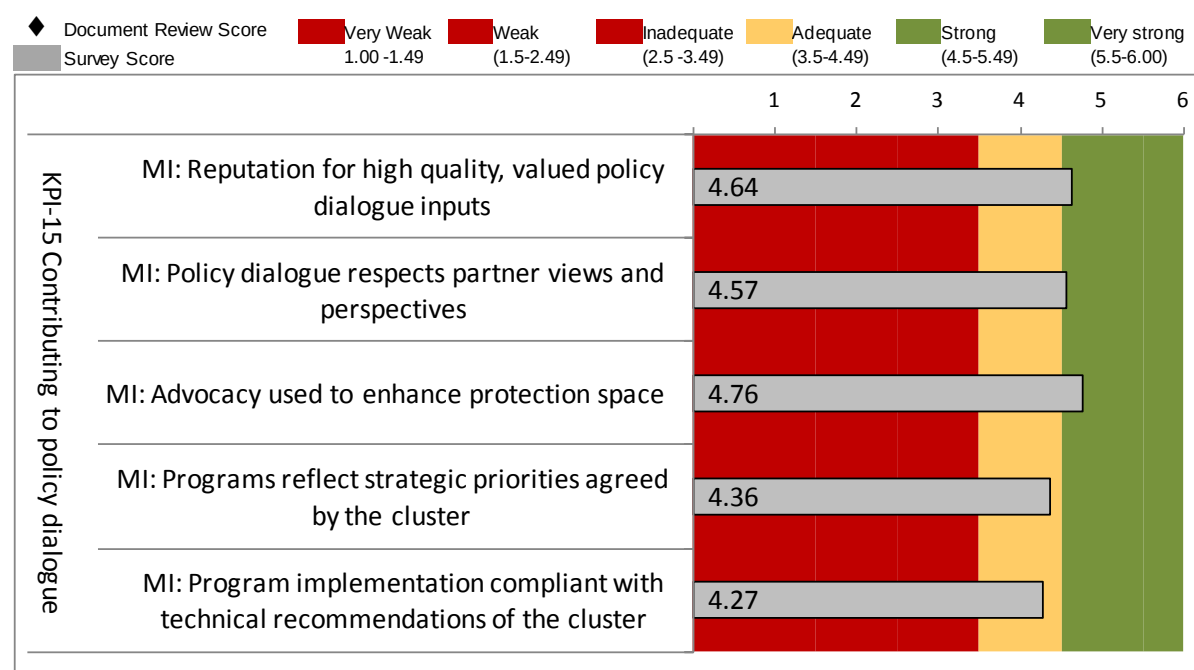
In response to the second question, whether UNHCR engages fully in the Common Humanitarian Action Plans (CHAP) in countries where this programming process is being utilised, respondents provided a rating of strong. However, there were high levels of 'don't know' responses on this question from donors in-country, direct partners, and respondents from recipient governments and peer organisations (53, 52, 44 and 38 per cent respectively).

As a leader of both country level and global clusters (further discussed below) UNHCR contributes to inter-agency plans. UNHCR has also participated in the Consolidated Appeal Processes (CAPs), the Flash Appeals, and the Emergency Humanitarian Action Plans in years past. UNHCR is a full member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).

KPI 15: Contributing to Policy Dialogue

Finding 15: Survey respondents believe that UNHCR adds value to policy dialogue with its humanitarian partners.

UNHCR engages in policy dialogue with partners on a wide range of issues in humanitarian assistance, migration, and international law. All respondent groups perceived UNHCR to perform in the range of adequate to strong in the way that it contributes to policy dialogue. This includes the advocacy role that UNHCR plays in order to enhance the protection space for persons of concern.

Figure 3.23 KPI 15: Contributing to Policy Dialogue, Ratings of Micro-Indicators**MI 15.1 – Reputation for high quality, valued policy dialogue inputs**

The majority of respondents (74 per cent) rated UNHCR as adequate or higher for providing valuable inputs to policy dialogue.

MI 15.2 – Policy dialogue respects partner views and perspectives

A majority of respondents (72 per cent) also considered that UNHCR adequately respects the views of humanitarian partners when it undertakes policy dialogue. Three respondent groups provided average ratings of strong on this question (donors in-country, direct partners, and respondents from recipient governments) while respondents from peer organisations and donors at headquarters gave an average rating of adequate on this MI.

MI 15.3 – Advocacy used to enhance protection space

UNHCR performs adequately or better in using advocacy with governments and other stakeholders to enhance protection space, according to the majority of respondents (77 per cent). Respondents from peer organisations, direct partners, and donors in-country were the only groups asked this question.

MI 15.4 – Programs reflect strategic priorities agreed by the cluster

Participating in a cluster implies that an organisation makes adjustments in its strategy and programming in order to align and coordinate its operations with those of the cluster. The majority (72 per cent) of respondents asked about this issue (i.e., respondents from peer organisations, direct partners, and donors at headquarters) considered that UNHCR's practice is adequate or better in adjusting its programming to reflect the strategic priorities agreed by the clusters it participates in (which may include protection, emergency shelter, or other clusters). Direct partners were significantly more positive on this point than other groups. Donors at headquarters, while providing a rating in the adequate range, were significantly less positive.

