

Introduction to OCHA and the “Humanitarian Environment”

“OCHA Mandate”

‘responsible for the coordination of humanitarian response in natural disasters and complex emergencies through the Emergency Relief Coordinator and USG for Humanitarian Affairs’

Ref: GA Resolution 46/182 (1991) and the Secretary General's Reform - 1997.

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VIDEO 1



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Mission Statement

“To mobilise and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international humanitarian actors in order to:

- alleviate human suffering in natural disasters and complex emergencies;
- advocate for the rights of people in need;
- promote preparedness and prevention efforts to render international assistance effective, timely and appropriate; and
- facilitate sustainable solutions”.

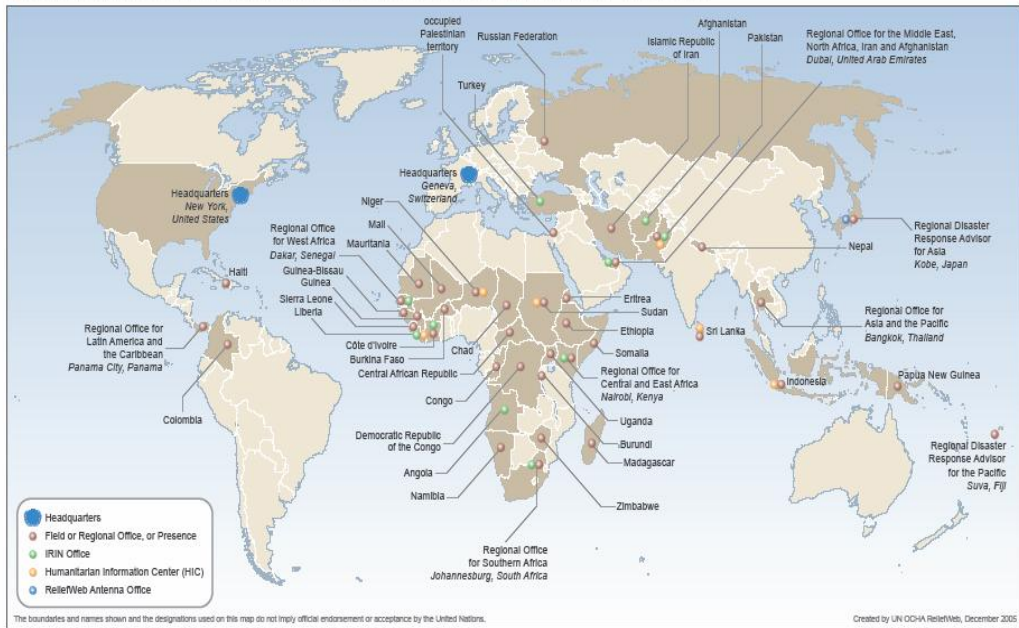
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Key Issues

- UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP and WFP are “UN Agencies or Funds”. OCHA is not.
- It is important to understand the difference.
- OCHA’s ‘mandate’ stems from various UN GA and SC Resolutions. Ultimately it is founded on the basis of GA Res. 46/182 and other (previous and subsequent) resolutions
- Part of the ‘fun’ of working for OCHA is the flexibility it provides.
- We can argue that its mandate is defined through what it does.

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United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Presence

