



The Standby Partnership Joint Monitoring Report – Earthquake in Türkiye and Syria



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Acronym List

AAP – Accountability to Affected Populations
BHA – Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
CCCM – Camp Coordination and Camp Management
DRC – Danish Refugee Council
DFAT – Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Australia
DMFA – Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
RVO / DSS – Dutch Surge Support
FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD – Focus Group Discussion
GAC – Global Affairs Canada
GFFO – German Federal Foreign Office
IM – Information Management
IOM – International Organization for Migration
KII – Key Informant Interview
MHPSS – Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MSB – Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency
NMFA – Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PSEA – Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SBP – Standby Partnership
SDC – Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Sida – Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TOR – Terms of Reference
FCDO – Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office United Kingdom
UN – United Nations
OCHA – Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund
WASH – Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP – World Food Programme
WHO – World Health Organization
ZIF – Center for International Peace Operations

1. Executive Summary

The purpose of the joint monitoring mission was to assess the overall Standby Partnership (SBP) contribution to UN operations in the context of the emergency response to the February 2023 earthquakes in Syria and Türkiye. This exercise also served as an evidence-based analysis of the current strengths and weaknesses of the SBP mechanism and helps identifying ways forward to improve it.

The SBP joint monitoring exercise focused on three key areas:

Part A: Outcome and performance

Part B: Operational and Implementational challenges

Part C: Emerging needs for future support & strategic recommendations

One of the key outcomes of this monitoring exercise was a priority list of impactful and achievable recommendations to improve the SBP Network's work in humanitarian and development contexts.

Key Findings and recommendations

The monitoring mission task force has observed many key recommendations that were mentioned by deployees, and UN Focal Points (see Part C: Emerging needs for future support & recommendations), however the task force has prioritized the most impactful for the SBP network to take forward:

1) Clarification of SBP deployments responsibilities

The support SBP deployees received from sending partners was found to be strong, with 75% considering the sending partners' onboarding process to be extremely effective or somewhat effective. The level of preparedness and capacity within the UN Country Offices (COs) to host, onboard and manage incoming SBPs was found to vary considerably. Whilst many had positive experiences, several deployees noted issues with line management, preparation of clear TORs, administrative support and onboarding (51% of the deployees were not satisfied with the UN onboarding process). One SBP noted their role was a duplication of existing work. A positive finding for the UN agency COs was on exit strategies to ensure continuation of the work, with **80%** of the deployees confirming they worked with their supervisor on a clear exit strategy for the positions they covered.

It is recommended that UN SBP focal points at the HQ level ensure the UN COs are aware of the SBP process, requirements and responsibilities associated with receiving an SBP deployment, and that they allocate the resources to deal with this. A standardized checklist on what the UN CO responsibilities are and amending the TORs around actual needs it is highly recommended (i.e. why, where, when the expertise is needed).

2) Deployees performance and satisfaction rate

All the UN personnel interviewed agreed that the SBP deployees made valuable contributions to the UN operation. The UN agencies acknowledged specifically that their organization wouldn't have been able to deliver and implement their response with the same quality, speed, and scale without the SBP deployees' support. Some UN Agencies used the SBP deployments to cover long leaves of absence given to national staff who were directly impacted by the earthquake. It was noted that most of the UN agencies used the SBP mechanism as a second wave of surge staffing while the first wave was filled through internal surge mechanisms.

UN agencies reported that **75%** of the SBP deployees had a *highly satisfactory* performance for the entire duration of their assignment both in terms of technical skills and interpersonal skills. The remaining **25%** of SBP deployees were considered *satisfactory with some reservations and unsatisfactory* mainly related to technical and language skills, work ethics, behavioral attitude, not adapting to the context, or lack of knowledge of the organizational structure. However, the majority of the UN COs interviewed in person that had reported having issues with the SBPs performance or behavior confirmed they did not report this at the time and therefore it was not addressed.

It is recommended that UN SBP focal points at the HQ level ensure their COs are aware of reporting systems for issues with SBP performance or satisfaction and encourage COs to report issues at the time during the deployment. The focal point should inform the SBP sending partner and work with them to address this. It is also recommended that UN COs ensure any specific requirements such as prior knowledge of working with that UN agency and/or of its organizational structure are included in the SBP request requirements.

3) Fit-check call:

Fit check calls following the recruitment process for SBPs were valued highly by both deployees and UN agencies. The fit-check calls were identified as a relevant tool to assess not only the technical skills of the deployees but the soft skills as well, and for the UN Agencies to explain the context situation, stress level and the organizational context, to ensure both parties are aligned in their expectations and requirements of the role. However, there was some discussion that fit check calls should not be used as an additional formal interview for candidates.

It is recommended that the SBP network develops flexible best-practice guidelines for the fit-check calls to ensure they are used in the most valuable and appropriate way.

4) Security:

Security briefings were found to be valuable, but some deployees did not receive this very quickly after arriving in country, and many deployees mentioned that the briefing did not provide any practical information on how to deal with an earthquake. The SSAFE training was noted as important for SBPs deployed in E duty stations, and this requirement should be clearly

mentioned in the TORs.

It is recommended security briefings are held once SBPs arrive in country and these include safety and security information based on the context in country at that time. It is recommended the SBP discuss potential ways to provide UNLP/UN Certificate for deployees working in hardship duty stations.

5) PSEA:

No specific PSEA concerns were shared with the task force. However more than 50% of the SBP deployees were not aware of their UN Agency's PSEA focal point/hotline.

It is recommended that the PSEA structure and reporting mechanism and focal point are clearly defined and provided to the SBP deployees from the beginning of the assignment.

6) Discrepancy in the perception of the SBP deployments:

During the field mission, the task force assessed that the UN Agencies at field level have different expectations from the SBP deployees, and that this may have resulted in some dissatisfaction with performance. Some expected SBPs to lead and provide advice and guidance to the CO on the response from day one, whereas others expected SBPs to complete specific tasks with guidance and technical support provided by supervisors.

It is recommended the SBP network create a clear definition of the role of an SBP and their responsibilities versus the responsibilities of the sending partners and receiving UN CO, to ensure expectations are aligned and well managed, especially during the first few weeks.

7) Engagement and value of SBP joint Monitoring Missions:

Overall undertaking joint monitoring missions in contexts where the SBP mechanism was strongly utilized as a key tool in the UN response was considered very positive by deployees and UN focal points at country level. However, one of the main limitations of this monitoring exercise was the lack of engagement from some HQ sending and receiving partners during both the remote phase and in preparations for the field mission.