MI 15.5 – Program implementation compliant with technical recommendations of cluster

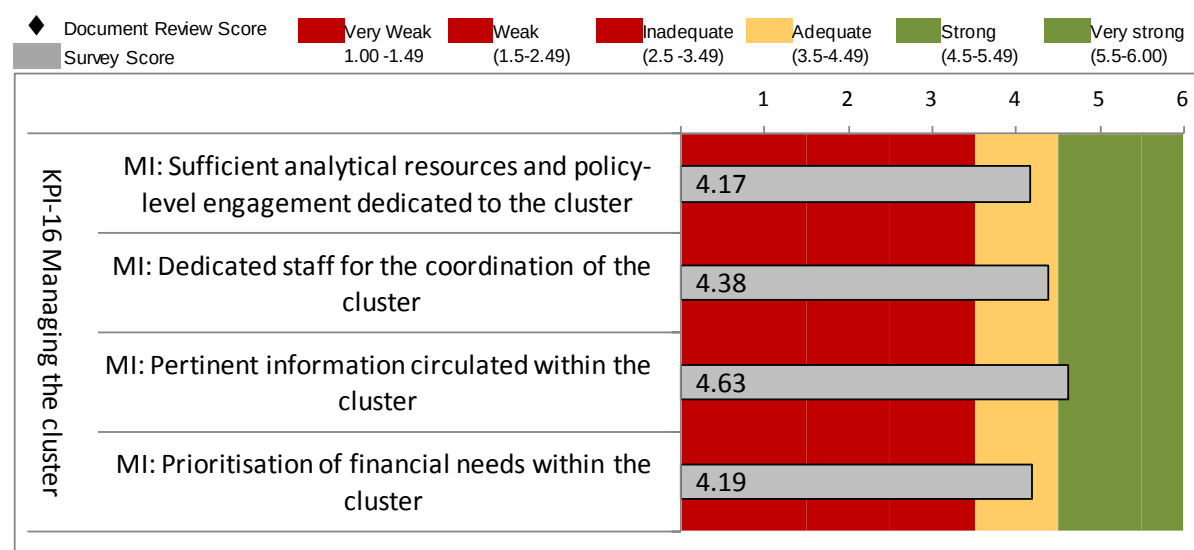
Direct partners were significantly more positive about UNHCR's compliance with technical recommendations of the clusters than respondents from peer organisations and donors at headquarters. The latter were significantly less positive on this question, but 36 per cent responded 'don't know'.

KPI 16: Managing the Cluster

Finding 16: UNHCR was considered adequate overall for dedicating sufficient resources to managing the protection cluster that it co-leads in Burundi, the only MOPAN survey country in which the cluster system is currently being implemented.

UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster in 21 countries and co-leads it in two. It also leads the Emergency Shelter Cluster in six countries and co-leads it in one. All the questions under this key performance indicator were asked only of respondents in-country who were familiar with UNHCR's role as a protection cluster co-lead in Burundi. Thus, only respondents from peer organisations and direct partners provided ratings on UNHCR performance in co-managing the protection cluster in that country.

Figure 3.24 KPI 16: Managing the Cluster, Ratings of Micro-Indicators

**MI 16.1 – Sufficient analytical resources and policy-level engagement dedicated to the cluster**

The majority (69 per cent) of respondents from peer organisations and direct partners rated UNHCR adequate or higher for dedicating sufficient analytical resources and policy-level engagement to strategic activities within the cluster.

MI 16.2 – Dedicated staff for the coordination of the cluster

Respondents from peer organisations and direct partners rated UNHCR as adequate in providing dedicated staff for coordination of the protection cluster.

MI 16.3 – Pertinent information circulated within the cluster

Respondents from peer organisations rated UNHCR as adequate for ensuring that pertinent information is circulated within the cluster and direct partners rated UNHCR as strong. Overall, the majority (75 per cent) of respondents rated the organisation as adequate or higher.

MI 16.4 – Prioritisation of financial needs within the cluster

Respondents from peer organisations and direct partners both perceived UNHCR as adequately facilitating prioritisation of financial needs within the protection cluster it co-leads.