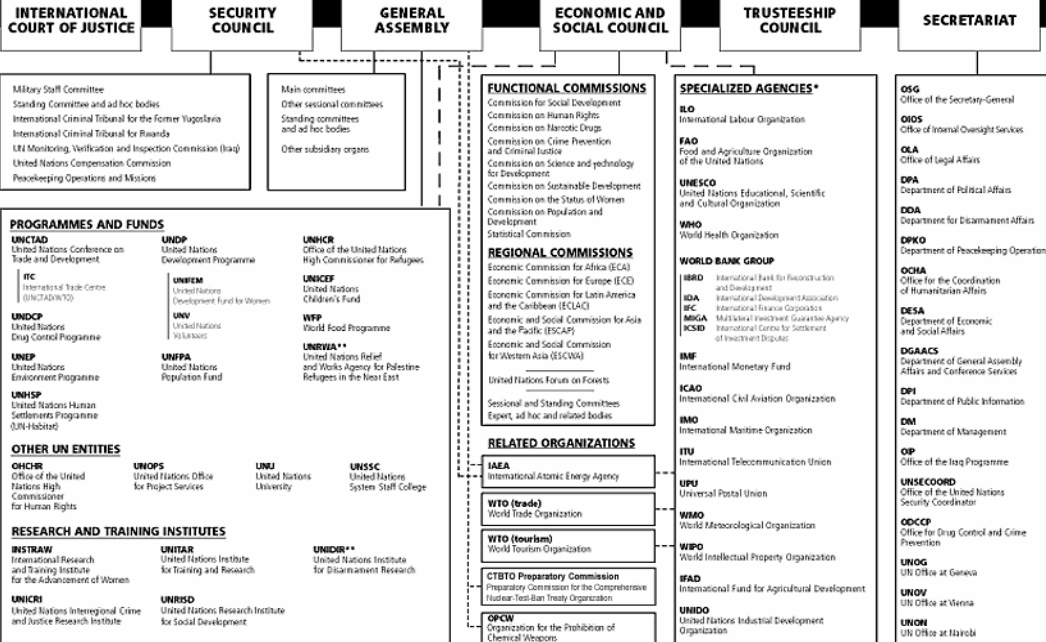


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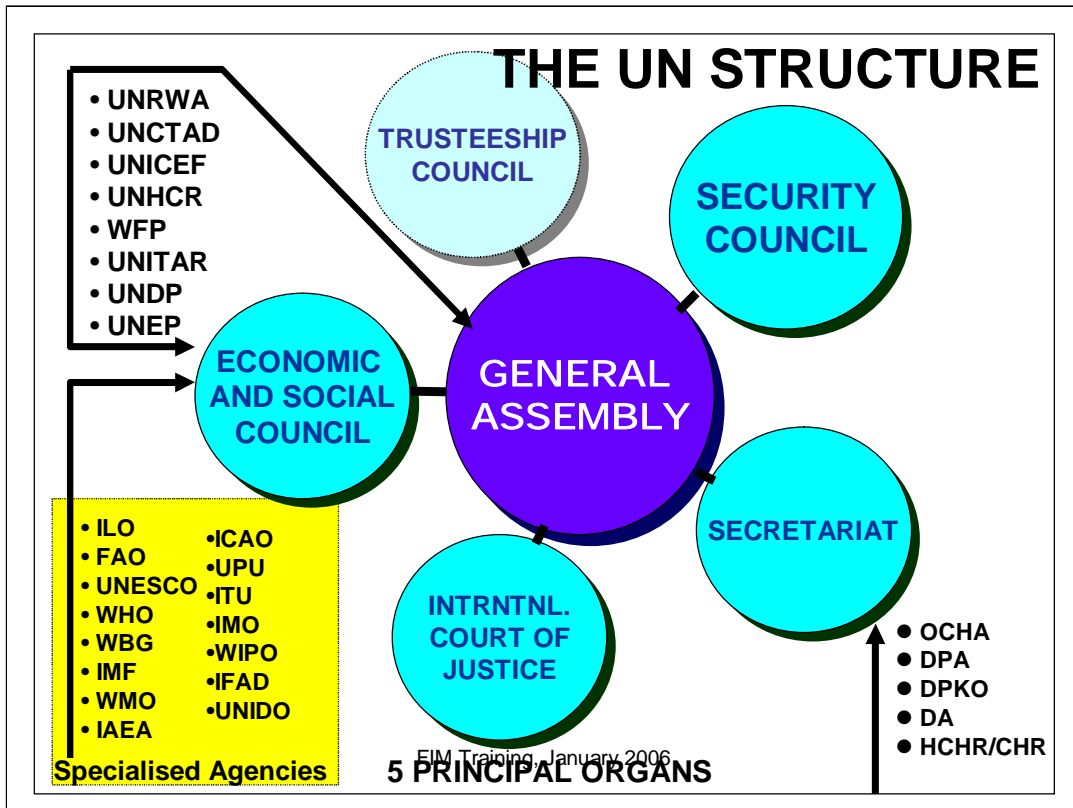


The UNITED NATIONS system

PRINCIPAL ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS



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Where does OCHA fit?