It is recommended the SBP network analyses the value and limitations of this joint monitoring mission to propose ways to improve engagement for any future missions. It was discussed that this could include making engagement in and/feedback to monitoring missions a mandatory requirement when receiving SBP deployments.

8) Exchange & communication among deployees

During the Focus Group Discussion conducted in Gaziantep, all SBP deployees welcomed the opportunity to provide feedback and discuss their work with other SBPs, and all said they would value earlier connection with other SBP deployees in the same duty station during their deployments.

It is recommended the SBP network identifies a platform or informal approach for connecting SBP deployees at the same duty station. This recommendation was also made during the Focus Group Discussion conducted during the previous monitoring mission in Ukraine and neighboring countries.

2. Context Analysis

The devastating 7.8-magnitude earthquake near the Türkiye-Syria border in the early hours of Monday 6 February 2023 was followed by another one nearly as strong. The earthquakes caused one of the biggest disasters to impact the region in recent times. More than 50,000 people were killed and more than 107,000 injured¹. Thousands of buildings collapsed, leaving countless people exposed to unforgiving winter conditions, without access to shelter, food, water, heating and medical care. Schools and hospitals were destroyed.

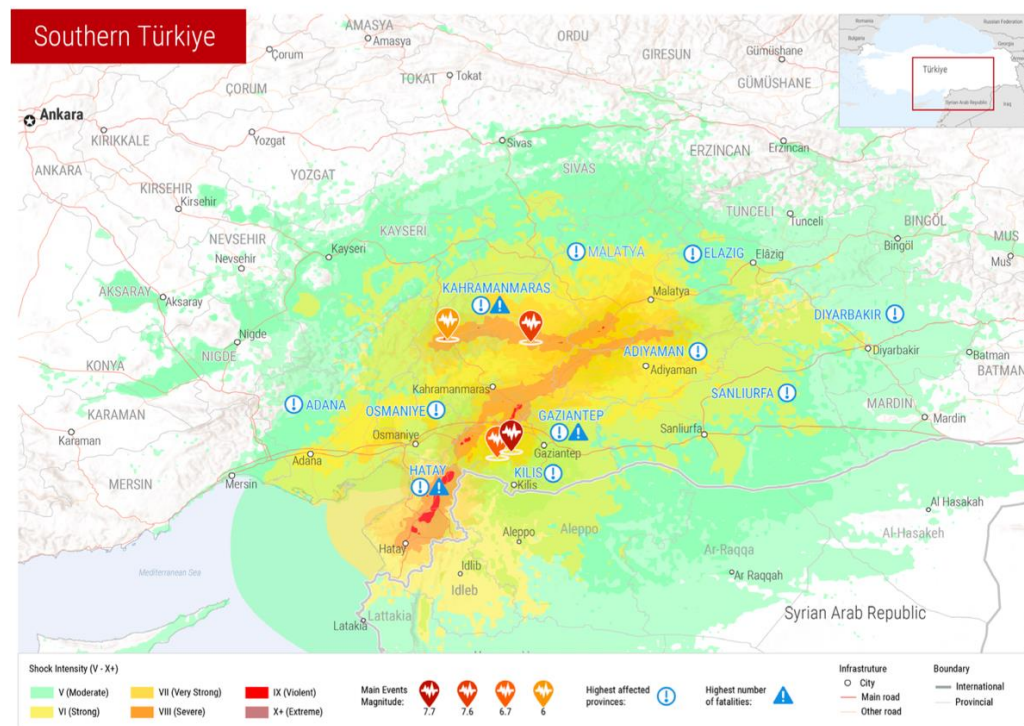
The earthquakes struck as the humanitarian crisis in northwest Syria was already at the highest level since the conflict began, with 4.1 million people relying on humanitarian assistance to subsist (UN, 14 February 2023), and Türkiye hosting the largest refugee population in the world². In the 11 Turkish provinces impacted by the earthquakes live more than 1.74 million refugees.

With countless buildings destroyed, [United Nations Development Programme](#) (UNDP) early estimates were that up to 210 million tons of rubble would need to be cleared in Türkiye alone. The destruction left 1.5 million people homeless and will require the construction of 500,000 new housing units to compensate. (UN, 14 February 2023).

¹ AFAD

² https://reliefweb.int/report/turkiye/flash-appeal-turkiye-earthquake-february-may-2023-entr?_gl=1*e8kb7e*_ga*NzU0MzAyMDE4LjE2ODM2MzgzMjE.*_ga_E60ZNX2F68*MTcwMDA1NTQ1NS4zMC4wLjE3MDAwNTU0NTUuNjAuMC4w

Areas affected by the earthquakes



Intersectoral situational analysis

The Turkish government led the response in Türkiye, through coordination by the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) and with the Turkish Red Crescent, but due to the massive needs caused by the earthquakes, the government called for international assistance.

The earthquake came on top of a very complex humanitarian situation in Syria. Coordinated assistance by the UN to Syria's northwest crosses the border from Türkiye, while Damascus is the coordination hub for assistance within in the government-controlled parts of Syria³. Flash appeals were issued for both Türkiye and Syria within 10 days of the earthquakes.

SBP Joint Monitoring Missions

Whilst not wholly standardized, Standby arrangements operate similarly across UN agencies and Standby Partners. To a large extent, the challenges, lessons learned, and opportunities are therefore often the same. The SBP Network has agreed that, where the activities and objectives of SBP partners align for a particular humanitarian, development, or crisis response, joint field monitoring missions may add value for both sending and receiving partners. Additionally, joint missions minimize the burden on country offices of hosting and/or supporting concurrent missions by different partner organizations.

³ <https://disasterphilanthropy.org/disasters/2023-turkey-syria-earthquake/>

The first monitoring mission was conducted by the SBP Network in Kenya and South Sudan in 2012 with the participation of MSB, DRC, UNICEF, UNHCR, and RedR Australia.

In 2019, the SBP Network conducted the pilot 'After Action Review (AAR) Mission' to Mozambique which represented the first post action joint evaluation mission. This monitoring exercise was led by Irish Aid, NORCAP, OCHA, UK-AID, UNICEF, RedR Australia, Australian Aid, and the SBP Secretariat.

Finally, in 2022 the SBP Network conducted a joint Monitoring Mission in Ukraine and neighboring countries to assess the outcome of the SBP response, the performance of the SBP deployees, key recommendations for the future and key challenges encountered. The exercise was led by OCHA, UNHCR, NORCAP, DRC, UK-FCDO, WHO, MSB, and the SBP Secretariat.