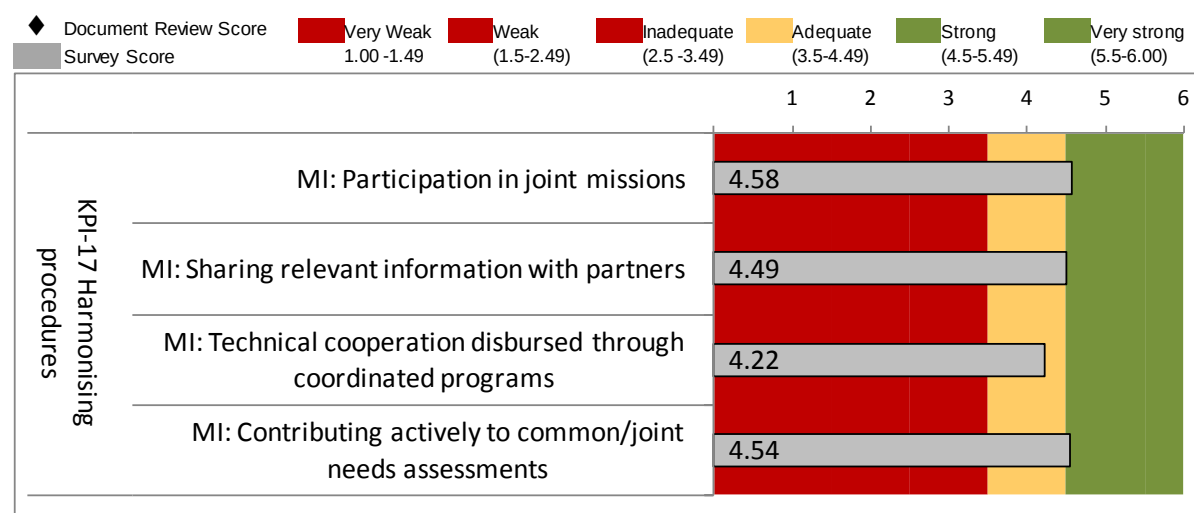
KPI 17: Harmonising Procedures

Finding 17: UNHCR is considered adequate in harmonising procedures with other actors. It is recognised by survey respondents as strong, overall, for its collaboration in the framework of joint missions and common needs assessments.

Respondents from recipient governments, donors in-country, and direct partners considered UNHCR strong in harmonising arrangements and procedures with other programming partners as appropriate, according to its mandate and humanitarian principles. The two other respondent groups rated the organisation as adequate on most of the questions asked in this KPI.

Although the document review did not provide an assessment of the indicators in this area, document sources illustrate UNHCR efforts to align with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and participate in Delivering as One processes. As noted below, UNHCR is very active in joint needs assessments and often participates in joint missions.

Figure 3.25 KPI 17: Harmonising Procedures, Ratings of Micro-Indicators



MI 17.1 – Participation in joint missions

Most respondent groups provided an overall rating of strong on UNHCR's participation in joint missions.

MI 17.2 – Sharing relevant information with partners

Respondents from peer organisations and recipient governments considered UNHCR to adequately share relevant information, in particular regarding needs, with humanitarian and other partners. The three other respondent groups provided a rating of strong on this MI.

MI 17.3 – Technical cooperation disbursed through coordinated programs

All the respondent groups answering this question (i.e., all groups except direct partners) rated UNHCR as adequate in providing technical cooperation through coordinated programs. However, 36 per cent of donors in-country and 30 per cent of donors at headquarters responded 'don't know' to this MI.

MI 17.4 – Contributing actively to common/joint needs assessments

Overall, donors in-country, respondents from recipient governments, and direct partners perceived UNHCR's active contribution to common/joint needs assessments at country level as strong, whereas respondents from peer organisations considered it adequate.

UNHCR has a strong partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP) for carrying out joint assessment missions. In on-going refugee situations, UNHCR and WFP perform joint assessment missions at least every two years.

Every year, UNHCR performs a Global Needs Assessment (GNA) of all its operations. Although this is not a joint process, the GNA also reflects efforts to harmonise as the 2008 GNA Pilot Report noted:

*The GNA is harmonious with assessment approaches and tools used by humanitarian and development agencies of the United Nations system. The GNA benefits from and contributes to existing joint United Nations assessments and planning processes such as the CAP/CHAP and the related Needs Assessment Framework, CCA-UNDAF.*⁴⁶

⁴⁶ UNHCR (2008). *Global Needs Assessment Pilot Report*, (p. 3). Retrieved 31 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/48ef09a62.html>

3.3.5 Knowledge Management

Surveyed stakeholders and the document review agreed that UNHCR's performance in knowledge management is adequate in all areas other than presenting performance information, which the review of documents highlighted as an area for improvement.

Figure 3.26 shows the overall survey and document review ratings for the three KPIs in the knowledge management quadrant.

UNHCR performs acceptably with regard to knowledge management, receiving ratings of adequate from the survey and the document review on most key performance indicators. The document review noted that UNHCR has made improvements in reporting on its effectiveness – particularly as evident in the Global Report 2010 – but there is still room to improve in this area.