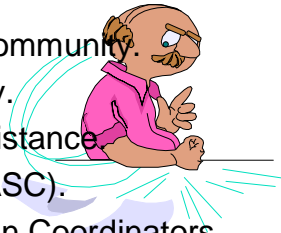
- Diagrams are a poor representation of the system - showing how the UN has grown at the whim of its masters.
- OCHA has a “mandate” - stemming from many GA Resolutions and a rich background (DHA, UNDRO etc) over 30 years.
- OCHA is new and manouvering for space in a cramped Secretariat.
- OCHA is strongly supported by donors (for now) but funding is contentious.
- OCHA is ‘creative’ in developing coordination in the field - no two places are the same.

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The Emergency Relief Coordinator

(GA Resolution 46/182, December 1991)

- Is the United Nations' USG for humanitarian affairs, and head of OCHA.
- Is the advisor to the Secretary-General on humanitarian affairs.
- Processes requests from Member States for emergency aid.
- Collects and analyses early warning information and inter-agency needs assessments.
- Prepares situation reports for the international community.
- Mobilizes international emergency relief capacity.
- Negotiates access to populations in need of assistance.
- Chairs the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).
- Manages the world-wide network of Humanitarian Coordinators.
- Promotes the smooth transition from relief to recovery.



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At the top of the international pyramid, guiding the whole international response to disasters is the Emergency Relief Coordinator.

At the moment, the job is held by a Japanese, Mr. Kenzo Oshima.

He is the head of OCHA.

He handles requests from member states for assistance.

He is responsible for the analysis of early warning information, for inter-agency needs assessment, and for situation reports, in which he tells the international community how a particular emergency is unfolding.

A GENERALIZED UN COORDINATION MODEL

GLOBAL LEVEL - The IASC is the primary mechanism for determining inter-agency coordination

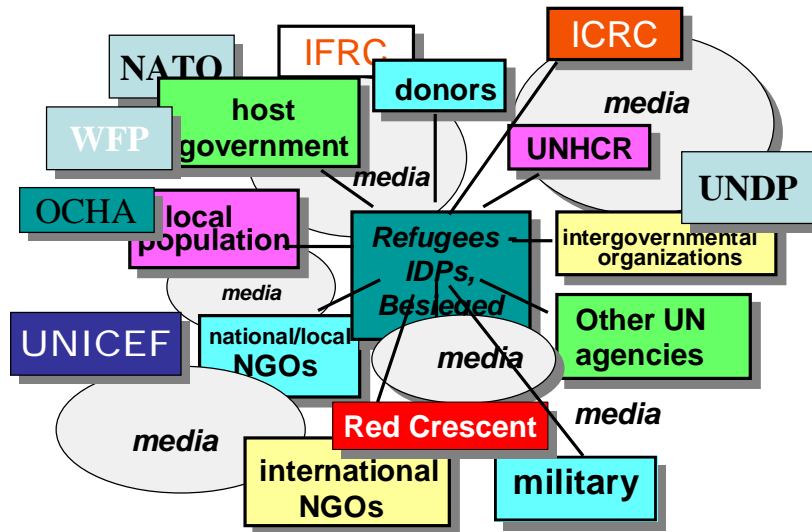
Leadership - Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC)

Implementation - A Humanitarian Coordinator in the field which **may or may not be** the UN Resident Coordinator, the country head of the Lead Agency if designated, or another individual specially chosen.

