



UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

OCHA is the part of the United Nations Secretariat responsible for bringing together humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent response to emergencies. OCHA also ensures there is a framework within which each actor can contribute to the overall response effort.

OCHA's mission is to:

- Mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors in order to alleviate human suffering in disasters and emergencies.
- Advocate the rights of people in need.
- Promote preparedness and prevention.
- Facilitate sustainable solutions.

How OCHA Delivers

OCHA's Strategic Framework ensures that OCHA delivers on its core mandate, while responding to contemporary global challenges. The three pillars of the Strategic Framework are:

- 1. Partnerships:** broadening the coalition for multilateral humanitarian action
- 2. Service provider:** building a better system
- 3. Reliability and professionalism:** creating better staffing and surge solutions to be there when it counts

OCHA Presence in Iran

OCHA has been present in Iran since the Bam earthquake in 2003. However, OCHA sent an UNDAC team to Iran in response to the earthquake in Khorasan province in 1997 (1,570 people killed). In the Bam Earthquake (26,271 people killed), OCHA dispatched a full scale



Iran Foreign Minister, Dr. Javad Zarif (right), and UN Under Secretary General, Mr. Mark Lowcock (left), meet in November 2017.

UNDAC team and mobilized the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG).

- OCHA re-established its official presence in the country in 2013 by establishing a Humanitarian Assistance Team (HAT) after signing a joint statement with the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

- OCHA Iran serves as the secretariat of the UN Disaster Management Team, which is chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator.

- OCHA Iran has organized several workshops and trainings, such as the post-Bam earthquake workshop (2004 and 2011) to familiarize the government and the IRCS with INSARAG methodology. In October 2012 OCHA facilitated a coordinated needs assessment workshop in Tehran which examined IASC Guidelines on Coordinated Assessments (MIRA).

- In August 2013, OCHA, the WFP Readiness Initiative and UNICEF, organized a training on international response tools, which was attended by 90 staff from UN and National Disaster Management Organization (NDMO) of Iran. The same group delivered an earthquake simulation in two interlinked locations (Tehran and Kerman) on 12-13th October 2013.

- A Plan of Action (PoA) between Iran and OCHA on in disaster management 2014-16 has successfully been completed and a new one for

Contact:

OCHA Humanitarian Assistance Team (HAT) in Iran
8 Shahrzad Blvd., Darrou,
Tehran 1948773911 P.O. Box 15875-1557

Tel: +98-21-22886676
Fax: +98-21-22886675
<http://www.unocha.org/ochaيران@un.org>



2017-2018 is approved. It includes a structured strategic dialogue and information exchange; strengthened operational coordination efforts; the provision of technical support and capacity building for Iranian humanitarian and disaster management actors and support to Iran's engagement in regional and global forums.

- In May 2016, OCHA organized an Emergency Response Planning (ERP) workshop in Tehran for UN Agencies. UNICEF organized a similar ERP workshops in Kish and other cities to raise awareness of members of the NDMO and other government stakeholders.

- The International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (SDS) was held in Tehran in July 2017. It undertook evidence-based assessments of latest reports, national, regional and global efforts and country experiences in advancing SDS mitigation and adaptation.

- OCHA organized two Training of Trainers (ToT) workshops in July 2017 to strengthen the internal response capacity of the civil society through greater public awareness campaigns about disaster preparedness. Public education trainers were familiarized with methods of public participation in the disaster management cycle, essential activities in emergencies and the skills needed to lead effective training sessions.

- OCHA facilitated Iran's attendance in International Simulation exercises such as the INSARAG SIMEX - Earthquake Response Exercise (ERE) in Malaysia, 10-15 September 2017. The EREs increase awareness of disaster response methodologies and exchange information about technical and political USAR issues in the INSARAG context.

- On 13 November 2017, a Seminar on the Disaster Risk Portfolio of Tehran was organized in TDMMO to familiarize the institutions, international agencies and the Diplomatic Corps (resident in Iran) with Iran's accomplishments in strengthening readiness and preparedness during disaster risks.



ToT Course (TDMMO Center), 2017.

- On 21-23 November, the Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock, visited Iran. During his visit, he met with officials including Dr. Javad Zarif, and discussed regional and global humanitarian crises and tools for promoting emergency preparedness efforts. He also addressed the humanitarian crises in Syria, Yemen and the Rohingya refugees and recommended that Iran protect and assist response efforts for the people.

- The Get Airports Ready for Disaster (GARD) initiative was held in Tehran on November 2017 at the Mehrabad Airport with OCHA/UNDP facilitation. Participants and trainers evaluated the current level of disaster preparedness at the airport, conducted training exercises to cope with surges in air traffic, and developed an action plan (to be implemented) that ensures the airport is prepared for future natural disasters.

- OCHA facilitates and encourages Iran's participation in the UN-CMCoord and PREP Training Courses around the world to promote the concept of and preparedness in disasters

- In January 2018, OCHA enabled the publication of the first Farsi language edition of the INSARAG Guidelines that deals with USAR related issues, aiming at minimum international standards for USAR teams and methodology for international coordination in earthquake response operations.

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