Figure 3.26 Quadrant IV: Knowledge Management, Survey and Document Review Ratings

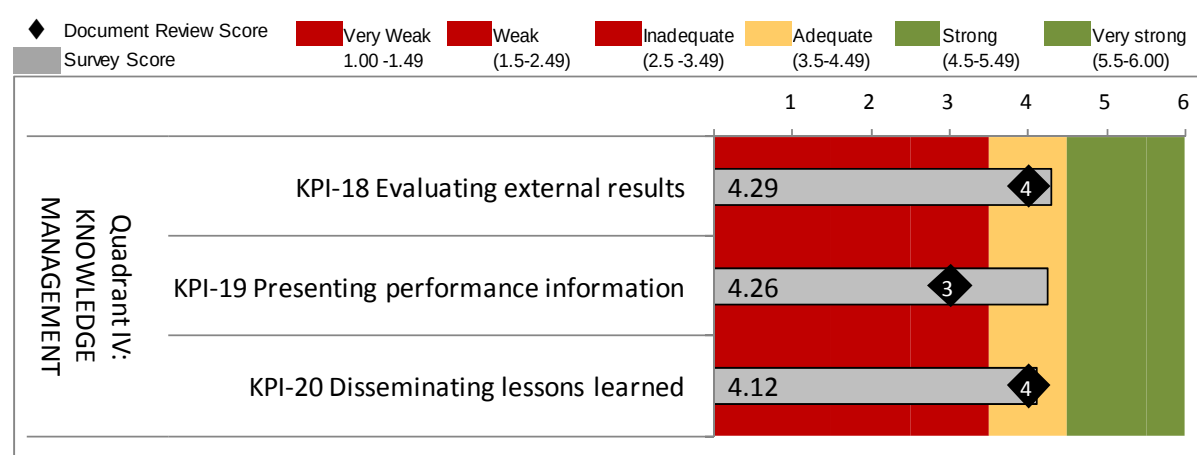


Figure 3.27 shows the mean scores for the three KPIs for all survey respondents, and by category of respondents.

Figure 3.27 Quadrant IV: Knowledge Management, Mean Scores by Respondent Group

	Total Mean Score	Peer Organisations	Recipient Governments	Direct Partners	Donors in-country	Donors at HQ
KPI-18 Evaluating external results	4.29	4.28	4.31	4.39	NA	4.19
KPI-19 Presenting performance information	4.26	4.38	4.05	4.59	4.24	4.26
KPI-20 Disseminating lessons learned	4.12	4.19	3.86	4.12	4.08	4.32

KPI 18: Evaluating External Results

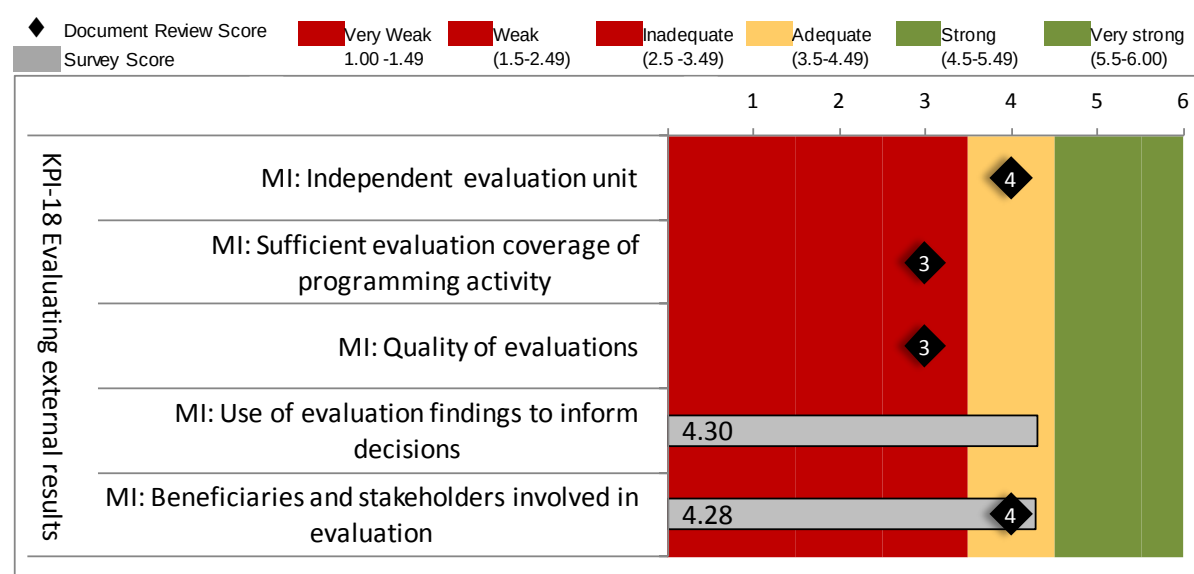
Finding 18: UNHCR was perceived as adequate in consistently evaluating its delivery and external results.

In 2006, UNHCR established the Policy Development and Evaluation Service (PDES) to replace the Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit. The PDES is considered to be adequate in terms of its independence. While officially reporting to the Executive Management, since 2008 it

has sent its evaluation reports directly to Executive Committee members and aims to ensure independence through a number of other practices.

There is little documentary evidence on the coverage of UNHCR's work by the evaluation function or on the process for ensuring evaluation quality in the organisation. Respondents noted that UNHCR is adequately using the findings of evaluations to inform decisions on policy, programming, and strategy. UNHCR was rated as adequate for its efforts to involve beneficiaries and direct partners in its evaluation process.