Support - OCHA Office in the field

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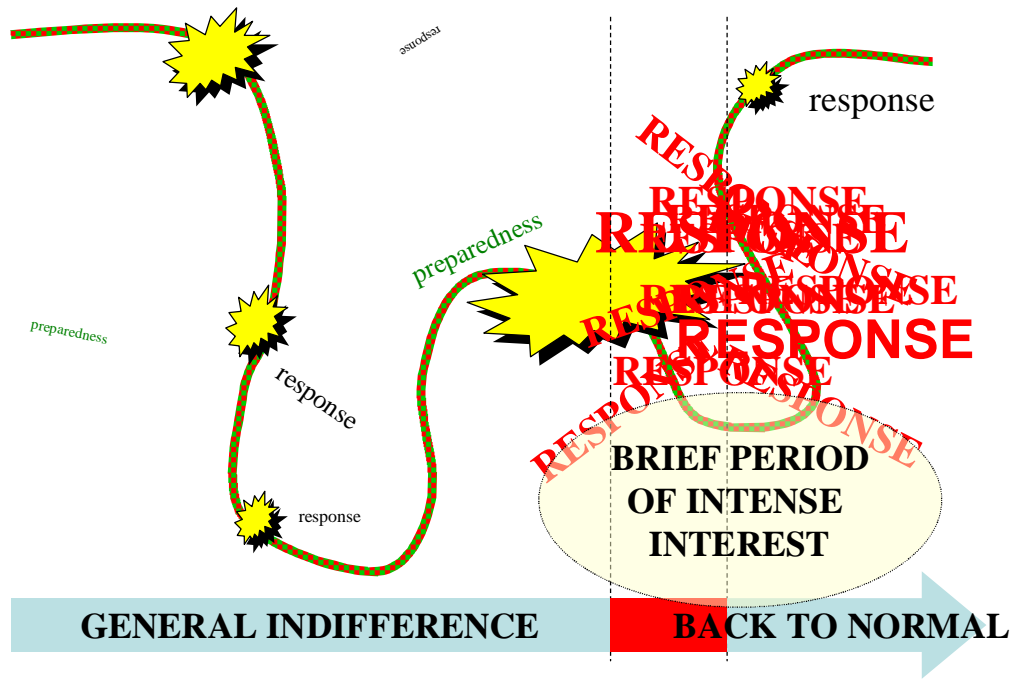
The “International System”



Can anyone coordinate this?

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THE USUAL INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM RESPONSE



The Humanitarian Coordinator

The HC is appointed by the ERC/USG, in consultation with the IASC, to:

- Coordinate the humanitarian efforts of all UN Agencies
- Facilitate communication and cooperation between the UN and other humanitarian agencies on the ground and with bilateral military forces
- Coordinate the overall international humanitarian assistance strategy:
 - set priorities for assistance
 - lead the inter-agency consolidated appeal process
- Promote respect of key humanitarian principles, e.g. neutrality, impartiality, by all parties to the conflict
- Negotiate to obtain humanitarian access to those in need

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The second tier, below the ERC, is the Humanitarian Coordinator (when there is a war), or the Resident Coordinator (when there isn't)-- that is the HC or the RC. One per country, or one per emergency.

He is the leader -- the *primus inter pares*, of the UN system in any given country. While on mission, you report to him.

(The problem is that many of them, particularly RCs, are often not very aware of the imperatives of disaster response: speed, action.

Field Level Coordination

- Country Team is led by UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator
- Country Team (Heads of Agencies) work together on development of common strategies and programming (CAP, CP, SMT, DMT).
- OCHA facilitates this process through the OCHA Office in the field **which works for the RC/HC.**
- OCHA's activities vary greatly according to the specific situation and coordination model. (e.g. Russia/DPR Korea/Liberia/Indonesia, Pakistan).
- Every emergency is situation specific.....