The response to the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria was selected as a focus for the first joint monitoring exercise in 2023 after an in-depth discussion with SBP partners directly involved in the Earthquake response and the MEAL working group. Since the earthquake, many UN Country Offices have benefited from significant SBP assistance in both Syria and Türkiye. As of September 15th 2023, a total of **85 requests**⁴ had been made by the UN Agencies, out of which **63 positions were filled** by the sending partners.

3. SBP Joint Monitoring Mission Purpose & Methodology

Objectives

The purpose of the joint monitoring mission was to assess the overall Standby Partnership (SBP) contribution to UN operations in the context of the emergency response to the earthquake in Syria and Türkiye. This exercise also served as an evidence-based analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the current SBP mechanism to help identify ways forward to improve it.

The SBP joint monitoring exercise focused on three key areas:

Part A: Outcome and performance

Part B: Operational and Implementational challenges

Part C: Emerging needs for future support & strategic recommendations

Approach and methodology

⁴ Disclaimer: This number refers to the requests shared by sending and receiving partners and might be partial due to the quality of data received

The monitoring mission methodology relies on a variety of data collection tools and several sources of data in a mixed-method approach to capture the different aspects in play in relation to the SBP deployments corresponding to the three key focus areas mentioned above. The mixed-method approach provides a broader spectrum of ways to better understand complex contexts, to reach a high number of respondents, and to address complementary questions that were not possible to investigate using one single methodology.

Data collection combined a remote phase of desk review, surveys and remote key informant interview (KIIs), with a field visit that allowed for face-to-face KIIs with UN Senior Management staff and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with deployees.

The former SBP MEAL Coordinator with the support of the MEAL WG co-chair and the task force members developed the methodology and tools prior to the launch of the joint-monitoring mission. The main data collection methods are listed below:

- **Desk review (Remote):** including key documents and reports about the current context and other monitoring or evaluation reports that have been conducted and published (Kenya and South Sudan 2012, Mozambique 2019, Ukraine 2022). Review updated data on deployments in Türkiye and Syria.
- **Quantitative Methods – online perception surveys:** two perception surveys, one shared with 24 UN focal points out of which 10 responses were collected and one shared with 52 SBP deployees out of which 33 responses were collected. The surveys were launched in May 2023.
- **Key Informant Interviews (remote):** Nineteen semi-structured remote interviews conducted with SBP deployees in June 2023; 3 semi-structured remote interviews conducted with UN focal points between June and July.
- **Key informant interview (in-person):** 8 (group) KIIs conducted in Ankara and Gaziantep, Türkiye from September 26-28, 2023, with: FAO, OCHA, UNICEF, UNFPA, IOM, UNHCR (2), WHO.
- **Focus Group discussion (in country):** one focus group discussion with SBP deployees in Gaziantep on September 28, 2023. 7 deployees from DRC, NORCAP, Irish Aid and CANADEM participated.
- Consolidation of Results / Report Write Up
- Meeting on General Findings at the presence of the wider SBP Network during the 2023 Mid-Annual Consultations (power-point presentation)

4. SBP Monitoring Mission Limitations

- **Lack of responsiveness from UN Country Office focal points** to surveys and remote and in-country interviews. A higher response rate would have increased the validity of the data
- **Lack of responsiveness from UN and sending partners SBP focal points** on deployees data and CO contact details for field mission
- The unavailability of some relevant data gave insufficient information on two receiving agencies
- **The field mission took place only in Türkiye** . The only information we gathered for the Syria response came from online interviews and surveys, which affected the ability to triangulate and verify findings to the same extent as the Türkiye/Northwestern Syria response.
- **The timing of the field mission** further constituted a limitation, as some of the agency staff had left the mission – this was partially balanced with the remote part capturing input at an earlier stage of the response.
- **Turnover and gap in the SBP Secretariat Staffing affected the timing of the monitoring mission, and led to delays in its planning and the analysis/report-writing phase.**

5. SBP joint response to the Earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria

Due to the devastating effect of the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, many SBP partners decided to provide in-kind contributions through SBP deployee support to UN Operations actively engaged in the response.

85 requests for SBP deployees were made by UN agencies in the context of the response, specifically between February and September 2023, confirming that the SBP mechanism served as a second wave of surge support. Since the beginning of the response, **63 experts** have been deployed to **11 UN agencies** in Türkiye (43) and Syria (17) by a total of **14 SBP sending or funding partners**⁵.

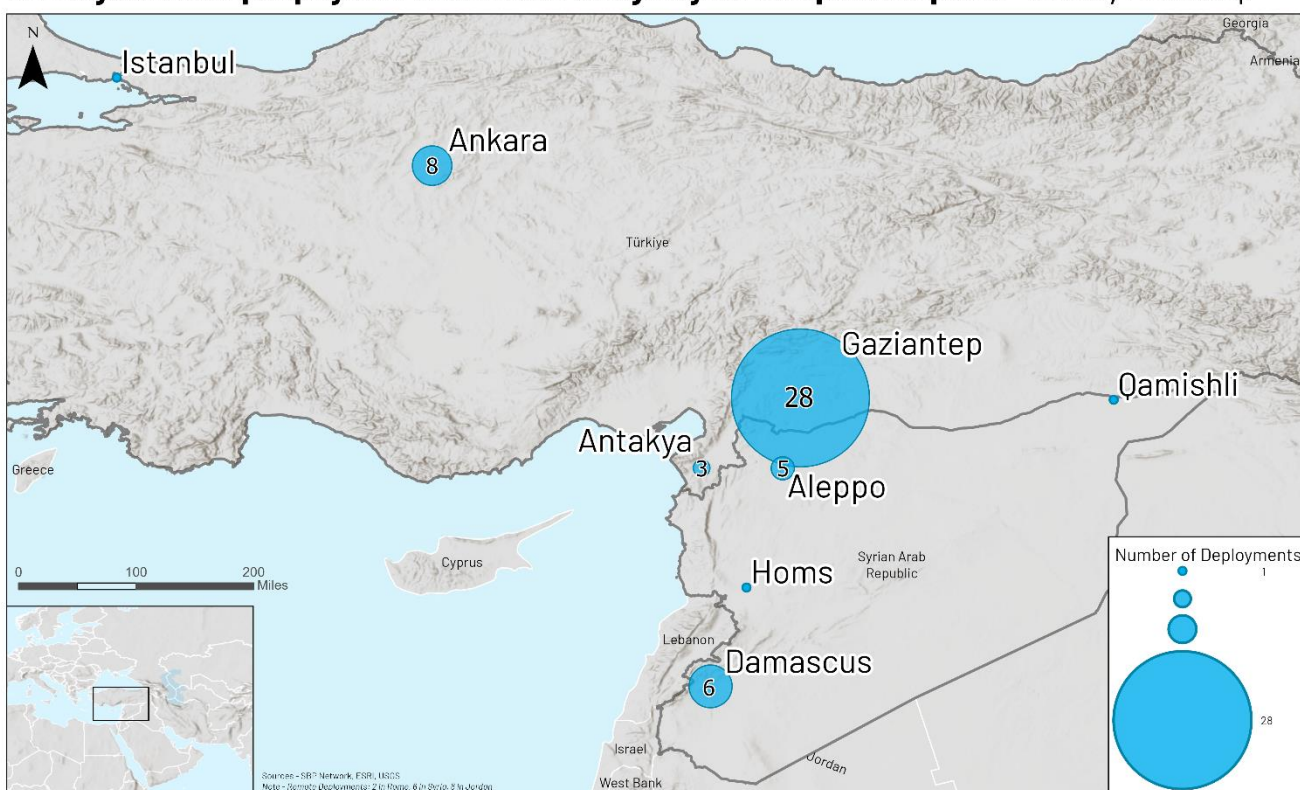
As per September 2023, the main profiles requested were in the areas of information management, logistics, gender, shelter, AAP, and coordination (see chart below).