Figure 3.28 KPI 18: Evaluating External Results, Ratings of Micro-Indicators



MI 18.1 – Independent evaluation unit

In 2006 UNHCR established the PDES, located in the Executive Office. PDES has an integrated work program of policy development, evaluation, research and dissemination. The head of PDES reports to the Deputy High Commissioner on evaluation matters and to the High Commissioner on policy matters, which may limit the independence of the evaluation unit.⁴⁷ However, one of the principles guiding UNHCR's evaluation function is 'independence' and its Evaluation Policy, which was updated by the PDES in 2010, comments on the use of different evaluation types and methods, including external or externally-led evaluations. Both the policy and practical guide⁴⁸ provide general points on ensuring independence in the conduct of evaluations (mainly through the use of external evaluators). As noted by PDES, the independence of the unit is assured through a number of its policies and practices, including: its evaluation policy that prevents senior management from asserting any kind of editorial control, the extensive use of external evaluators, the creation of multi-stakeholder steering committees, annual reports to the Executive Committee, and regular bilateral meetings with Executive Committee members.

⁴⁷ As noted by United Nations Evaluation Group in its 2007 report on *Oversight and Evaluation in the UN System*, there are pros and cons to such a location of the evaluation function and there are measures that can be taken to ensure integrity of the evaluation function when co-located with policy or research units. One such measure is to ensure that the Head of Evaluation has a direct reporting line to the Head of Organisation, on evaluation matters.

⁴⁸ UNHCR (2005). *How to manage evaluation: Seven steps*, Retrieved 31 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/429d7c792.html>

MI 18.2 – Coverage of programming activity by evaluation function

UNHCR's evaluation policy does not define the expected evaluation coverage of its programming and does not clearly explain how evaluations are planned and prioritised. The policy specifies that the PDES "work programme is established on the basis of regular consultations with the Executive Office and Executive Committee, as well as UN, NGO and academic partners."⁴⁹ As PDES noted, its work programme is demand-driven. Based on the documentation available, it is difficult to determine the coverage of the evaluation function, or to understand the approach to prioritisation of what are presumably scarce evaluation resources. While determining coverage in terms of programs may be a challenge, there may be a way to establish parameters that could determine whether evaluation is covering the major activities or a sufficient proportion of the budget that UNHCR has in a given period.

MI 18.3 – Quality of evaluations

UNHCR's evaluation policy is based on the Norms and Standards for Evaluation of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). Evaluation quality is one of the norms. The MOPAN assessment does not directly examine the quality of evaluation reports. Instead, it seeks to identify the organisation's practices with respect to ensuring evaluation quality. UNHCR's evaluation policy includes a sub-section on quality control, which emphasises the role that internal and external stakeholders play in providing feedback on evaluation and the importance of a lessons learned exercise at the end of each evaluation project. UNHCR highlights a number of practices that help to ensure quality of evaluations, which includes appointing an evaluation specialist as Head of PDES, ensuring that non-specialist members of the unit receive both external and on-the-job training in evaluation, engaging external consultants, and engaging expert readers to comment on draft evaluation reports. UNHCR also participates in the evaluation data base of Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP), thus forming part of ALNAP's periodic meta evaluation of evaluation reports in the humanitarian sector. However, there is no formal mechanism (such as a report) that systematically reviews and comments on the quality of evaluations in the organisation.

MI 18.4 – Evaluation findings used to inform decisions

Donors at headquarters, the only respondent group questioned about this MI, rated UNHCR as adequate in using evaluation findings in its decisions on programming, policy and strategy.

MI 18.5 – Direct beneficiaries and stakeholders involved in evaluation processes

Survey respondents were asked two questions related to this MI: whether UNHCR requires the involvement of key direct partners in its evaluation function, and whether UNHCR requires the involvement of key beneficiaries in its evaluation function. Overall, all respondent groups provided a rating of adequate on both questions. However, donors at headquarters expressed high rates of uncertainty on both questions (42 per cent answered 'don't know' on the first question, and 36 per cent on the second question); and 38 per cent of respondents from peer organisations also responded 'don't know' to the second question.

UNHCR's evaluation policy presents the principles guiding the evaluation function, one of which is consultation with stakeholders in the identification, planning, implementation and utilisation of evaluation projects. Moreover, UNHCR's evaluations consider the opinions of beneficiaries of different gender, age, socio-economic status, etc. In the case of major evaluations, UNHCR creates a Steering Committee that involves key internal and external stakeholders.

⁴⁹ UNHCR (2010). *UNHCR's evaluation policy*. (p. 9). Retrieved 31 May 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/3d99a0f74.html>

In all the evaluations sampled, stakeholders and beneficiaries were interviewed and/or surveyed and were thus involved in data collection, but it is not clear if they were involved in other parts of the evaluation process.

KPI 19: Presenting Performance Information

Finding 19: UNHCR received mixed ratings for presenting performance information on its effectiveness. Overall, survey respondents provided ratings of adequate. The review of documents noted improvements in the Global Report over time, but identified gaps in the use of performance information to provide evidence of UNHCR's effectiveness.