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OCHA Field Offices

- Primary Humanitarian Advisor to RC/HC
- Supports work of the UN Country Team, humanitarian and Government partners.
 - Negotiating humanitarian access
 - Defining minimum standards for operations
 - Leading/facilitating assessments
 - Developing plans of action and monitoring the outcome.
 - Collection, analysis and dissemination of information
 - Consolidated Appeal
 - Maintaining links with HQs Branches (Policy, advocacy etc)

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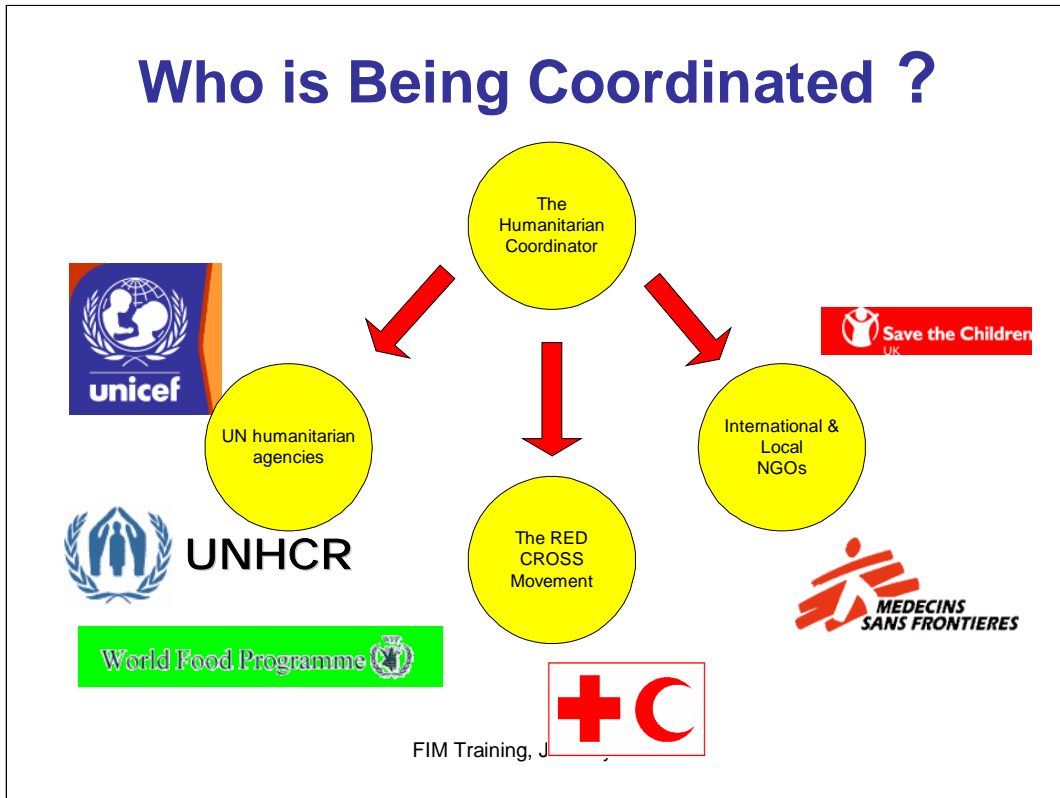
**.....but there are common themes for
OCHA's work**

- Monitor (all elements of humanitarian situation)
- Evaluate the impact of humanitarian programme
- Adjust on the basis of findings
- Report
- Facilitate preparation of Consolidated Appeals
- Working Group facilitation and management
- Contingency planning and capacity building
- Policy development
- Advocate on humanitarian issues (access, humanitarian position, rules of engagement (principles))
- Security issues