⁵ These data refer to figures shared by the SBP partners – unmet requests are likely more due to the lack of data. These data were triangulated with the information provided during the coordination calls and on the live tracker activated from the response.

Türkiye and Syria



Standby Partnership Deployments to the 2023 Türkiye/Syria Earthquake Response Standby Partnership



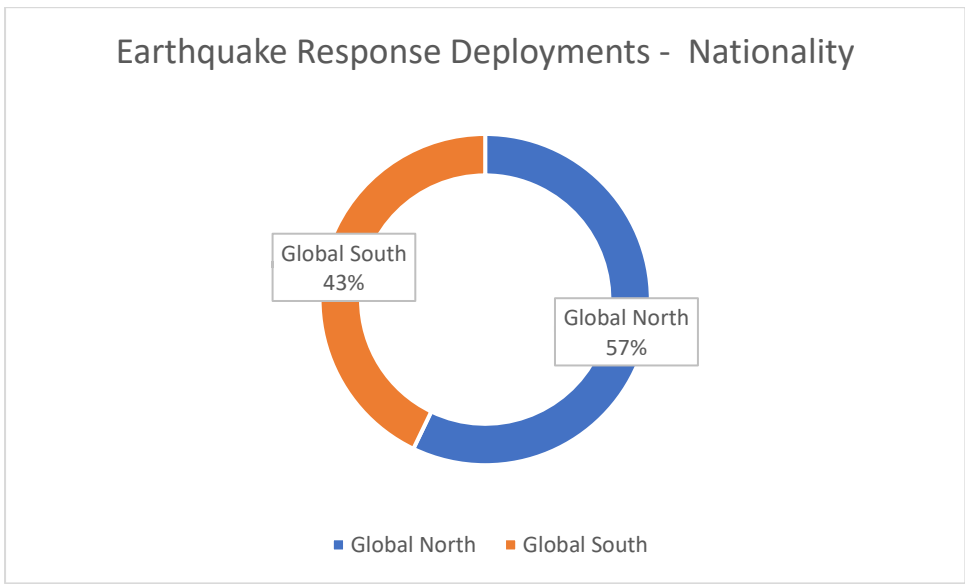
List of UN Agencies and SBP Partners involved in the Earthquake response

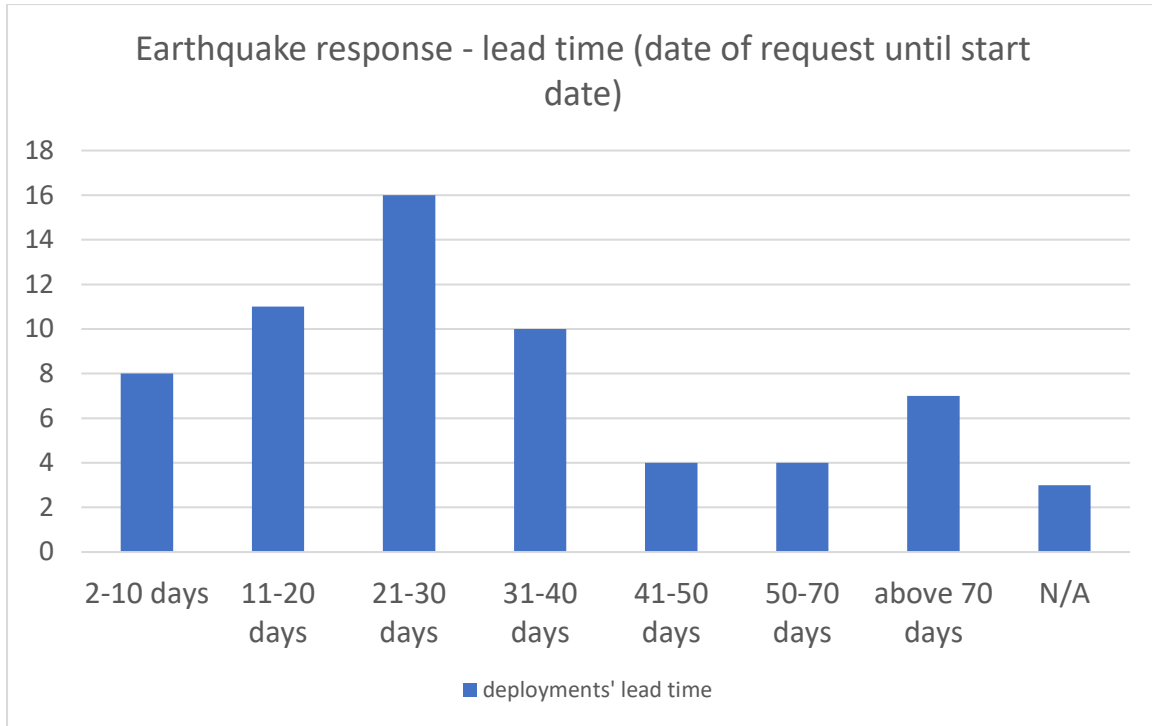
UN Agencies	SBP Partners
FAO	CANADEM
IOM	DRC
OCHA	RVO / DSS
UN Women	Ericsson Response
UNDP	iMMAP
UNFPA	Irish Aid