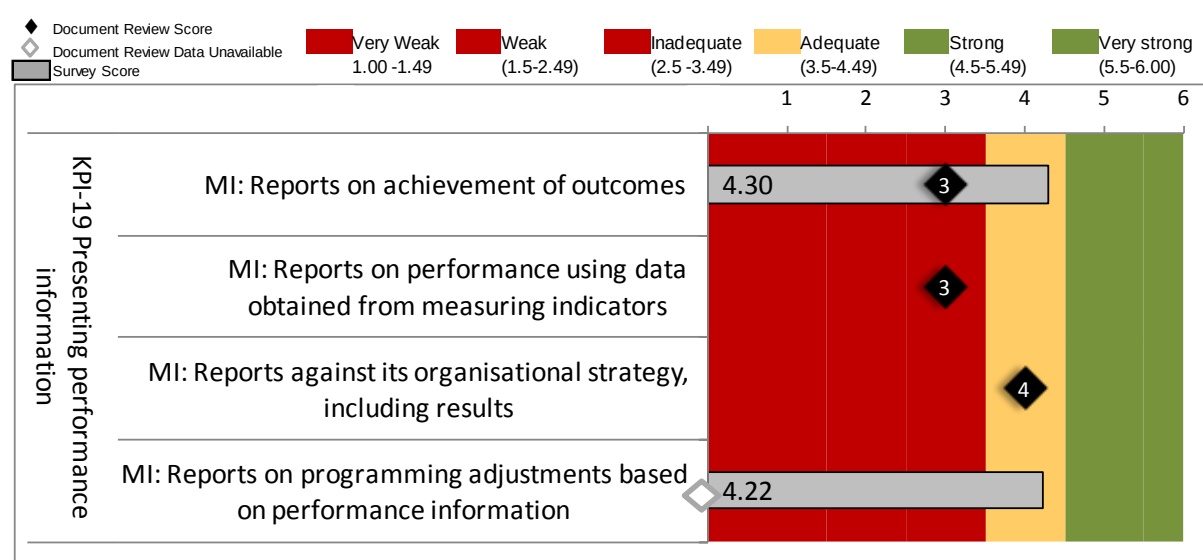
At the organisation-wide level, UNHCR produces the Global Report, which, since 2010, has become more performance-oriented and reports on progress toward the targets of the Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs). Survey respondents provided ratings of adequate on the questions relating to the quality of the reporting. While UNHCR generally reports against its organisation-wide strategy, the results on each micro-indicator suggest that the availability and analysis of performance information is still inconsistent.

UNHCR has recognised this issue:

*In 2011, UNHCR will critically review the impact of its programmes, in order to improve target setting and reporting in the next biennium. In addition, the Office will work to improve data collection and analysis in order to better understand and present the results and impact of its activities.*⁵⁰

At the country level, it is more challenging to assess the quality of performance reporting because coverage in the Global Report is minimal and Country Reports are not in the public domain.

Figure 3.29 KPI 19: Presenting Performance Information, Ratings of Micro-Indicators



⁵⁰ UNHCR (2011). *Global Report 2010*, (p. 11). Retrieved 4 July 2011 from <http://www.unhcr.org/4dfdbf35b.html>

MI 19.1 – Reports on achievement of outcomes

Respondents from recipient governments and donors at headquarters considered UNHCR to adequately report to the governing body on performance, including on outcomes achieved.

The Global Report 2010 reports on most of the GSPs (i.e., it presents the target for 2010-2011 and the progress in 2010), which is an improvement over previous Global Reports. However, information on progress is scattered throughout the report, which makes it difficult to see which GSPs are reported on and which are not. Moreover, it does not report on different results levels (i.e., outputs and outcomes). It also does not provide consistent analysis of how UNHCR's work is helping to address the challenges in moving towards the outcome.

MI 19.2 – Reports on performance using data obtained from measuring indicators

As noted above, the Global Report 2010 presents the GSPs with their performance targets and reports on most of these. It begins to compare the progress made on indicators to targets and baselines (referred to as the "current situation," or the situation in 2009 when the GSPs were developed.). However, the narrative of the report does not provide an analysis of the progress on the targets and how the targets link to the outcome area.

MI 19.3 – Reports against its organisation-wide strategy, including results

The Global Report 2010 makes reference to the expected humanitarian and management results identified in the Global Appeal 2010-2011 and reports on progress made in 2010 on most targets linked to the GSPs presented in the Global Appeal 2010-2011.

MI 19.4 – Reports on programming adjustments based on performance information

Direct partners provided UNHCR an overall rating of strong on reporting to the governing body on adjustments made to country programming on the basis of performance information, whereas the other respondent groups rated the organisation as adequate. However, respondents expressed high rates of uncertainty on this MI (47 per cent of direct partners, 45 per cent of donors in-country, and 50 per cent of peer organisations). This micro-indicator is the one for which respondents from peer organisations provided the highest rate of 'don't know' responses.

While the Global Report 2010 is not a country level performance report per se, it is the only report in the public domain that summarises country achievements (main objectives and targets). However, the country sections of the report do not describe adjustments made to plans and interventions based on performance, and it is hard to link the country sections of the Global Report with the country sections of the Global Appeal 2010-2011.

