

## UNDERPINNING SAVE THE CHILDREN RESPONSE

The objective of the Humanitarian Affairs Unit (HAU) is to enhance the strategic thinking and planning of Save the Children International's programs. The unit works to monitor and analyse the way in which economic, social, security and political trends constrain and shape the environment in which Save the Children operates. By identifying trends and triggers that affect populations and their leaders, Save the Children can be prepared to effectively respond to the most probable scenarios and can underpin its on-going interventions with evaluation and learning. Through its regional and global projects, the Humanitarian Affairs Unit strives to link different avenues of innovation in order to build, maintain and develop program quality.

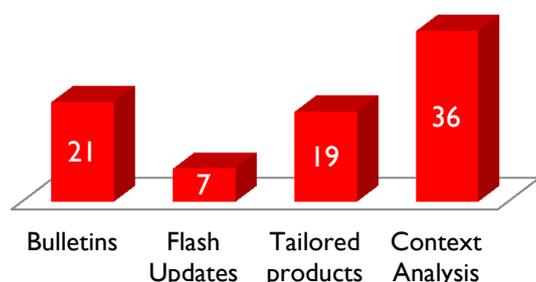
### Regional Analysts Network

In 2013, the primary objective of the Regional Analysts Network was to design a series of contextual analysis products that supported strategic programming throughout the Save the Children family, including country and regional offices as well as the SCI centre and SC members.

Several types of products were devised, piloted and have since been used across the organization. These included:

- Flash updates;
- Bulletins;
- Context analysis (scenarios, actor analysis, conflict assessments, cross-impact studies);
- Analysis products tailored on specific regional demands and priorities;

### Humanitarian Affairs Unit products distributed in 2013



These specifically-catered products have been positively received by members and widely used by staff in international programs, security and advocacy. Jakob Eilsøe Mikkelsen from SC Denmark commented that the analysis is 'very informative and useful' while Michael O'Neil of the SCI SLT noted that the work is 'very useful and insightful'. Moreover, Iraq Country Director Tina Yu cited the HAU's reports as 'wonderfully written and very comprehensive' with Guy Cave, the MEE Deputy Regional Director, acknowledging that the pieces were 'really great – very helpful'.

### Central Africa Republic

After providing analysis that was instrumental in making the case for opening the Save the Children mission in CAR, the Humanitarian Affairs Unit has provided continuous support to the CAR response team from the beginning of the emergency in March. In the form of scenario outlooks and trend indicators, the Humanitarian Affairs Unit has worked closely with the country office to issue regular analysis which provided support to the team in country and analysis to SCI centre and SC members as Save the Children established our programs in country.

"Regular analysis has been very useful to the country office in their program planning and 2014 strategy." Robert Lankenau, CAR Country Director.

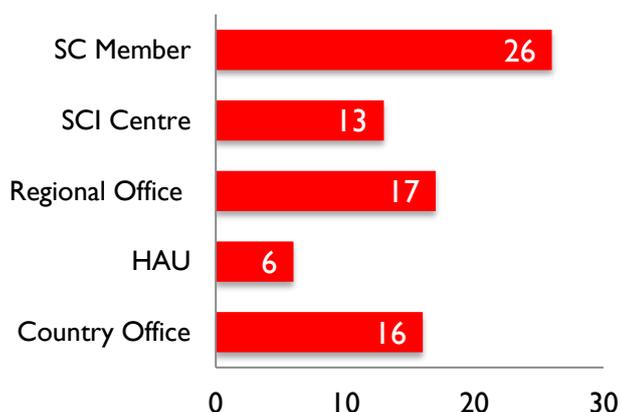
A survey of 34 participants launched in 2013 showed that 87.50% used the information and analysis provided in the HAU documents in their decision-making. Furthermore, 93.33% of respondents were



willing to recommend HAU analytical products to other decision-makers (other figures available under request).

Further testifying to the initial success of the HAU in operationalising its analysis, the level of demand for its support on proposal developments, annual planning and contingency planning exponentially increased towards the end of 2013. Additionally, as demonstrated in the diverse source of requests and the subsequent increase in the number of products distributed, the HAU is gradually reaching a wider audience within Save the Children.

### Support Requested by:



This trend has continued in 2014 as the HAU becomes more integrated into Save the Children's organizational structure. With analysts based in Nairobi and Amman, the RAN has been committed to producing analysis while simultaneously contributing to strategic programming and decision-making across the humanitarian and international programs spectrum. By way of an example, in East Africa, the HAU has assumed a pivotal role in the production of contextual analysis that will be used to inform the region's Child Protection and Child Rights Governance Strategy for 2016. Similarly, in the Middle East and Eurasia, not only has the HAU supported the Regional Office in navigating around the complex humanitarian context of the Syrian crisis by providing timely analysis on the political dynamics of conducting cross-border operations from Turkey and Iraq, but

the HAU has also assisted in preparing for a prospective humanitarian response in Ukraine.

### Syria Regional Response

Having recruited a Middle East and Eurasia Analyst in September 2013, the HAU sought to offer the MEE Regional Office with analytical assistance. Following the use of chemical weapons on innocent civilians, the HAU provided a two-part scenario report comprehensively examining the possible humanitarian implications of the prevailing military stalemate and subsequent political impasse in Syria.

These reports were supplemented by briefings presented both at the centre and at member offices. They were also accompanied by further analyses detailing the impact of the protracted conflict on the humanitarian situation beyond Syria's borders.

*"I am an avid reader of the Syria assessments".* Jacqueline Hale, Head of Advocacy (SC EU).