UNHCR	MSB
UNICEF	NCA
UNRWA	NORCAP
WFP	RedR Australia
WHO	SDC
	UK FCDO
	UK MED
	ZIF

Statistics on deployees who responded to the survey

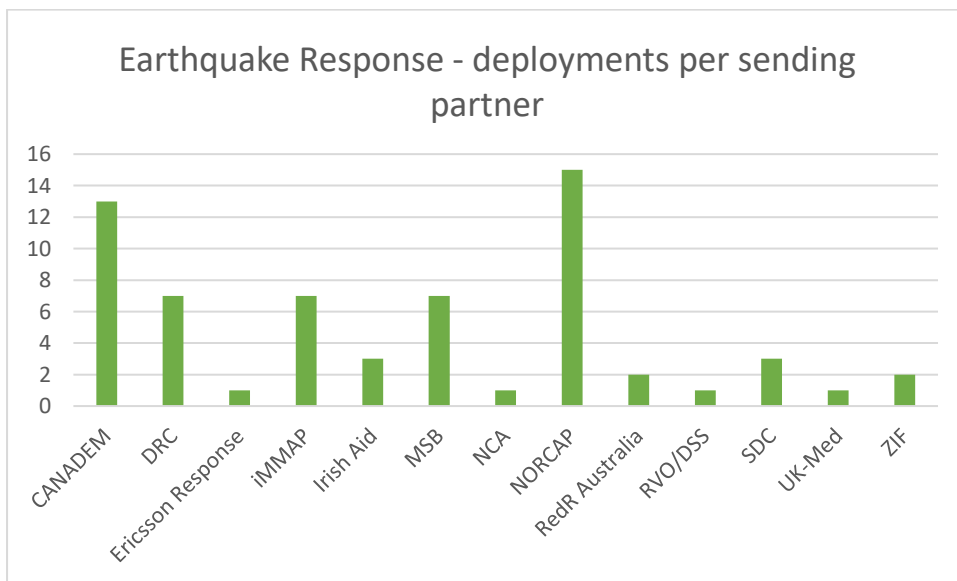
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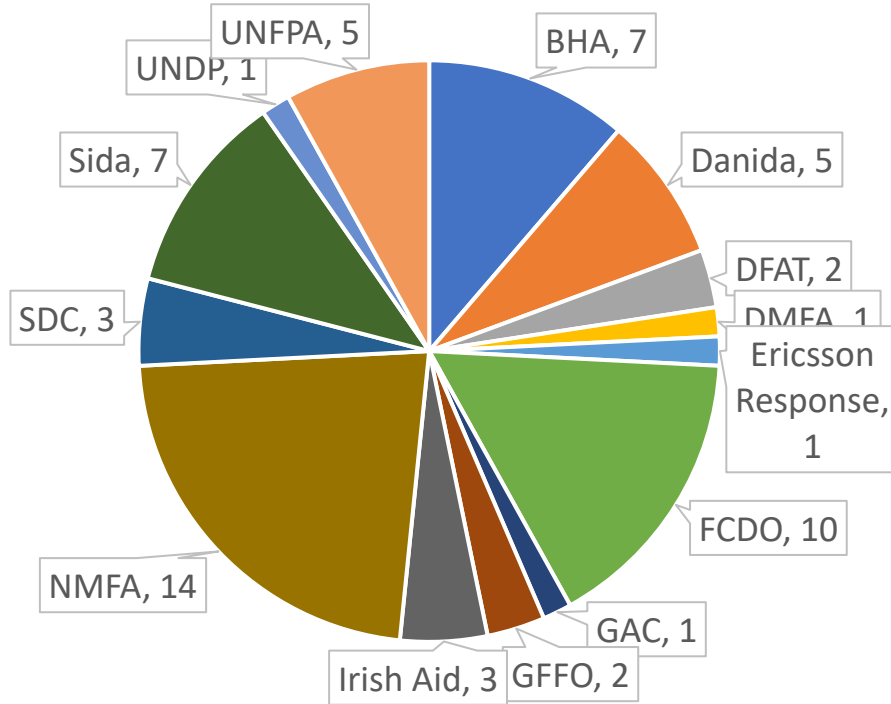


Median Length of lead time: 27 days
Reliable Data for 95% of met deployments

[\[OB\]](#)



Earthquake response - deployments per funding partner



Review findings

Part A: Impact and performance

SBP deployees' most significant contribution to UN Operations

All the UN personnel interviewed agreed that the SBP deployees made a valuable contribution to the UN operation. The UN agencies acknowledged specifically that their organization wouldn't have been able to deliver and implement its work with the same quality, speed, and scale without the SBP deployees on the ground.

QUOTE: *'The SBP is a brilliant instrument for humanitarian response, an extremely effective tool'*

UN Senior Management

It was noted that most of the UN agencies used the SBP mechanism as a second wave of surge staffing while the first wave was filled through internal surge rosters.

In the survey, UN agencies reported that **75%** of the SBP deployees had a *highly satisfactory* performance for the entire duration of their assignment both in terms of technical skills and interpersonal skills. The UN Agencies more satisfied with the support received were: FAO, UNICEF, IOM and OCHA; and the less satisfied was UNFPA (50% satisfaction rate for the cross-border operations).

The remaining **25%** was considered *satisfactory with some reservations* mainly related to technical and language skills, work ethics, behavioral attitude, not adapting to the context, lack of knowledge of the organizational structure.

A couple of UN Agencies on the ground expressed dissatisfaction with a few specific deployments, that had not met their expectations in terms of technical skills and abilities to lead and strengthen capacities. However, when this was discussed further with some of the UN agency COs involved, it highlighted that there were different expectations in terms of what an SBP deployee should bring to the role from day 1. Some UN Agencies shared clear expectations for the SBP to lead and guide the wider CO response to the Earthquake, bringing their experience from previous contexts, and felt instead SBPs awaited guidance and direction from them that they did not have capacity to provide, highlighting a lack of clarity on responsibilities between SBPs and the receiving UN agencies. Others expected SBPs to complete specific tasks at their supervisors instruction. The task force identified these differing expectations as a likely a contributing cause of some of the less satisfactory performance scores. This finding requires a reflection on the definition of the SBP deployments and responsibilities across the different parties.