UNHCR's Country Offices also produce two end-of-year reports: the Annual Protection Report and the Country Report. The Country Report is used to provide country program information to the headquarters units and to produce the Global Report and should report on the objectives, outputs and indicators in the Country Operation Plans. The Country Report could probably be considered as a performance report at the country level, but it is not a disclosed document.⁵¹

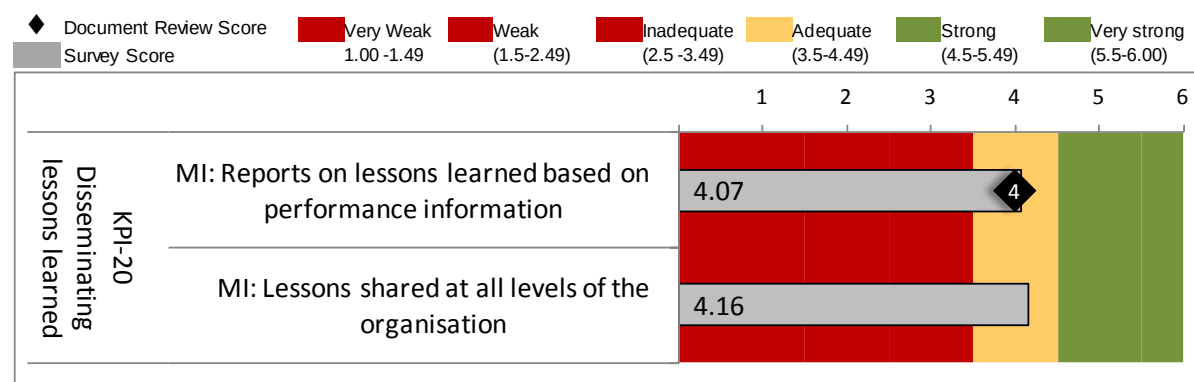
⁵¹ As noted earlier, portions of the country operational data will be made available to donors and other key stakeholders by the end of 2011. This may provide illustrations, at different points in the year, of the kind of programming adjustments being made in individual operations.

KPI 20: Disseminating Lessons Learned

Finding 20: Overall, UNHCR adequately encourages identification, documentation and dissemination of lessons learned and/or best practices.

This key performance indicator involved two MIs, only one of which was assessed by document review.

Figure 3.30 KPI 20: Disseminating Lessons Learned, Ratings of Micro-Indicators



MI 20.1 – Reports on lessons learned based on performance information

All survey respondent groups agreed that, overall, UNHCR is adequately identifying and disseminating lessons learned from performance information. However, 40 per cent of respondents from peer organisations and 39 per cent of donors in-country answered 'don't know' to this question.

There is evidence that UNHCR is committed to the identification of lessons learned since it has produced or plans to produce many documents – for both internal and external audiences – on what it has learned through its operational work. Indeed, the Policy Development and Evaluation Service (PDES) holds regular debriefing sessions on lessons learned, and publishes findings such as the lessons from UNHCR's involvement in recent emergencies in Central Asia.⁵² The Refworld website, which includes reports, policy documents, and other types of documents from UNHCR and external sources (e.g., governments, NGOs, INGOs, academics, etc.) provides a platform for sharing lessons learned material.

MI 20.2 – Lessons shared at all levels of the organisation

All survey respondent groups asked this question (i.e., all groups except peer organisations) gave UNHCR an overall rating of adequate for providing opportunities at all levels of the organisation to share lessons from practical experience. Yet, donors in-country and at headquarters were uncertain about this MI, as illustrated by their high rates of 'don't know' responses (respectively 53 and 36 per cent).

⁵² See "Crisis in Central Asia: Lessons learned from UNHCR's response to the 2010 emergency in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan," (2011, <http://www.unhcr.org/4d7e28219.html>)

4. Conclusion

The year 2011 marks the first occasion for MOPAN to involve humanitarian organisations in its assessment. The assessment indicators were adapted to try to capture the organisational practices and systems required for effective humanitarian assistance (e.g., the operational procedures and collaborative processes required for work in difficult environments such as war zones and rapid onset situations). Lessons learned from this experience will be used to inform future Common Approach assessments of multilateral organisations involved in humanitarian assistance.

This conclusion steps away from the specific ratings of the MOPAN assessment and looks at the major messages that can contribute to dialogue between MOPAN, UNHCR and its partners. The following themes emerged from the MOPAN Common Approach assessment of UNHCR:

From its strategy to its operations, UNHCR respects humanitarian principles

UNHCR's institutional culture strongly emphasises respect for humanitarian principles, which is reflected in its Global Appeal that insists on adherence to these principles (mainly to neutrality, independence, and impartiality). The Office also respects humanitarian principles while delivering humanitarian action and holds on-going policy dialogue with partners on the importance of observing humanitarian principles, particularly in cases of conflict.