**“in cooperation with the authorities”
“support leadership role of HC”.**

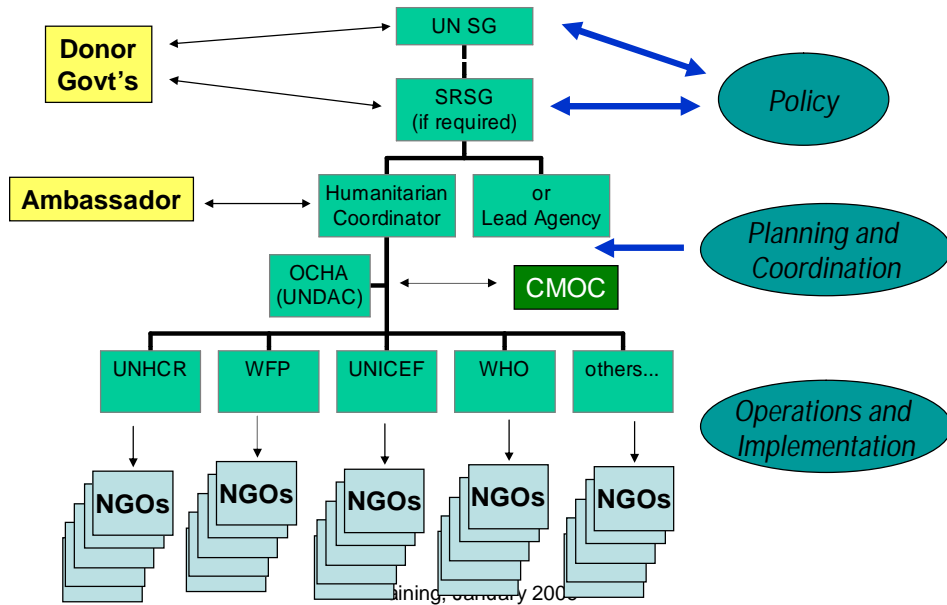
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Who is Being Coordinated ?

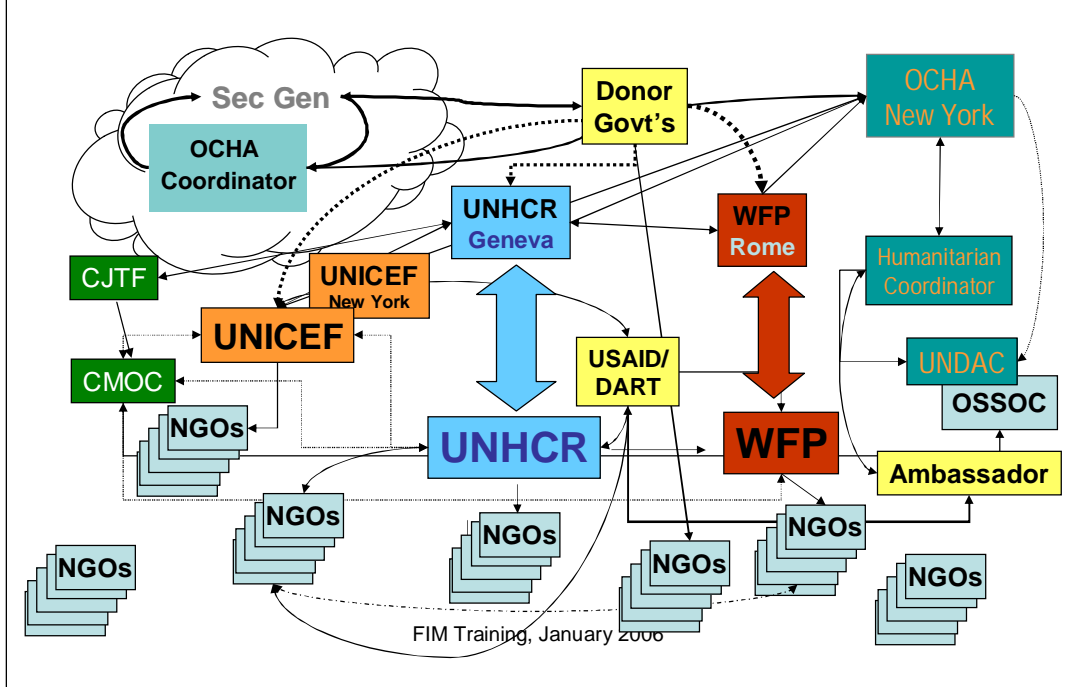


The only comment I would add here is that we are paid to coordinate these people. They are not paid to be coordinated by us.

Relief Coordination - the concept



Relief Coordination - the reality



Reminders:

- NOT a UN Agency
- No **operational** mandate
- Office of the UN Secretariat...has direct links to the Secretary General, the Security Council and the General Assembly.
- In effect, this means access, power and authority, if used wisely.
- Donors are very interested.

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