The field mission task force asked the UN representatives on the ground if they had sent timely information about the unmet expectations or performance issues to the sending partner organization and the deployee in order to address them from the start. From the interviews it seems that this process was not followed and that therefore the performance challenges

couldn't be addressed. The task force therefore assessed that there should be a clarification on the requirement to report these issues, and the process for this across UN CO staff, UN HQ SBP focal points and sending partners, to ensure problems are resolved early on. Country offices should be encouraged to address performance-related concerns with the sending agency in a timely manner with the UN HQ SBP focal point ensuring this is in place.

During interviews, the UN agencies acknowledged the specific added value that the deployees brought to their organization:

- Bringing coordination skills in sudden on-set emergencies
- Enabling agencies to take on cluster coordination roles and participate in clusters
- Building partnerships with other agencies, local authorities, and NGOs
- Bringing fresh ideas, a different perspective and experience, new approach to resolve problems
- Strengthening capacity building of national staff or newly recruited staff
- Filling short-term gaps
- Lack of Internal roster capacities

QUOTES:

'The SBP provided an opportunity to fill gaps very fast'

UN Senior Management

'The SBP is well incorporated in our strategy'

UN Senior Management

'SBP deployees take the lead in emergency situations'

UN Senior Management

Main results achieved by SBP deployees

Overall, **76%** of the deployees mentioned in the perception survey that they have made a substantive contribution to UN operations through their work and **75%** of them agreed with the statement 'I was able to complete my tasks within the assigned time'.

These findings are in line with the feedback received from UN Agencies which have acknowledged they would not have been able to achieve the same results without the support of the SBP deployees.

List of the SBP deployees' main achievements so far (from Surveys and Focus Group Discussion):

- Capacity building of national staff and partners; including local organisations
- Ability to fill gaps during quick scale-up of operations and programs
- Work autonomously
- Bringing change and innovation
- Provision of in-kind technical support not available in-house
- Development of impact studies on risk communication
- Development of data collection methodologies

- Development of strategies on Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
- Creation of data management products
- Development of Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) trainings
- Realization of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) awareness campaign
- Review project proposals and strengthen Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) in them
- Mainstreaming AAP in the Syria context
- Develop earthquake response plan for PSEA Türkiye network, institutionalizing the network to improve collective action and ensure sustainability.

Most of the deployees mentioned that the main contributing factors for achieving expected results were:

- Having supportive supervisors
- Good leadership
- Relevant experience in similar roles
- Accurate TORs
- Support from national staff
- Clear workplan
- A good induction from the sending partner.

Also, **75%** of deployees considered the sending partners' onboarding process as extremely effective or somewhat effective. In addition, **80%** of the deployees mentioned that they did work with their supervisor on a clear exit strategy for the positions they covered. Most of the deployees involved in the interviews and focus group discussions recommended the UN Supervisors have a clear handover /capacity building plan in place to ensure sustainability of the positions.

Part B: Operational and implementation Challenges

As part of the methodology, the monitoring mission task force asked the SBP deployees and UN agencies to list the main operational and implementation challenges encountered so far.

Operational challenges (mentioned by at least two respondents)

- Visa procedures for specific nationalities – more assistance from UN
- Lack of pre-departure administrative briefings (i.e. context, stress level in duty station, need for substantial amount of cash)
- Different benefit packages for deployees
- Length of selection process from sending and receiving partners
- Lack of UN ID or UN Certificate in some UN agencies which limited the movements in the country (especially in hardship duty stations)
- Limited number of profiles shared by sending partners (minimum 3 are required to ensure proper selection)
- Lack of Arabic and Turkish language skills

Implementation challenges (mentioned by at least two respondents)

- Local language skills are required for some roles (e.g. Protection, Child Protection, Health, IM). The lack of availability of Turkish speakers with the right set skills may have reduced the effectiveness on field operations.
- **Onboarding, clarity of roles and management:** Whereas 75% of deployees considered the sending partners' onboarding process as effective, around 49% of the deployees reported that the UN onboarding process was not satisfactory, especially in relation to administrative support and introduction to internal procedures of the UN Agency. More than a third of the deployees responded that they did not have a clear role and/or line management from the beginning. While most deployees felt their role made a contribution, 1 deployee mentioned that its role was a clear duplication, and could not understand what the UN Agency was expecting from the role.
- From the interviews conducted during the field part of the mission, it was clear that the SBP mechanism is not fully institutionalized within the UN emergency response plan. Not all agencies were ready to ensure proper support to the incoming deployees in the context of the first emergency response. More advocacy should be made to ensure that the various UN Country Offices are aware of the SBP mechanism and ready to support the deployees.
- Because of the contract modality many deployees do not have access to organizations' IT and administrative tools and this affected their overall performance.
- In **25%** of cases the deployees' profiles didn't fully match the expectations of the UN agency. Some UN agencies suggested to the partners to have a closer follow up on the CVs to ensure that the deployees have proper experience and technical and soft skills to fulfill their tasks. It is recommended that the UN country office conducts a 'fit-check' call with their selected deployee to ensure that they represent a right fit for the office and programme.
- **Security:** Not all deployees received a timely security briefing, and many responded that they did not have any specific information about earthquakes.
- More than **50%** of the deployees not aware of the Agency's PSEA focal point/hotline

'Need to strengthen reference checks, for good and bad'

'See SBP deployments as a gift/luxury'

'Did the SBPs make good relationships/partnerships to help drive forward response relations? Absolutely yes'

OCHA AAP SBP - hotline under establishment "will be the first time to have the voice of the community at the decision-making table".

Part C: Emerging needs for future support & recommendations

Emerging needs

During in-country interviews, the monitoring mission task force asked UN Agencies to share their potential needs for the near future for SBP partners to be better prepared to respond to upcoming requests. Most of the UN Agencies reported that they are currently in the recovery phase with a lower need for SBP deployments. Also, the Turkish Government declared an end of the emergency phase and that therefore international emergency staff should not be given visa to Türkiye.

UNFPA mentioned that they might need more support on the cross-border side; FAO mentioned potential needs in procurement; UNICEF is still looking for WASH experts; OCHA mentioned that IM requests were already submitted to some sending partners and that AAP requests will be made soon; UNHCR is in need of shelter experts and cluster coordinators; IOM mentioned potential needs in winterization. Some of the future needs for the North-West Syria response would also depend on the future possibility for the cross-border activities. During the time of the field mission, some assessments were also underway that would inform future needs in the areas of capacity strengthening of local partners.