UNHCR is commended for its openness to policy dialogue

UNHCR is an important advocate for the rights and protection of refugees and persons of concern. A key component of its advocacy program is enhanced policy dialogue with governments, partners, and other actors on a broad range of humanitarian assistance, migration, and international law issues. Survey results indicate that policy dialogue is an area of UNHCR strength that is characterised by informed, principled, and respectful engagement. Survey respondents appreciated the clarity of UNHCR's strategy based on a clear mandate with respect to refugee matters, which undoubtedly facilitates UNHCR advocacy and policy dialogue in this area.

UNHCR has made progress in managing for results and its practices are catching up with its commitment

In 2006, UNHCR embarked on a results-based management reform initiative that reflects the Office's commitment to become more results focused. It has introduced major changes in the way that it plans, budgets, monitors, and reports on its results. Such changes take time and there have been delays in the full implementation of its organisational results framework, Country Operation Plans, and the focus on results in UNHCR budgets and reports on expenditures. The effects of these new systems are just beginning to show in reporting practices. Although the Global Report 2010 does a better job of reporting on the Global Strategic Priorities than previous reports, further improvements are needed in presenting and using performance information so that the report can tell the performance story of UNHCR. These will likely materialise as the *Focus* software (a tool to support a results-based management system) is able to provide the information for reporting on all indicators and targets of the Global Strategic Priorities.

UNHCR's approach to cross-cutting priorities is well articulated at the strategic level but may be less clear in the field

UNHCR's strategic documents articulate a clear institutional approach to cross-cutting priorities such as gender equality, environment, and HIV/AIDS. However, it is not clear in available documentation whether this high level strategic support translates into changes on the ground.

UNHCR's emergency preparedness and response is improving but faces some on-going challenges

At UNHCR, emergency preparedness and response is a clear priority. It is perceived as being able to respond to rapid onset situations in a timely manner and it has strong surge mechanisms in place. It prepares contingency plans and has adequate procurement and supply chain management practices. UNHCR's ability to respond to changing circumstances is perceived as adequate, as is the length of time it takes to complete its procedures without affecting implementation. UNHCR's performance in the area of emergency preparedness and response is good, but may not be sufficient if it is required to respond to new types of situations affecting its populations of concern. The ability to respond quickly is a constant challenge for humanitarian organisations. UNHCR is currently reforming its supply management and intends to further strengthen its standby partnerships to enhance the predictability and quality of deployments. While the organisation's efforts should lead to improved emergency preparedness and response, some constraints to timely deployment of assistance in rapid onset situations are beyond UNHCR's capacity to address. A case in point is the provision of donor financial support, which is often short-term, event-driven, and earmarked.

UNHCR is recognised for contributions to inter-agency processes, yet feedback suggests that it needs to improve its coordination with other actors

UNHCR is working within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the Delivering as One processes. The MOPAN survey data indicates that it is a strong contributor to common/joint needs assessments and to inter-agency plans and appeals. It also engages fully in Common Humanitarian Action Plans (CHAP) in countries where this programming is being utilised, and it participates in joint missions. However, the assessment also suggests that UNHCR could improve its sharing of relevant information with partners and disbursing of technical cooperation through coordinated programs. Respondents had mixed views regarding UNHCR's coordination with partners, governments, and peer organisations. While some respondents considered this one of UNHCR's strengths, a greater number noted this as an area for improvement. This is not unexpected and would probably be the case in any broad survey given that UNHCR coordinates operations with a range of groups, both at field and headquarters levels, and may have to prioritise some relationships in some contexts. UNHCR direct partners, for example, tended to have more positive views and gave strong marks on the indicators related to this topic. Respondents from peer organisations noted coordination as an area for improvement and that may also reflect that most countries selected for the survey do not have cluster coordination operations, which is where most of the critical coordination among UN agencies takes place.

UNHCR's evaluation function is improving but is constrained by limited resources

UNHCR's Policy Development and Evaluation Service (PDES) is a small and recent evaluation unit. The unit has adopted a strong learning and utilisation focus in its new evaluation policy. Evidence of this is provided through its use of real-time evaluations, which are tailored to the humanitarian nature of UNHCR's work and provide rapid feedback in the field. There are some gaps in the evaluation function related to (i) defining and meeting desired coverage of programming activity by the evaluation function; (ii) strengthening its practices in terms of reviewing and reporting on quality of evaluation in the organisation; and (iii) adopting formal mechanisms for tracking implementation of evaluation recommendations.⁵³ Such measures

⁵³ PDES has recently developed a format to help track and report on implementation of evaluation findings and recommendations.

could help reinforce contributions to learning and accountability in UNHCR, but may also require additional evaluation resources.

UNHCR could enhance its transparency by sharing more of its documents

While the nature of UNHCR's work requires that certain sensitive information remain confidential, it may be possible to strike a better balance between maintaining confidentiality and meeting stakeholders' information needs. UNHCR should consider making some of its documents more widely available, as feasible given UNHCR's policy on information classification, handling and disclosure. UNHCR's plan to use its Global Focus website to make more operational planning and reporting information available to Executive Committee member States is a step in the right direction.