The RAN is still in the embryonic phase of its development and has yet to fulfil its programmatic and operational potential. In 2014, as far as resources and capacity permit, the HAU will continue to invest in this function in order to achieve its objective of contributing to and enabling Save the Children to deliver effective responses in challenging environments.

### Innovative Research Projects

*Enhancing the organisation's strategic thinking requires cultivating a culture of change and constantly looking at innovative ideas to improve the quality of our programs. To this end, the Humanitarian Affairs Unit has been working on several research projects in 2013, in order to identify key future trends, analyse them and define how SC should respond to them.*

**The Urban Futures Project** piloted with King's College London used the urbanization phenomenon to look at processes and methodologies Save the Children could use to cultivate a more futures-oriented strategy and operationalize the learning across the organization. Twelve key sectors or



phenomena shaping the future of urbanization have been identified as well as their implications for Save the Children and three tools were designed to support more strategic thinking around future urban humanitarian action.

### **The Humanitarian Affairs Think Tank (HATT)**

is a space for reflection on the future of humanitarianism. By facilitating an open forum where new ideas and new paradigms can be discussed this think tank forces us to problematize our established models, reconsider our pre-conceived notions and reassess our humanitarian values. Monthly articles are released, focusing on the analysis of the origins and consequences of the humanitarian crisis and on enriching the debate around neo-humanitarianism and the definition of a new generation of NGOs.

#### **The HATT editorial committee**

Composed of 30 engaged professionals from different organisations, the editorial committee is continuously being enriched by with new participants. The monthly papers written by the members, are discussed and debated within the HATT before being submitted for publication, to foster a creative and challenging thinking, and create a community of free thinkers eager to improve humanitarian efficiency. A dedicated cycle of conferences hosted by IRIS will be launched in 2014, the first one taking place in May 2014.

*“The HATT offers a unique and original space for speculative research around humanitarianism: it is time to prepare the future and recast humanitarianism in a post-globalised world! Thanks for this opportunity”.* Bertrand Brequeville, Desk Officer (Médecins du Monde).

**The Impact Investment Research project** As Impact Investment sector is due to explode in the coming decades Save the Children needs to position itself on this sector and build key partnerships. This research project looks at addressing the challenges NGOs face in securing funding. Risk misperceptions across the financial world prevent the disbursement of capital that would help ambitious projects achieve the maximum impact in reaching the most vulnerable people. The Humanitarian Affairs Unit and Save the

Children Canada are building a strategic partnership with Lloyd’s underwriters, utilizing risk management strategies for humanitarian programming to define insurance products which will facilitate fast access to capital in specific situations. The Humanitarian Affairs Unit is currently working on the design and testing of a first pilot which will be implemented during 2014.

The **Warning and Information System for Humanitarian Emergency Strategies** (WISHES project) has the ambition to create a predictive algorithm exploiting three different sources of information including a database of 127 variables for 175 countries over a minimum of ten years. This will allow us to identify countries and regions more likely to experience humanitarian disasters in the near future, and the factors that specifically put children and women at risk.

This tool will allow managers to respond to trends and incipient crises before they explode into the open; it will inform our political strategy and responses by having access to thoroughly analysed parameters on key actors and trends in a region or country and by the end it will provide an objective insight on how politico-security dynamics can affect the humanitarian situation, e.g. shifting refugee movements, obstacles to access, etc.

The output of this ambitious and innovative project will enhance Save the Children’s efficiency and responsiveness at all levels, in emergency and development contexts, and will support Save the Children’s activities in building resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction.

The HAU is currently working on the first phase of the project with the Federico II University, Department of Statistics.

In 2014 the Humanitarian Affairs Unit intends to:

- expand the Humanitarian affairs think tank and diversify its outputs by setting up conferences, debates and developing partnerships with universities and other think tanks

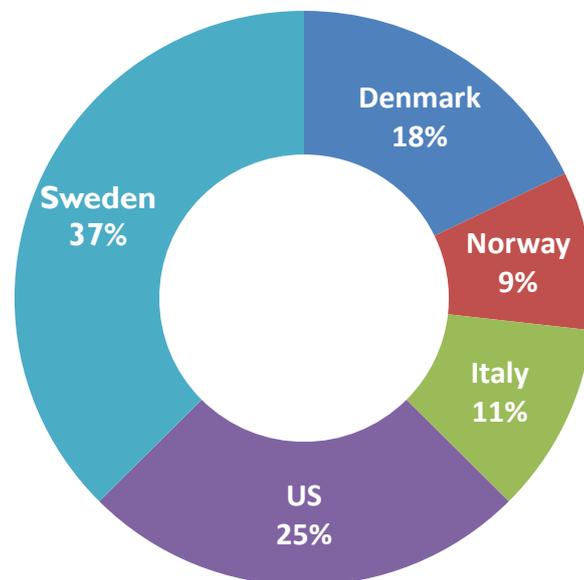


- Pilot the HUG Impact Assessment products design and test it within Save the Children
- Reflect on a field led programming process project in which the participation and consultation of the civil society and beneficiaries would be a key element of the decision process within Save the Children
- Complete the first phase of the WISHES project: building up a data base of 127 vulnerabilities factors for 175 countries over the last 10 years.

### Humanitarian Affairs Unit Structure and Financing

The HAU was established in 2012 with the ambition of employing two centre staff and seven regional analysts. However, this vision is not yet fully realized, in 2013 there was one centrally funded position (Michel Maietta) and senior researcher (Stephanie Stern) at SCI Centre and regional analysts in East Africa (Eilidh Kennedy) and in Middle East and Eurasia (Caelum Moffatt).

**280k made available from Members for HAU breaks down as follows:**



For 2014 Members (Italy, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Canada) have already committed 195k.