Recommendations to the SBP Network

During all the phases of the monitoring exercise, from surveys to key informant interviews and focus group discussions, many recommendations were listed by UN focal points and deployees.

Below is the full list of the recommendations and in the executive summary and in the conclusions section the list of key recommendations that the task force screened as priority for enhancing the effectiveness of the SBP network in humanitarian and development contexts.

Administration and operation

- Many deployees requested more clarity on logistics and administrative arrangements within **SBP partners and UN agencies**. One of the solutions, that was highlighted in the previous MM as well, is the development of a clear guidance document on the roles and responsibilities of sending partners and UN Agencies.
- The UN Agencies recommend the sending partner to check visa eligibility prior to the submission of profiles.
- Deployees recommended the **UN Agencies'** HR and administration units to invest more resources in supporting the SBP partners to request visas especially for deployees coming from "difficult" nationalities.
- UN agencies requested to know in advance which **SBP partner** is allowed to extend deployments. This recommendation was highlighted in the previous Monitoring Mission as well.

- Most of the deployees requested to receive by the **UN agency** an introductory package and check list on the host organization internal procedures and working tools (especially IT system) prior to the deployment.
- Both deployees and UN Agencies at CO level recommended having a fit-check call with the candidates to reduce the mismatch of profiles.
- Deployees requested administrative briefs before departure (i.e. political and social context, cash situation...)
- Sending partners to share more CVs with UN Agencies
- Deployees requested to have access to all the internal software and tools in order to perform their duties in a sustainable way
- UN agencies requested the possibility to have longer term deployments (minimum 6 months)
- Some UN Agencies considered it relevant for them to propose a list of potential candidates for the requested assignment.

Security

- **UN agencies** to ensure that UNDSS provides practical briefings and trainings on security and safety, within the first three days of the deployment; ad hoc-briefings on earthquakes should be conducted in duty stations with increased risks of earthquakes.
- **UN agencies** to ensure that evacuation details are part of the security briefing/training.
- In contexts like Northwest Syria, the UN agencies should provide SBP deployees with UNLP or UN Certificate – especially for field coordinators
- Deployees in Northwest Syria considered helpful the provision of a satellite radio
- SSAFE training should be mandatory for all deployees

Strategic

- Ensure the capacity building of national and/or newly recruited staff is part of the **SBP deployees'** TOR if this is expected as part of the role.
- **UN supervisor and SBP deployee** to prepare a clear workplan during the first weeks of the assignment.
- **UN supervisor** should work with the deployee on a road map for ensuring the sustainability of the position.
- **UN agency** to ensure full integration and equitable treatment of the SBPs within the organization.
- **UN SBP focal points at HQ** to ensure that the SBP mechanism is fully institutionalized within the UN emergency response plan.
- UN Agency to ensure clarity on the line of management or to inform the deployee in advance about the unavailability of the line manager.

- UN Agencies to have check list on the role of the surge: why, where, when we need the expertise - More contacts between UN CO and HQ on actual office needs are required
- TORs to be revised to reflect actual tasks not to jeopardize performance ratings
- Fit check calls with the CO prior to the deployment are highly recommended. The UN Agencies should prepare a one pager guidance note on the purpose of these calls.
- For strategic roles guarantee minimum 6 months deployments – this recommendation came from both deployees and UN FP
- Handover and exit strategy to be discussed from the beginning
- Deployees to take initiatives beyond their TOR
- More capacity building to be implemented since day one
- UN Agencies highly recommended more diverse rosters, in terms of gender and nationality
- During the first stages of the emergencies, the UN Agencies recommended the sending partners to select candidates with previous experience in the agency and with context experience
- Sending partners are highly recommended to deploy more national staff to avoid visa issues and language barriers and to improve localization

Duty of care

- **SBP partners** to organize more field visits to assess deployees well-being.
- **SBP partners** to consider flexible contract modalities for specific profiles and especially for caregivers.
- **SBP partners** to consider ways to promote communication amongst deployees, such as an online platform to connect SBPs deployed to the same duty station. This recommendation was mentioned in the previous Monitoring Mission as well.
- Use the fit-check call to explain to the deployees the stress level in the duty station.
- UN Agencies to guarantee at least 1.5 rest days per week
- SBP partners to clarify the DSA policies prior to the deployment start
- For hardship duty stations, airport pick up to be guaranteed
- Harmonization of benefits and packages between deployees / sending partners

Inclusion and diversity

- More practical workshops on PSEA to be conducted
- All UN COs to have a dedicated PSEA staff
- PSEA referral and reporting mechanisms to be included in onboarding process
- More attention to the needs of deployees with disabilities
- Awareness trainings on LGBTQIA+ community to be conducted for staff and deployees
- Ad hoc sessions on gender and inclusion are needed especially in Syria

Comparison with previous Monitoring Mission (Ukraine)

In 2022, the SBP Network conducted its first structured joint monitoring mission on the response to the Ukraine crisis.

Whilst the methodology of the two monitoring missions was similar (online survey and KII, field KII and FGD with deployees), the analysis and the timeline were more structured and organized for the Türkiye and Syria response.

This was due to the active participation of the MEAL WG and the task force from the planning phase to the report development.

Main findings comparison:

- During both missions, all UN Agencies agreed that the SBP deployees made a valuable contribution to UN operations;
- The level of SBP deployees high performance was 75% in both missions
- In the Ukraine monitoring mission, 90% of the deployees mentioned they made a contribution to the UN Operations. In the case of the monitoring mission to the earthquake response, only 76% of the deployees reported the same. This might be linked to the fact that in a few cases a duplication of efforts was reported.
- Meanwhile, 70% of the deployees were extended in the context of Ukraine, while only 33% were extended in the contexts of Türkiye and Syria. This can be justified with the nature of the crisis and the level of support required.
- In both cases the UN Agencies confirmed that the SBP mechanism was used as second wave of surge support.
- In the Ukraine Monitoring mission, 30% of the deployees mentioned that the UN onboarding was not satisfactory; while 49% reported the same for the earthquake response.
- In both monitoring missions, 25% of the deployees didn't fully meet the expectations of the UN Agencies
- In the Ukraine monitoring mission, 50% of the deployees found a clear line of management. In the Earthquake response monitoring mission, 57% of the deployees reported to have found a clear line of management.

Common recommendations:

The below recommendations have come up multiple times across the missions, therefore, the task force advocates for the Network to prioritize them:

Security: more practical and ad hoc trainings to be conducted as soon as the deployee reaches the duty station

Road map and exit strategy to be conducted from the beginning of the assignment

Fit-check calls highly recommended for avoiding mismatch of profiles and as an opportunity for the candidates to know more about the context.

Enhancement of the **UN onboarding mechanism** was highly recommended

The UN Agency to make sure they have a **check list** on the usage of the SBP mechanism

Sending partners monitoring visits were highly recommended

Duty of care: online platform to connect deployees in the same duty station; provision of UNLP for deployees in E duty stations to facilitate access and movements in the duty station.

Conclusions, recommendations and steps forward

Based on the findings of the monitoring exercise, the monitoring mission task force has developed several **conclusions** on the contribution of the SBP mechanism to UN operations, and has provided **recommendations** to further improve future SBP support to emergency responses.

The conclusions and recommendations presented here are intended to be translated into key actions by the SBP network to further improve the SBP response to emergencies.

Conclusions on the SBP contribution to UN operations

- It was acknowledged that SBP deployments enabled UN Agencies to rapidly **scale up** their operations on the ground and that this may not have been possible without this support. The SBP support provided a critical mix of technical, emergency, leadership, and soft skills during this response.
- Many SBP deployees covered **critical roles** and filled coordination positions within the UN Agencies and at the Inter-Agency level. SBP deployees supported the UN Agencies in a wide range of diverse functions, including Clusters coordination, setting up Information management systems, Communications strategies, Logistics mechanisms, Shelter, WASH, GBV, SRH and MHPSS strategies etc.
- Between UN Agencies there are still different opinions on the nature and role of the SBP deployments in emergency contexts. Some UN Agencies Country Offices expect deployees to hit the ground running, lead operation and provide advisory support to the staff; while others use the mechanism to fill gaps and have extra support on the ground under the direct supervision of a senior staff. This difference in perception most probably influenced the satisfaction rate expressed in surveys and KII.
- The main **added value** of SBP deployment mechanism to UN operations was delivering highly qualified personnel that was able to contribute fresh ideas and new ways of thinking; technical and interpersonal experience; positive and proactive attitude in fragile contexts; capacity building and mentoring; temporarily closing gaps in UN recruitment processes; providing specific functions not available in internal rosters; longer deployments (up to 1 year) compared to internal surge (typically 4-6 weeks).

Key Recommendations and steps forward

Strategic	DoC	Security	Value of Monitoring Missions
<p>It is recommended that UN SBP focal points at the HQ level ensure the UN COs are aware of the SBP process, requirements and responsibilities associated with receiving an SBP deployment, and that they allocate the resources to deal with this. A standardized check-list on the role of the SBP surge and the actual need was considered useful to avoid duplication of effort and to maximize the SBP support (i.e. why, where, when the expertise is needed).</p>	<p>No specific PSEA concerns were shared with the task force. However more than 50% of the SBP deployees were not aware of their UN Agency's PSEA focal point/hotline. It is recommended that the PSEA structure and reporting mechanism and focal point are clearly defined and provided to the SBP deployees from the beginning of the assignment.</p>	<p>Security briefings were found to be valuable, but some deployees did not receive this very quickly after arriving in country, and many deployees mentioned that the briefing did not provide any practical information on how to deal with an earthquake. The SSAFE training was noted as important for SBPs deployed in E duty stations, and this requirement should be clearly mentioned in the TORs.</p> <p>It is recommended security briefings are held once SBPs arrive in country and these include safety and security information based on the context in country at that time. It is recommended the SBP discuss potential ways to provide UNLP/UN Certificate for deployees working in hardship duty stations.</p>	<p>One of the main limitations of this monitoring exercise was the lack of engagement from some sending and receiving partners during the remote phase and field mission. It is recommended that the SBP network analyses the value and limitations of this joint monitoring mission to propose ways to improve engagement for any future missions. It was discussed this could include providing feedback in monitoring mission being a mandatory requirement when receiving SBP deployments.</p>
<p>It is recommended that UN SBP focal points at the HQ level ensure their COs are aware of reporting systems for issues</p>	<p>SBP partners to organize more field visits to assess deployees well-being.</p>		

<p>with SBP performance or satisfaction and encourage COs to report issues at the time during the deployment. This should then be passed on to the SBP sending partner, who should work with the UN SBP focal point to address this. It is also recommended that UN COs ensure any specific requirements such as prior knowledge of working with that UN agency and/or of its organizational structure are included in the SBP request requirements.</p> <p>It is recommended that the SBP network develops flexible best-practice guidelines for the fit-check calls to ensure they are used in the most valuable and appropriate way.</p>	<p>During the Focus Group Discussion conducted in Gaziantep, all SBP deployees welcomed the opportunity to provide feedback and discuss their work with other SBPs, and all said they would value earlier connection with other SBP deployees in the same duty station during their deployments.</p> <p>It is recommended the SBP network identifies a platform or informal approach for connecting SBP deployees at the same duty station. This recommendation was also made during the Focus Group Discussion conducted during the previous monitoring mission in Ukraine and neighboring countries.</p>		
<p>During the field mission, the task force assessed that the UN Agencies at field level have different expectations from the SBP deployees, and that this may have</p>			

<p>contributed to some of the dissatisfaction with performance.</p> <p>It is recommended the SBP network create a clear definition of the role of an SBP and their responsibilities versus the responsibilities of the sending partners and receiving UN CO, to ensure expectations are aligned and well managed, especially during the first few weeks.</p>			
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Annexes

- Annex 1 – SBP Joint Monitoring Mission Türkiye and Syria Timetable
- Annex 2 – SBP Field mission participants
- Annex 3 – Survey Template - SBP Deployees
- Annex 4 – Survey Template - UN CO focal points
- Annex 5 – KII Template - SBP Deployees

Annex 6 – KII Template - UN CO Focal Points

Annex 7 – Meeting topics - UN CO Senior Management

Annex 8 – FGD Template - SBP Deployees

Annex 9 – TOR — SBP Joint Monitoring Exercise Earthquake in Türkiye and Syria

Annex 10 – UN interview list

Annex 11 – Türkiye field mission meeting plan

Annex 13 – SBP Deployees data sheet